

Nakasone informs Murkowski of willingness to work on trade

Prime Minister Nakasone informed Alaska Sen. Frank Murkowski recently of his willingness to work with Japanese trade and private sector officials to open up the Kansai airport project to U.S. contractors.

Nakasone also told Murkowski that Japan would continue to consider Alaska as a significant source for expanded coal procurement.

Murkowski, who is chairman of the ~~Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee~~ on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, discussed these issues with the prime minister during the senator's trade mission to Taiwan, Japan and Korea.

During their meetings, Murkowski stressed that the \$8 billion Japanese construction project for a new international airport in Osaka is "more than just a construction project, it's sym-

bolic of the inability of U.S. firms to

Murkowski responded by noting that because the airport project was such a massive undertaking, the best way to ensure high quality work would be to allow open competitive bidding to experienced U.S. firms.

"By doing this we would utilize the technical expertise that U.S. firms have to offer in the area of airport design and construction," Murkowski said.

Murkowski also discussed the results of a recent Japan-U.S. energy working group report which recommended that Japan decrease domestic coal production and fill the domestic demand with imported coal from Alaska as a means to reduce the growing trade friction between Japan and the United States.