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MR. TRUDEAU REPORTS ON TALKS WITH MR. NIXON

On his return from Washington, where he had met with President Nixon on economic issues affecting Canada, the Prime Minister made the following statement to the House of Commons on December 7:

Mr. Speaker, as Honourable Members are aware, I spent several hours yesterday with President Nixon in Washington. I should like to take a few moments of the time of the House to report on those meetings and on the discussions which took place concurrently between the Ministers of Finance and Industry, Trade and Commerce, with their officials, and the United States Secretaries of the Treasury and of Commerce and their officials.

One of the purposes of my visit was to seek reassurance from the President, and it can only come from him, that it is neither the intention nor the desire of the United States that the economy of Canada become so dependent upon the United States in terms of a deficit trading pattern that Canadians will inevitably lose independence of economic decisions. I stated to the President, as candidly as I was able, the concern which had been expressed in Canada, and indeed by some Honourable Members, with respect to

the character of the U.S.-Canadian relationship. That concern was precipitated, of course, by the introduction on August 15 of the new United States economic policies, but it has been reflected increasingly in recent years by the continuing flow to Canada of American investment with its inherent advantages and disadvantages.

U.S. VIEW

I cannot emphasize too strongly the warmth and the understanding with which President Nixon responded to my questions and the candid attitude which he revealed. He assured me that it was in the clear interests of the United States to have a Canadian neighbour not only independent both politically and economically but also one which was confident that the decisions and policies in each of these sectors would be taken by Canadians in their own interests, in defence of their own values, and in pursuit of their own goals.

The century-old desire of Canadians to benefit from our North American neighbourhood and to profit from our relations with the United States, while at the same time remaining Canadian to the degree and extent that we choose, was put to the President by me and accepted by him without hesitation or qualification.

We are a distinct country, we are a distinct people, and our remaining as such is, I was assured, in the interests of the United States and is a fundamental tenet of the foreign policies of that country as expressed by the Nixon administration.

I should add that the President was sensitive to the suggestion that his August 15 policies could be interpreted as evidence that the United States was unable to accept a Canada with a strong trading and current account position *vis-à-vis* the United States. This interpretation he could understand, but he stated to me forcefully that it was incorrect. I have not the slightest doubt, having spoken to him, that his in-

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