

Dozens of agencies and thousands of civil servants—federal, provincial and municipal—are daily involved in administering policy. Not infrequently, however, these agencies confuse the citizens they are designed to serve. Most civil servants are conscientious, but sometimes they apply the letter rather than the spirit of the law. Mistakes go unnoticed and uncorrected. Procedures laid down to prevent waste generate red tape instead and benevolent policies are applied in undesirable ways.

It then goes on to say that while the solution is not simple, a partial answer would be widespread use of ombudsmen and towards the end of his article he makes a good case for the need of an ombudsman at the federal level and refutes the arguments that to date have been advanced against such an appointment.

Honourable senators, the task envisaged in this resolution, as I see it, is stupendous, but it is also urgent and vital because it has to do with our precious heritage of individual rights, liberties and freedoms. I therefore give this resolution my wholehearted support.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Gouin, debate adjourned.

CANADA-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING— DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Thursday, April 9, the adjourned debate on the inquiry of Hon. Mr. Phillips (Rigaud) that he will call the attention of the Senate to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group held at Washington, Cape Kennedy, Houston and San Antonio, March 10 to 15, 1970.

Hon. Keith Laird: Honourable senators, I understand that the honourable Harry Willis will not be present this evening, so may I have leave to continue this debate?

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is it agreed that the honourable Senator Laird speak now in place of the honourable Senator Willis?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Laird: Honourable senators, we have heard such excellent reports from the representatives of this house who attended

this meeting, it is difficult for me to make a contribution that is at all unique. Frankly, I am sorry that all the representatives have not yet spoken, because I should have liked to have had the benefit of their views before trying to make a contribution on the subject of Canadian-American relations. However, I do want to begin by saying that sometimes we become so very involved in complexities that when it comes to Canadian-American relations we find it desirable at a certain stage—and I hope I might contribute to this tonight—to get back to certain fundamental concepts, forgetting about all the ramifications and intricacies that surround the problems between our two countries.

First, to lay a simple foundation for the problem, let me remind you that the Americans are probably our closest friends. We all have the utmost respect for the people of the United Kingdom and the people of France, but the Americans are our friends, and this sentiment prevails not only in English-speaking Canada but in French-speaking Canada.

So, we start with the proposition that we have next door to us our closest friends. Of course they are closest to us geographically as well, and for that reason it is perfectly normal that our relationship with them in every respect should be close. I mention that particularly because of the economic relationship. It is natural that there should be an intertwining of the economic lives of the two countries. I do not need to urge upon you the fact that what happens in the United States has a profound effect upon Canada.

The United States—at least in terms of unification—is a somewhat older country than Canada and, consequently, is more developed. As a result, it has available more money for investment, and it is very logical that such investment should take place in the country next door, Canada.

Thirdly, no one can convince me that the United States has any territorial designs upon Canada. The recent problem concerning the Arctic, I suggest, does not involve any attempt on the part of the Americans to acquire new territory. What they are after is some kind of arrangement for passage through the waterways there.

In the fourth place, we should remind ourselves of this proposition—and I hope you agree with me—that the vast majority of the people in this country are opposed to political union with the United States of America. They are our friends, yes. We are closely bound to them economically, yes. But, there is