

Minister indicate why the decision was taken not to appear to explain this important legislation to the United States legislative body?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of this request but I will look at it with some attention. As a matter of general principle, I am sure all members on both sides of this House will agree that it is not proper at first blush for members of the Canadian Public Service to appear before legislative bodies of other countries.

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

PROPOSED REVIVAL OF CANADA-UNITED STATES  
MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON TRADE—GOVERNMENT  
POSITION

**Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the Prime Minister meant to indicate by the final part of his answer that there will be no spokesmen there to explain the Canadian government policy position. I should like to ask a further question of the Prime Minister in view of recent representations to the committee of the other place studying Canadian-U.S. relations, specifically by former U.S. Ambassador to Canada Schaezel, in respect of the Canadian-U.S. ministerial committee on trade and economic affairs which has not met for the past five years. Ambassador Schaezel specifically recommended that this committee be revived as an important instrument to overcome some of the difficulties referred to by Ambassador Porter. Can the Prime Minister indicate whether the government is giving consideration to this important committee in order that we might be able to overcome some of the difficulties that have presently been suggested.

● (1420)

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** On the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, what I intended to convey, and think I did convey, was that if the United States wants to know about our policies, the way to know about them is not to summons our civil servants in front of their Congressional committees. Our ambassador is there. There are constant meetings at the ministerial level between Canada and the United States. We, of course, are very prepared and desirous to defend any aspect of our policies and to explain them to the American government, but we are not a colony of the United States.

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

**Mr. Trudeau:** On the meeting of the committee to which the hon. member refers, I think this is an interesting suggestion. I will see when the last meeting was held and whether another one is called for. It may be that because of the frequency of the meetings by ministers of many departments in the past several years the committee was not absolutely necessary. I know the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Justice, the Solicitor General and the Minister of Finance have all been meeting at a fairly frequent pace. Perhaps it was not necessary to have this continuing committee meet.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, just to be clear to the Prime Minister with regard to this joint economic sub-committee that is meeting tomorrow and Wednesday, the request was made through the regular diplomatic sources in Washington through our embassy. The embassy officials there did not offer either to advise the names of anyone or suggest in what way we might be adequately represented. Perhaps the Prime Minister should look into that in order that we can effectively explain this new policy initiative taken by the government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR PORTER ON CANADA-UNITED  
STATES RELATIONS—SUGGESTED PROTEST OF  
AMBASSADOR'S ACTION

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Since the remarks made by Ambassador Porter were not in print but apparently were deliberately made without a text before some senior journalists in Canada and that therefore the Prime Minister will not be able to check the text, I should like to ask the Prime Minister, since pretty well all the people at this conference with the ambassador are in agreement concerning what he said or is alleged to have said, whether he and the Government of Canada would make clear to the United States government that we do not accept as appropriate ambassadorial activity explicit criticism made internally of federal and provincial government operations.

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

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, the difficulty is as stated by the Leader of the New Democratic Party that I do not have the exact text. I can only assume that some of the things alleged to have been said, if said, were meant to be stated personally as an opinion of the ambassador. Certainly he was not speaking as the ambassador. Some of the quotations attributed to him, particularly as they concern provincial politics, certainly are beyond the acceptable bounds within which an ambassador should stay. I am sure the United States government would agree with this, but once again the whole case is based on reports which I have not been able to verify. I would like to add that word of caution. It is possible that Ambassador Porter himself will want to deny some of the statements which have been alleged or put in his mouth.

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

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, since the ambassador apparently took pains to say to some journalists as they were leaving the meeting that they were free to comment either in the written media, on television or through other forms, it seems to be the deliberate policy of the U.S. government at this time for the ambassador to make such a statement and it seems extraordinary that such an experienced man would simply express a personal view in such a serious area. I would like to repeat in a sense the first question to the Prime Minister to confirm if this is the official U.S. policy and, if it is so, would he make clear that it is unacceptable to Canada?