

NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

the time unanimously adopted. The resolution provided, so far as Canada is concerned, that important treaties should be approved in the first instance by this parliament. That is the reason why this convention, which to all intents and purposes is in the nature of a treaty between different countries, is being submitted to parliament. The purpose is to secure in the last analysis the control of parliament over any agreements of international significance which may bind the people of this dominion.

These words, taken with the principle enunciated by Mr. Meighen, with the attitude of Sir Robert Borden in 1919 and the words of the late Lord Bennett surely stand as precedents which should have guided the Prime Minister not a few weeks ago but last fall when the Leader of the Opposition suggested to him that this matter was one which should at the earliest moment be submitted to parliament for ratification or for rejection. Here are the words of Mr. Bennett in the same debate, as found at page 1968 of *Hansard* of April 12, 1928:

The ratification of a convention is, of course, as the Minister of Justice has said, a prerogative of the crown. The crown acts on the advice of its ministers, and in this instance the ministers from Canada will advise the crown that the convention is a sound one in which Canada concurs, if the Canadian parliament, comprising both the Commons and the Senate, approves of it. I wholly agree that it is desirable—indeed I have always so held—that both the Commons and the Senate of parliament should be asked to approve of conventions or treaties that carry international implications or responsibilities. That, I think, is clear.

We on this side of the house say to the Prime Minister, "that, we think, is clear." The prime minister in closing the debate added these words, as found at page 1974 of *Hansard* of April 12, 1928:

I submit that the day has passed when any government or executive should feel that they should take it upon themselves without the approval of parliament to commit a country to obligations involving any considerable financial outlays or active undertakings. In all cases where obligations of such a character are being assumed internationally parliament itself should be assured of having the full right of approving what is done before binding commitments are made. I would not confine parliamentary approval only to those matters which involve military sanctions and the like. I feel parliamentary approval should apply where there are involved matters of large expenditure or political considerations of a far-reaching character.

Now the Prime Minister will not deny that this particular situation involves political considerations of a far-reaching character I am sure that the Prime Minister on reflection will, as the leader of this house, true to its traditions as he asserts he is, be the first to say after thinking the matter over that the wise course for his government would have been to submit this matter to parliament last fall. In answer he might say that there was no agreement between the United States and

Canada. Even if there had been no long term agreement, there was time from the middle of August until October 14 last to have some kind of exchange between the governments of the United States and Canada which could have been submitted to the house, and there surely would have been no doubt at that time about what parliament would have done in principle with respect to the resolution which I suggest might well have been presented then.

But there are reasons, I suppose, why this was not done, and perhaps we find some evidence in the attitude taken by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the standing committee on external affairs last fall when he said in answer to a question put to him as found on page 20 of the proceedings of the committee on Thursday, November 28:

So far as this department is concerned—and I say this very emphatically—so far as this department is concerned we have not been brought into this picture whatever. This has been a discussion on a military basis. This department deals with the political aspects of it.

Then he went on to say:

This department knows nothing more than that; and when these military communications have been digested we are ready to help in the preparation of those notes and to provide for their exchange through diplomatic agencies, diplomatic media.

Mr. Smith (Hastings - Frontenac): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I am coming to the point you have in mind. Then the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) said:

Along the lines of that question, it seems to me quite unusual that in a matter of this kind, which has political as well as military implications, there should not have been interdepartmental consultation, as there was previously, and in which the Department of External Affairs should participate.

Now, in fairness to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the next day he did correct the impression he had left by using the words I have just quoted.

An hon. Member: Then why read them?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I shall deal with them, but I want to state that the first day the Secretary of State for External Affairs used those words. I suggest to the Prime Minister that in a matter of this sort—

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will you read what he said the next day?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I will read it in my own time. I will make my own speech, just as the Prime Minister is accustomed to doing when he makes a speech. I will deal with these things in the order which I believe is best.

I submit that the reason no resolution was presented to this house last fall was because