

1. INTRODUCTION

The nature and climate of Canada's relations with the United States, the policies that guide the conduct of these relations and the objectives to be pursued are matters that are the subject of consideration by Parliament and decisions by Government. This paper describes the instruments used to forward the Government's expressed intentions.

Sharing as they do the continent north of the Rio Grande, the Governments of Canada and the United States have necessarily developed a whole complex of mechanisms to deal with the many aspects of their relationship. A sketch in chart form of the main lines of consultation is attached as Appendix "D". The Canadian Government's principal instrument for the formulation and execution of foreign policy is the Department of External Affairs, with, in the United States, the embassy and consular posts. As evidence of the importance of Canada-United States relations in every field, a number of joint Canada-U.S.A. entities have been established, some at the ministerial level and some at the official level. In addition, there is the Canada-U.S.A. Parliamentary Group which provides for consultation among federal legislators. Most departments of the Canadian Government have working contacts with their opposite members in the United States. A number of interdepartmental committees have been established by the Government to ensure that information is exchanged and effort co-ordinated.

The objective of the co-ordination arrangements that exist is not to subject all official dealings with the United States to detailed central control - which would be neither feasible nor desirable - but rather to ensure that there is adequate control of the main elements of the relationship, that established policy is implemented in a coherent manner, and that on any given issue adequate account is taken of the full range of official interests that may be involved.

Although this paper is primarily concerned with bilateral relationships between Canada and the United States, these relationships also have an important multilateral dimension. Canada and the United States are both members of a number of international bodies, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, NATO, GATT, IMF, the World Bank and its related institutions, and the Geneva Disarmament Conference. Developments in these organizations can have direct effects on Canada and/or the United States, in some cases giving rise to bilateral discussions or negotiations between the two countries. In addition, because of the international importance of the United States, its policies and actions in any part of the world have an effect, direct or indirect, on the policies pursued in that part of the world by other countries, including Canada. Thus, if the United States decides to engage in strategic arms talks with the U.S.S.R., or if it decides not to, this represents a factor which Canadian policy must take into account. Similarly, steps taken by Canada to alter its participation in NATO or to extend diplomatic recognition to the Peking Government must be taken into account by the United States. In the economic field, a United States decision for or against restricting imports of textiles from low-cost producers has obvious consequences for the level of exports of such products which may be directed towards Canada. The general foreign policies pursued by the two countries, and the various ways in which these policies impinge on each other, are thus a major element in the overall Canada-United States relationship.