

in the United States, if in connection with any arrangement which is made, and which he proposes to submit to parliament, the interests of the fishing industry in connection with these matters are protected.

Mr. BENNETT: I suppose, Mr. Chairman, I should make at least a few observations in answer to what my hon. friend has said. When this government came into power it found that negotiations had been initiated by its predecessors for a treaty between the United States and Canada with relation to the deep waterway to the sea. It will be recalled that despatches were sent by this government to the government of the United States, and by the government of the United States to the Canadian government. There then intervened a discussion as to the position of Canada on the one hand and the provinces on the other with respect to the ownership, if I may use that broad term, of the water in the national section of the St. Lawrence river, and on the Ontario side of the international section. The matter had been in abeyance for some time after the decision of the supreme court. When this government came into power it was again taken up just where it had been left off, and negotiations are proceeding as I indicated this afternoon.

To precede treaty negotiations with a resolution would seem to be somewhat difficult, and to talk about a treaty being submitted to the house for approval before it is signed suggests a negation of the use of the word "treaty" itself. This the hon. gentleman, as a skilled lawyer, well knows.

So far as the bargain is concerned, a treaty is a contract between states; it is a question not of concession but of agreeing upon terms. If concessions are granted or not granted, they are the subject matter of the bargain or contract or agreement between the parties, and it would be premature indeed to undertake in any sense a discussion of what might be involved in the agreement between the parties to the contract that we call a treaty.

So far as the other matters to which the hon. member has referred are concerned, it is obvious from the terms of the despatch that was sent by the Canadian government—not the present government—to the American government, in which reference was made to the effect of American fiscal policies upon the production and distribution of Canadian products, that it was in the mind of the then executive that the matter should be considered. But the reply indicated that, after all, the making of a contract with respect to the use of water which constitutes the international boundary between

[Mr. Ralston.]

the two countries—the only necessity for a treaty being the fact that it is an international body of water, the state of New York affected on the one side and the province of Ontario on the other—is not the appropriate occasion to discuss the questions to which the hon. gentleman has just now referred. If he says that there was any attack against the late administration because negotiations had been initiated, I think he is not speaking by the book. I gathered from what he said subsequently that what he had reference to was the observations made at that time by Canadians on both sides of politics with respect to the reciprocity agreement of 1911. It will be recalled that the terms he used were employed not only by Canadians but by Americans of high repute. I daresay he remembers the jocular observation of a former president of the United States in that regard, speaking at a great gathering in this country, and the equally, shall I say, pregnant observations of one of his opponents, who, as it subsequently developed, did not intend them to be taken too seriously, but which were taken very seriously by Canadians in various parts of the country. I daresay the hon. gentleman will also recall what I have so frequently said, and said at that time with as much strength and vigour as I could that the difficulty lies in developing between two countries a channel of trade that is subject to interruption or destruction without the interests of the one being considered by the other. That a channel of trade which has been established should, after a country has got into the habit of carrying forward its trade through that channel, be subject to destruction without reference at all to the interests of the other party is something which I have always condemned and I still think is injurious to the welfare of any country. A fair bargain on trade matters which gives benefits to both on terms that prevent the possibility of injury if the agreement lapses by the effluxion of time or after reasonable notice has been given, is an altogether different matter, and one about which I think the hon. gentleman and myself entertain no great difference of opinion. I feel quite satisfied that if, as and when any agreement is arrived at in the form of a treaty between the United States and Canada, it will be on such terms as will not involve this country in such capital expenditures as those to which the hon. gentleman refers, or involve us in the acceptance of obligations in any sense out of keeping with the benefits that will accrue to us.

Mr. RALSTON: What I feel about my right hon. friend's reply is this. He suggests that it is premature to discuss this matter here a