

The third consideration relates to the advantages of working as closely as possible with Latin American countries in order better to bring their policies in line with our own at the United Nations. The Latin American countries are becoming more and more aggressive and more and more independent of United States leadership at the United Nations. This trend will probably continue to develop and the only way it can be checked is to create an understanding in as many spheres as possible between their interests and ours. While there might not be much direct discussion of United Nations problems during meetings of the OAS, there are nevertheless certain issues which are closely related and those issues are discussed often by men, particularly government officials, who also represent their country at the United Nations. Never before have we had so close contacts with Latin American representatives as we are maintaining in New York. These contacts should even be more intimate than they are now. They would become easier if they were intensified by our association with the work of the OAS.

Fourthly, we often use the argument that it is better for us not to join the OAS because, were we to join, the Latin Americans would then realize that our connections with the United States are of such a nature that we could never take a different line from that adopted by Washington. This theory is not particularly applicable to the OAS and there is no more danger of such a situation developing there than there is in NATO or in the United Nations. Our relations with the United States are of such an intimate nature that they will always influence profoundly our relations with any other country or alliance.

It may be that because of the reasons mentioned above there should be a change of emphasis, if not of policy, in the way we envisage our relations with the OAS. I suggest that we might be more forthcoming than before in our approach to that problem. I see, for example, that in the last Circular Despatch sent to our Missions in Latin America on this subject, it is said that "you will appreciate that discussion of the question at this stage with officials of the OAS or any governments that are members of the Organization would not be desirable since it might well lead to additional pressure for us to send observers to the 1953 Conference before the Canadian Government has had an opportunity to formulate views on the matter". As a result our Heads of Missions make it a point not to mention the problem. This is rather unhealthy since it could very well convey the impression generally that we are ignoring the OAS altogether. Either the Latin American countries take the OAS seriously and then they feel slighted by such an attitude or they don't and then there would be no discomfort to discuss it.

From what I have heard, the issue is not very much alive; this is a further reason why we might be more forthcoming than before if and when it is raised. We need not give the impression that we are begging for an invitation but we could give the impression that were it to come it would be seriously considered bearing in mind our other commitments and interests.

This is suggested mainly because there is always a danger that too negative an approach is harmful to the sort of cooperation we want to develop with Latin American countries individually. We might have reached the stage where we could allow our Heads of Missions and the Department more freely to discuss the matter