

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Canadian Government's intention of placing greater emphasis on relations with Latin America and the Caribbean was implemented in April 1977 when Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson announced the creation of the Bureau of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs. Relations with the two regions, previously administered within the former Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs with U.S.-Canada relations, are now to enjoy added emphasis as a result of the formation of the new office.

Latin America

During 1977, the Canadian Government continued to pursue its policy of furthering the development of relations with the countries and institutions of Latin America. Some significant results were registered, most notably in expanding trade and economic relations, in co-operation for development, and in increasing consultation on a variety of political and other matters.

Since the early 1970s, Canadian trade with Latin America has increased steadily, with exports reaching \$1.6 billion in 1977 compared to \$1.48 billion in 1976. In this period, Canada has also, through the Canadian International Development Agency, extended substantial bilateral development assistance to the countries of the region, especially the poorer ones, to help them achieve their social and economic aims. The program continued to expand during 1977 as CIDA devoted a larger part of its global resources to Latin America. CIDA also participated in multilateral regional projects with a variety of inter-American institutions.

In January Mr Jamieson visited Brazil, Peru and Colombia to further Canada's relations in the region following the 1976 visit of Prime Minister Trudeau to Mexico, Cuba and Venezuela. In April, Mr Jamieson made a visit to Mexico, while the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce visited Venezuela, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr MacEachen, went to Venezuela and the Minister of Fisheries and Environment, Mr Leblanc, visited Cuba. These and other visits were manifestations of, and provided further impetus to, the development of Canada's growing links within the hemisphere.

The Latin American tour of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, which performed before packed houses in Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Mexico, demonstrated Canadian achievement in another field.

In addition, throughout 1977 Canada remained abreast of human rights developments in a number of Latin American countries. Canadian officials emphasized the importance Canada attached to the improvement of human rights everywhere by speaking out on the question in various international forums and by making representations to specific countries when such action seemed warranted.