

The achievement of independence by Jamaica and by Trinidad and Tobago is an event of special significance and interest for Canada because of our Commonwealth association and historic ties which have existed for centuries between Canadians and the people of the West Indies. I am confident that these good neighbours of ours - the first new members from the Western Hemisphere - have a valuable contribution to make to the United Nations.

Last year when I spoke in the general debate, the United Nations was facing many grave issues, some of which threatened its survival. The atmosphere in the Assembly was one of tension and anxiety. The future was uncertain. The events of the past twelve months have not dispelled all the difficulties; but neither have they fulfilled the pessimistic prophecies of a year ago. In fact there have been some gains in the complex international endeavour to strengthen the cause of peace.

LAOS

For example, at the beginning of 1962, the situation in Laos seemed far from settled. By July however, international agreements providing for a unified, independent and neutral Laos had been signed in Geneva by the fourteen nations attending the conference. They included governments which did not recognize each other but which shared a common determination to face reality and find a solution. The result was a positive step toward peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

Canada was one of the signatories of the Laos Agreements and as a member of the International Commission charged with the task of seeing that the agreements are carried out, will fulfill its responsibilities with fairness and diligence. I emphasize however that ultimate success will depend on the continuing