

I must say that I was puzzled to learn the other day of certain proposals that imports of crude oil into the United States should be restricted on defence grounds. When such large supplies are becoming available in Canada in locations connected with refining facilities in the United States, and when it would seem prudent not to discourage further exploration and development of these oil resources, this suggestion is one which is particularly difficult to understand. Not only would such a proposition, if implemented, tend to disrupt the economic development of this continent's oil resources, but it seems entirely to overlook the fact that American oil exports to Canada are already far greater than our exports to the United States. That is not, therefore, the kind of proposition which helps to make the course of our economic relationships easier.

I do not underestimate the difficulties of carrying through commercial policies or maintaining economic conditions which will be conducive to good relations between us. We must realize how serious it would be, however, if those important relationships were to be impaired. It is surely worthwhile for both our countries to make a special effort to avoid actions which would have such deplorable consequences.

No doubt problems will arise in our economic relations in the future and some of them may be of quite a serious character. We shall be best prepared to handle such situations with good sense if we and our neighbours have always in mind that we shall be living together for a long time. We shall live most satisfactorily and with a minimum of friction if we are steadily aware of the growing interdependence between ourselves and within the community of the free world.

What I have said about defence and trade alone will, I hope, indicate that in my view relations between our two countries will not be "easy and automatic", but that they will be increasingly complex and important; and they must remain close and friendly.

The fortunes of both our countries are interdependent. But the dependence of Canada on the United States is far greater than the reverse. That is a fact which we must accept even if, at times, it makes us feel uncomfortable.

- This does not mean that we should not stoutly maintain and frankly express our own views on all matters of interest or concern to us. It does not mean that we should not do our best to alter American policy in matters which affect us when we think that policy is wrong. Above all, it does not mean that we should not use every legitimate means to protect Canadian interests, when they are damaged or threatened by American policy. "Canada first" may be good policy as well as a good slogan, but there is nothing how to be said for "Canada only" or "Canada apart from its friends and allies". Above all, let us give no countenance to the idea, so sedulously cultivated by the enemies of freedom and the slaves and dupes of Communism, that Canada can live and grow, apart from and without the friendliest relations with its great neighbour, which is also the strongest bulwark of our common defence against those aggressive despotisms which are today the greatest threat to peace.