

lengthy delays encountered by traffic using it, and it has become necessary to widen the bridge.

The original legislation passed by the Canadian Parliament provided that construction of the bridge was to start no later than December 31, 1975. Discussions in the American Congress led to a change in the proposed bill there. The bill, which dealt strictly with this one bridge, the Fort-Falls Bridge, was expanded into an omnibus bill covering all international bridges in the United States. Therefore, we found ourselves, having passed this act, not having legislation that coincided with the American legislation. Rather than try to get another bill through Congress, which might take a great deal of time, it was felt that it would be more sensible to amend the Canadian act and permit the local authorities to proceed with the construction of the bridge.

This bill, therefore, basically does two things. It brings the Fort-Falls Bridge Authority Act into line with the American legislation so that, as I indicated, a number of levels of government can work together to accomplish this undertaking. The other purpose is to postpone the date of the commencement of construction, which in the act is December 31, 1975. It is obvious that date cannot be met at this point. Construction has not started yet, and there is not even finalization on the site. This bill proposes to postpone the commencement of construction for five years, to December 31, 1979. This will give time for the further investigations that are required.

There seems to be general agreement from the Canadian side on this point. The Town of Fort Frances has passed a resolution asking that this bill be passed. The Province of Ontario does not appear to have any objections. I therefore recommend the bill for passage by the Senate.

On motion of Senator Haig, debate adjourned.

● (1450)

## MEXICO

### VISIT OF CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Thursday, April 10, the debate on the inquiry of Senator Fergusson calling the attention of the Senate to the visit of a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians to Mexico, 6th to 10th January, 1975.

[Translation]

**Hon. Jacques Flynn:** Honourable senators, I had the opportunity to visit Mexico for the first time in 1960. At that time, I was Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. The Speaker, the Right Honourable Roland Michener, had been invited by the Mexican government to represent the House of Commons at the 150th anniversary celebration of that country's independence. Because of previous engagements, and as he was in Great Britain at the time, he asked me, to my great pleasure, to represent the House of Commons in Mexico.

I came back from that visit with wonderful memories of the hospitality of Mexico and Mexicans. This year, as a member of the delegation which met with Mexican parliamentarians in Mexico in early January, I had my second experience of the kind. Again I came back with pleasant

[Senator Molgat.]

memories. I might say that they are even better since I got to know more about Mexico.

[English]

It was my pleasure and privilege earlier this year, as a member of a Canadian parliamentary delegation, to pay another visit to Mexico, our other neighbour on the North American continent. I would like at this time to report on that visit, and to share with you a few of the impressions about Mexico that I brought home.

Today's Mexico is not the Mexico of the old caricatures and third-rate Hollywood movies. It is no longer the Mexico of Zapata and Pancho Villa, of banditos and manana, of mere tortillas and tequila. Contemporary Mexico is a land in a hurry. It is a modern, hospitable, dynamic country with a definite purpose and direction. It is a people alive with dreams and brimming with the energy and determination to achieve them.

We have enjoyed diplomatic relations with Mexico for three decades. Yet, it is only very recently that we have really come to know Mexico, and realize how much we have in common with that country. For years there has been scarcely a world issue of any consequence on which Mexico and Canada, as nations of intermediate size, power and wealth, have not made common cause. We have taken similar stances on a multiplicity of issues relating to international affairs, and we have had to solve a number of similar social, economic and cultural problems. All this should have brought us closer together a long time ago, but it did not.

Up until a few years ago we were strangers on the same continent—ignorant of one another as nations and artificially separated by our mutual obsessive preoccupation with the United States of America. But times have changed. And in the past few years Canadian relations with Mexico have expanded rapidly on all fronts—political, economic, cultural and commercial. The visit two years ago of Mexico's President Echeverria to Canada resulted in our entering into important bilateral agreements which gave rise to projects and programs which are proving to be beneficial to both nations.

In the past few years, there have been trade missions to Mexico led by cabinet ministers, Canada-Mexico ministerial committees and bilateral businessmen's committee meetings. These have resulted in highly significant new business operations and have served to further strengthen and extend the network of consultation and cooperation between both governments and both private sectors.

Today, Mexico is Canada's most important diversified trading partner in Latin America. Trade between our two countries is running at somewhere between \$300 million and \$350 million a year. Each of our countries produces a good number of items of which the other is badly in need. For example, if we have fresh tomatoes and strawberries in January, it is thanks to Mexico. On the other hand, if they have paper on which to print their daily newspapers, in large measure it is thanks to us.

As our commercial contacts with Mexico grow, we find more and more new products in which to trade. And the new Canadian tariff preferences for developing countries are serving to further stimulate trade and help restore some of the balance. The balance still favours us quite