

to participate in the work of certain inter-American organizations dealing with technical matters which are of interest to us. The government--and I am sure all hon. members--feel that whatever our formal relationship may be with any particular inter-American agency we should broaden and deepen our association with the Latin republics of this hemisphere, and that such a process will be of great material advantage to our economic and political development.

The Pacific Area

If I may, I should like to take a long jump across the Pacific and say a few words about the situation in the Far East. Because of the historical and continuing intermingling of the North American and western European societies there has been a natural tendency for Canada to be particularly preoccupied with finding solutions to the critical economic, political and security problems with which the destruction of the second world war confronted the European and north Atlantic communities. We have made some progress in dealing with these problems. Meanwhile, on the other side of our country scant progress has been made in coping with the great post-war problems of the Pacific area.

Failure to reach an agreement on procedure for drawing up the Japanese peace treaty is merely one indication of the underlying tensions in East Asia today. Unloosed amid the social and political turmoil and economic dislocation attending the collapse of Japanese power on the continent of Asia, communist forces have overrun virtually all of northeast Asia, that part nearest to Canada. They menace now the United Nations sponsored government in south Korea. They have seized the greater part of China. Farther to the south in the countries of southeast Asia the situation is even more confused. There the communists have tried to ride to power on the nationalist movements which have been struggling for independence from colonial powers, all of which have been prepared in varying degree to assist the indigenous populations to secure that independence. Unless the great political problems of this area are resolved there can be no real peace and stability in Asia. Without such stability there can be no economic reconstruction and development, to give the 750 million people of this area a better way of living, which would contribute so largely to an expansion of international commerce and the preservation of world peace.

Canada, a country which borders on the Pacific ocean, would be foolish to try to isolate itself from the political and economic problems of Asia. That continent is now close to us. The vast expanses of the Pacific have shrunk as the result of air transport. You can now travel from Vancouver to Tokyo and Hong Kong by air in less time than it takes to travel from Vancouver to Ottawa by rail. Edmonton and Vancouver now rival San Francisco as North American air gateways to Asia. In fact in this air age the Far East is neither far nor east. Therefore Canadians must learn to look, as they are of course learning to look, northwest to Asia. I think that the economic development in western Canada would certainly be greatly stimulated by the restoration and development of trans-pacific trade. That trade will increase proportionately with the rise in the standard of living in the countries of the Far East, which cannot take place under disturbed and confused international political conditions.

In the Pacific, then, serious problems continue to exist, and I should like to mention just one or two of them in detail. First, the Japanese peace treaty; a peace treaty with Japan will not of course automatically adjust Japanese relations with its Pacific neighbours. It will, in fact, at the beginning introduce new and uncertain factors into far eastern international relations. Nevertheless the absence of such a treaty is one of the causes of uncertainty in the Far East. Much as the United States occupation of Japan has done for that country, I myself am inclined to think that military occupations as a rule quickly reach a point of diminishing returns, and if suitable arrangements can be made should be terminated as quickly as possible.

The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), then Secretary of State for External Affairs, stated in this house on December 19, 1947, and again on April 13, 1948, the views of the Canadian government in respect of the procedure that should be followed in negotiating a peace treaty with Japan. Our views remain