

Supply—External Affairs

tic community and the importance of it. That I do not deny. It is an enormously important part of our whole policy for our existence that we live in harmony and trade on as equitable terms as possible with all in the Atlantic community, but we have not yet articulated for ourselves any kind of over-all concept of Pacific policy.

However, we are being dragged into it. We are coming into it through the avenues of trade. It is almost as though the old traditional rule were applying in this situation, that the diplomat were being preceded by the merchant, because in the post-war years and since, as we have developed our trade with Japan, and more recently in wheat with China, we have begun to think in more positive terms about a Canadian role in the Pacific. This has come about as a consequence, first of trade. The nuclear explosion by China, to which reference has been made, has undoubtedly accelerated our interest; but trade actually gave it its first impetus. The first real turning of our attention to the west followed our interest in the sale of Canadian goods.

But this is not enough. It is only part of what should be done if Canada is to enunciate a clear, definite and well developed policy for this country in the Pacific. We have to be aware that two thirds of the world's people live in the Pacific region of the world. Whatever affects them politically or economically is increasingly going to affect us. What they do has a bearing on what happens to us. Even if we were to try to do so we could not live in isolation; we could not escape involvement in the Pacific. It would be most unfortunate if our involvement took the form of policy developed on a hit or miss, day to day basis to meet circumstances as they arose. The development of a continuing policy for this region is not simply the responsibility of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Many of his colleagues in the cabinet have an interest in the evolution of such a policy. But the minister and his department can give the leadership required, provide guide lines, provide the basic plan upon which Canadian policy can be developed.

If we are to have a well integrated policy for the Pacific it will have to take into account trade and commerce in addition to the usual diplomatic relationships. It will have to take account of defence policy and the policies of our allies and friends in the commonwealth who are already deeply committed in this region. It will require the

[Mr. Fleming (Okanagan-Revelstoke).]

integration of foreign aid and technical assistance programs. We have a substantial interest in the north Pacific fisheries. Our immigration programs are bound to be affected. We shall need to develop an interchange of people through tourist travel. We shall require an accelerated rate of development of our west coast ports as well as of our interior lines of communication with those ports. It will involve the development of a national highways policy, all brought into some relation with the development of a Pacific policy.

There is one question which has been discussed along the west coast for many years but which has received still greater attention in the past few months. People are asking whether we should not now be actively negotiating for a corridor through the Alaska Panhandle to provide access to tidewater for the great, developing northwest regions of British Columbia and the Yukon. Furthermore, as there is a continued development of the resources in the north of the prairie provinces, and since much of this production will be turned into the Asian and Pacific markets we shall need to be more and more concerned about communications on the west coast—the most rapid and economic means of getting these products to the Pacific region. All this calls for an integrated and articulate policy of development which will be understood and supported by the Canadian people. I hope that the minister, in the course of this debate or in the course of a future debate on foreign affairs will tell us what thinking has been done on this subject within the Department of External Affairs or in any of the other departments of government.

I noticed that at the time of the meeting in Japan the hon. gentleman did refer to a Canada-U.S.-Japan triangle. It was a step further than we had gone in the past but I am asking the hon. gentleman to go further still. After all, a triangle is not the most satisfactory basis for a relationship—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): The Pacific triangle.

Mr. Fleming (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Well, I think it is a step forward though I believe it still falls short of what we really need as a Pacific nation. Although the coastline of British Columbia measured in a straight line from the 49th parallel to the Alaska Panhandle is only about 500 miles, the length of the coast line itself, with all its many indentations, amounts to something like 15,000 miles. These fiords reach deep into the re-