

CANADA'S RELATIONS WITH GABON

The following statement by the Prime Minister was issued on March 4:

The Ambassador of Canada in Washington has delivered to the Ambassador of Gabon a note protesting the fact that the Gabonese Government acted in a manner incompatible with international law and the maintenance of close and friendly relations between our two countries in connection with the Libreville meeting of February 5 to 10. In the... note, the Canadian Government expresses its hope that the Gabonese Government will reconsider its attitude, but states that in the present circumstances the Canadian Ambassador designated to Gabon will not proceed with the presentation of his credentials.

The Canadian Government also regrets that, on the occasion of the Libreville meeting, it was not possible to reach agreement between the federal and Quebec governments on sending a Canadian delegation to that meeting.

Quebec, as a "Francophone" province having exclusive domestic jurisdiction over education, was clearly and particularly interested in the matters to be discussed at this conference. The Federal Government was prepared to make appropriate arrangements to ensure the fullest representation of provincial and

"Francophone" interests on a Canadian delegation, and our willingness to do so was made clear on more than one occasion to the Quebec authorities and to the countries involved in organizing the conference. Indeed it was suggested that the Quebec Minister of Education could head a Canadian delegation. It was also made clear to all concerned, however, that the Canadian Government was the only authorized spokesman of all Canadians at the international level, and the only one entitled to receive such an invitation.

The policy of the Canadian Government to develop agreed procedures for provincial participation as a part of Canadian delegations to international meetings of interest to the provinces, is explained in detail in a document submitted to the recent Constitutional Conference entitled *Federalism and International Relations*. The document also contains proposals for strengthening existing mechanisms for facilitating provincial participation in such meetings. In view of these proposals and the statements of the government of Quebec at the Constitutional Conference and elsewhere that it is their desire to discuss these and related matters with the Federal Government, it is my hope that Quebec will agree that there should be such discussions before decisions are taken in this field.

CANADIANS PLAN BRAZIL AIRPORT

A team of Canadian consultants has been chosen by the Brazilian Government to plan South America's first international airport for "jumbo" and supersonic jets. The group, headed by Acres International Limited and John B. Parkin Associates, both of Toronto, was chosen over strong international competition, including seven firms from the United States, Europe and Canada. Hidroservice, a large Brazilian consulting firm, will work closely with Acres-Parkin.

Brazil's five-man co-ordinating committee for the airport project will now negotiate a contract with Acres-Parkin for the first phase of a \$1.2-million technical and economic study. The design stage, phase two, is estimated at \$8 to \$10 million, and construction, phase three, is estimated at \$100 million.

R. Dixon Spears of Canada Limited, aviation consultants, of Montreal, will assist in the project. The technical resources of the Department of Transport and Air Canada will also be available.

EFFORTS REWARDED

The choice of Acres-Parkin is the result of sustained effort over a period of many months, Trade and Commerce Minister Robert Winters stated. Last summer, the Department of Trade and Commerce sponsored an Airport Export Committee Mission to Brazil to present Canadian capabilities in airport

development. Subsequently, two Brazilian delegations visited Canada to inspect Canadian facilities. [See *Canadian Weekly Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 45, Nov. 8, 1967, P. 6].

Mr. Winters said that the Acres-Parkin success demonstrated the scope of results possible through the combination of private enterprise initiative and Government support. "This co-operative spirit is the key to exporting Canadian professional services and know-how," he declared. Mr. Winters commended the assistance received from the Department of Transport and Air Canada.

MONETARY FUND WITHDRAWAL

Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Minister of Finance, has announced that Canada has taken steps to draw the equivalent of \$426 million (U.S.) from the International Monetary Fund.

This amount includes \$241 million (U.S.) which represents Canada's creditor position in the International Monetary Fund. These funds have been regarded as equivalent to exchange reserves. The drawing also includes \$185 million (U.S.), equivalent in value to Canada's contribution of gold to the International Monetary Fund.

The drawing leaves unimpaired Canada's normal rights to secure credit from the Fund equivalent to Canada's quota of \$740 million (U.S.).