

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 26, 1969

The house met at 2 p.m.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

Fifth report of Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence—Mr. Wahn.

[Translation]

#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER AS TO  
DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON WITH  
PRESIDENT NIXON

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to report briefly to the house on my recent meeting with the President of the United States.

If I were asked what has been the most significant result of the events of the last two days, I would say without hesitation that it is the fact that the groundwork has been laid for co-operation and consultation between our two governments, which will allow for the holding of consultations at all levels, the official level, the ministerial one and that of the leaders of governments.

[English]

I should report as well the significance, in my view, of the fact that President Nixon set aside some time so early in his new administration to receive the Prime Minister of Canada. No other country is as important to Canada as the United States; it is therefore reassuring to know that we have at this early date established the contacts and fortified the channels of communication so necessary to the effective conduct of our relations.

A number of matters were discussed by the President and myself, by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and his counterpart Mr. Rogers, and by other officials. These discussions led to a confirmation of the Canadian-United States commitment to the continued expansion and freedom of world trade, to agreement with respect to our community

of interest in the expansion of energy movements across our border, and a confirmation of the importance of an early solution to the current wheat marketing problems.

I wish to add that we were given a very full explanation of the reasons which led President Nixon to initiate the Safeguard anti-ballistic missile program, and these I intend to convey to cabinet at the earliest opportunity so that Canada's attitude may be determined.

It was further agreed that a meeting of the joint cabinet committee on trade and economic policy will be held on June 25, 26 and 27.

I do not wish to sit down without saying that I found in President Nixon a warm and understanding friend of Canada, a man with whom I shall be able to speak on behalf of Canadians in a frank yet genial fashion. For this I am very thankful. To further this good beginning I extended to the President and to Mrs. Nixon a warm invitation to visit Canada at their earliest convenience.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I am happy to note that we all look forward to that event and that the house welcomes it.

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** My first words are to extend to the right hon. Prime Minister a very warm welcome back to the country and to parliament. This was the first meeting between the Prime Minister and the new President of the United States. In the space of two days, and from their initial encounter it would probably be unrealistic to expect much more than that the leaders of the two governments should exchange views on important subjects that are of mutual concern to the countries, and that they would establish a relationship as leaders of governments which could easily be drawn upon in the future to our mutual advantage. I think it is quite apparent from what has been said that the Prime Minister and Mr. Nixon have begun to establish this kind of relationship. This is a very constructive development.

At least two serious economic problems were discussed, oil and wheat. It was apparently agreed to hold meetings at the official level between the two countries to discuss the