

was little better than that of a colony. To have invited Canada to join the Union at any time before 1919 would have been tantamount to giving Great Britain a voice in the councils of the American republics.

But this is no longer the case. Canada is now an independent State in full control of her foreign policy. It was therefore with some surprise that, in December, 1942, Canadians read the instructions that had been issued, in 1928, by the United States to its delegates at the Havana Conference. These instructions refer to the possibility of Canada being proposed as a member of the Union. In that event, the United States delegation was to be "guided by the oral instructions given by the Secretary of State." What these oral instructions were the published document does not say; but it is clear from the context that they were to oppose Canadian membership. "If", the written instructions say, "colonies, possessions or dominions, whose foreign relations are controlled by European States, were represented in these conferences, the influences and policies of European powers would be injected into the discussion and disposition of questions affecting the political entities of this hemisphere. Whatever value such conferences would have, it would not be that attaching to a conference distinctly American."

However extraordinary this attitude may appear to Canadians, there is no public evidence that the State Department has changed its views even now. It is perhaps in the light of the United States instructions of 1928 that we must read the statement of the Canadian Prime Minister in the House of Commons on August 1, 1942, when he said that reasons had been given to the government "why it would not be advisable to have an invitation extended." The Prime Minister then went on to say: "During this period of war, there are special reasons why the South American republics and the United States might wish to discuss certain economic and other problems without having representation present from any member of the British Commonwealth of Nations...it is not simply a matter of relations between Canada and other countries on this continent."

In public discussion of the question, certain reasons have been suggested why it would not be in Canada's interest to join the Union. The most important of these refer (a) to Canada's membership in the British Commonwealth of Nations, (b) to our special relationship to the United States, (c) to our form of government, and (d) to the alleged isolationist character of the Union of American States.

The first objection made is that membership in the Union would be incompatible with Canadian membership in the British Commonwealth. This objection is usually met by the assertion that there is no incompatibility whatsoever between membership in the two organizations. Both the British Commonwealth and the Union of American States are associations of free nations. Membership in the Union, as it is now organized at least, would not put Canada under any obligation to accept commitments that might be prejudicial to the interests of the Commonwealth. On the contrary, if Canada were a member of the Union, she could use her influence to prevent the other American countries from moving in directions that were inimical to the interests of the Commonwealth.

The second objection is based on the thought that Canada might find herself lined up with the Latin American republics in opposition to the United States on some important question of policy. It is suggested that this might interfere with traditional friendly relations with that country. This view is met by a statement that Canada can hardly be expected to always agree with the United States; and it might happen that the Canadian point of view will be the same as that of the Latin American republics. But that is not held to be a sufficient reason why Canada should deny itself the right to