

and, possibly, much to lose by joining the OAS. After all, being members of the United Nations and NATO, it would appear that in these we can cover matters of prime political concern as affecting ourselves and South America. I do not believe that Canada's trade with Latin America will be prejudiced by not joining the OAS, since it is my impression that those countries are inclined to deal with the country which will make the better deal or a more convenient deal, such as on a barter basis; nor do I think our trade will be increased by joining.

C. LANGILLE
for Ambassador

1098.

DEA/2226-40

L'ambassadeur au Mexique au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Ambassador in Mexico to Secretary of State for External Affairs

DESPATCH 569

Mexico, December 17, 1953

CONFIDENTIAL

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Reference: My Telegram No. 9 of November 27th.†

There is still little indication of public interest here in the Tenth Annual Conference to be held at Caracas next March. The agenda of the conference, which became publicly available at the end of October, was published in full by the leading newspapers. Very little was written about it editorially.

2. The air telegram under reference was sent because we are now within less than three months of the opening of the meeting in Caracas and, as yet, we have no indication of the final decision on the question of Canada's acceptance or non-acceptance of the status of observer, nor have we been asked to make any sounding about the Mexican reaction to this invitation.

3. In the absence of any knowledge of Canada's intention, room is naturally left for speculations. For example, there was published here on November 29th a dispatch from the United Press which includes the rather misleading remark that "it is understood that the present Canadian government prefers closer ties with the Commonwealth to a direct political association with the American republics within the inter-American regional system". I attach a translation of the item in case you have not seen it.†

4. I do not intend to go into the merits of our association with the OAS in this despatch. There is one point, however, which I feel compelled to make: it would be a serious mistake to turn down an invitation for observer status sponsored by Washington for reasons which date from pre-war days. The world, as well as Canada's and Latin America's positions therein, has changed so much during the last two decades or so that what may have been valid at that time may no longer hold good to-day. United States policy towards Latin America is more cooperative and flexible, thus reducing the possibilities of friction; our trade has increased more than