

*External Affairs*

the communique issued by the United States-Canada committee on economic affairs which met in Ottawa on January 5 and 6, said:

It was also agreed that wherever feasible there should be close consultation in advance between the two governments whenever it seemed necessary for the government of one country to take action which might affect the commercial and economic interests of the other.

That seems to me to be a less forthright declaration with regard to consultation than the one we received earlier. Hon. members will notice that the communique said:

It was also agreed that wherever feasible—

And so on. Mr. Speaker, there should not be such a qualification regarding the relations between our two countries. In every case where the interests of the other are affected—and this applied to us when we introduced the new customs regulations last year—there should be consultation. There is no excuse for it not taking place. Not only should there be consultation but it should be continuous and effective to prevent to the fullest possible extent those difficulties arising. We know what some of the difficulties are. One is restrictions on our exports of oil and strategic base metals to the United States, restrictions which do not reflect the theory of unity in continental defence. Another problem is that of the surplus disposal of agricultural products concerning which it was hoped by the government last summer that some progress had been made in preventing United States policy in this matter affecting unfairly our own exports but concerning which at the present time there are many ominous signs that that kind of action may still be taken.

There is also the whole question of defence relationships between our two countries. I shall not go into this question in too much detail at the present time because when the defence estimates are up for consideration we will have ample opportunity to discuss this matter.

There is also the question of the relationship between our two countries and peoples in regard to control of our Arctic territories. I know that the Prime Minister said in this house last summer that whereas these arrangements to ensure Canadian control and sovereignty over her Arctic territory had not been satisfactory when the government came into power—notwithstanding the feelings of the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Hamilton)—all difficulties had been removed and everything was changed because of new regulations. Ever since that date—I believe it was last September—I have been trying to get these regulations which brought about this changed situation but without any success whatever.

[Mr. Pearson.]

We are going to have these problems and I think we must assume that the good sense and the realization of our interdependence on both sides of the border will ensure that while these difficulties will arise, with good will and practice they can be solved. We have to face the problems involved in these relationships with a sense of realism and with evidence of maturity. We must search for solutions to these problems that will maintain Canadian rights and protect Canadian interests but we must do this while recognizing that our two countries in the world in which we both live must inevitably work closely together; that isolation of either one from the other is made impossible by geography, economics, enlightened self-interest and by, as I have expressed it, the very nature of the world in which we live with its tensions and deep conflicts between two struggling systems of human and political organization.

We can never forget as we try to solve these problems with our neighbours that the United States remains the foundation of our defence for the western world and its ideals against those who would destroy them and by its very power it is the only western country qualified in the material sense to give the kind of leadership and the kind of strength without which we would be in a bad way in the western world today. We should talk up and talk straight and if necessary we should do more than talk when our rights and our interests are being overlooked in Washington. But that surely does not mean petulance, pettiness or—to use a word of which the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Green) is so fond—whining. We are supposed to be grown up now nationally and one indication of maturity is a combination of firmness with steadiness and understanding.

I have been wondering whether the time has not now come for a top level formal conference between the leaders in Canada and the United States to see if some formal agreement could not be reached and embodied in a formal convention, perhaps for ratification by legislatures—because this would be one way of bringing these matters to the attention of congress as well as parliament—embodying principles that should govern our relations. We had such an agreement in the Hyde Park arrangement. We had an enunciation of principles, as the minister knows, repeating the principles of the Hyde Park agreement, I believe in 1950, but it was an informal document with no binding effect in any formal sense. Perhaps the time has come when we should try to work