

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Report of Minister on Scandinavia

[Translation]

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

TABLING OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
WORKING PAPERS

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table copies in both languages of the two reports submitted by the government of Canada at the last meeting of the constitutional conference, held on June 11 and 12 last.

I promised to the house, on the morrow of this conference, to table those reports in the house. They are entitled: "The Taxing Powers and the Constitution of Canada", and "Federal-Provincial Grants and the Spending Powers of Parliament".

[English]

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that we also presented to the conference a third paper which dealt with certain constitutional aspects of regional disparity. This paper is not being tabled now as it was principally a review of the positions that we had stated before in publications of the federal government such as "Federalism for the Future" and "The Constitution and the People of Canada" and in the papers that were tabled today. Whether any further paper on the subject of regional disparities will be published subsequently will depend on the future. It will depend on the nature of our future discussions on this subject.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REPORT OF MINISTER UPON RETURNING FROM
SCANDINAVIA

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have this opportunity to give hon. members a brief account of my recent tour of Scandinavia. This is the first statement I have given and I think it appropriate that it should be made here in parliament and not in the press.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Sharp: My tour began on June 8 in Oslo and ended on June 19 in Reykjavik, after visiting Helsinki, Copenhagen and Stockholm. This was the first time a Canadian foreign minister had made a tour of all five Nordic countries. It was the first time that a Canadian foreign minister had visited some of these countries.

My purpose in undertaking this tour was to reaffirm on a personal basis the long standing good relations between the Canadian and Nordic governments, to provide a new impetus for increased co-operation between Canadians and the Nordic peoples, and to make Canada better known in those countries.

In all the capitals visited, I emphasized that the enlargement of Canada's international horizons taking place as a result of our foreign policy review does not imply any lessening of Canada's interest in Europe and that we recognize the importance of Europe not only for our security but also for many other dimensions of our national life. It is from Europe that most of our population, our culture and our tradition comes. The bulk of our immigration and a significant proportion of our exchanges of persons, ideas and goods are still with Europe. These relations are of great importance not only in themselves but also as a means of diversifying our external relations and developing an identifiably Canadian way of life in North America. For all these reasons we wish to seek new forms of co-operation with the Europeans, including the Scandinavians.

• (2:20 p.m.)

Everywhere we went our reception was friendly and generous, and I wish to say here, as I said there, how much we appreciated the care with which our programs were prepared and the many kindnesses we were shown. It was evidence, I think, of the high regard in which Canada is held in those countries and of their desire to get to know us better.

Great interest was shown in our review of foreign and defence policies. In outlining its nature and the results so far, I stressed the great changes that have taken place both in Canada and the world in the last few years. I pointed out that Canada is now aware, as it has never been before, that it is not only an Atlantic nation but also an American nation with growing interests in Latin America, a Pacific nation with growing ties with Japan and other Asian countries, and an Arctic nation with increasing responsibilities for the development, surveillance and defence of our vast northern territories. Above all, I emphasized that in deciding to stay in NATO and to stay in Europe, we have rejected a non-aligned or inward-looking orientation.

This explanation received a sympathetic reception everywhere. Those Nordic countries that are partners of ours in NATO pointed out