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LATIN AMERICA

In pursuance of the Government's announced policy of further improving the good relations which exist between Canada and the Latin American nations, the Prime Minister became in 1960 the first Canadian Head of Government to visit a Latin American country. Accompanied by Mrs. Diefenbaker, he paid a state visit to Mexico from April 21 to 24 as guest of President Lopez Mateos who six months earlier had been the first Mexican Head of State to visit Canada. During his visit to Mexico the Prime Minister was admitted to membership in the 200-year-old *Ilustre Y Nacional Colegio de Abogados*, the first non-Mexican ever granted this distinction.

Another official visit to Mexico took place in September, when Mr. Pierre Sévigny, Associate Minister of the Department of National Defence, represented Canada at the ceremonies marking the 150th anniversary of Mexican independence, September 12-17.

In May the Secretary of State for External Affairs was Canada's official representative at the celebrations in Buenos Aires commemorating Argentina's 150th anniversary. He afterwards spent a few days in Chile and Peru, with brief stopovers *en route* in Brazil and Mexico. As he later informed the House of Commons, in all these countries he found great friendliness and much interest in Canada. While in Buenos Aires, the Minister invited President Frondizi of Argentina to visit Canada.

Mr. Green arrived in Santiago shortly after the disastrous earthquakes which struck the southern part of Chile. He obtained from official Chilean sources an assessment of the damage, and, on the basis of this information, the Canadian Government forthwith took steps to aid the distressed country. A gift of 9,832 tons of flour and 1,000,000 pounds of canned meat was sent to Chile. In addition, approximately \$25,000 for medical and other supplies was donated from the International Relief Fund, which is administered by the Canadian Red Cross in consultation with the Department of External Affairs. Five RCAF "North Star" aircraft were quickly put into operation in carrying medical and food supplies, together with field-hospital equipment, and a total of 46,300 pounds of freight were transported to Chile in this way by June 3. Following their arrival in Chile, the RCAF planes operated a shuttle service to the stricken areas. President Allensandri of Chile afterwards wrote to the Prime Minister expressing the gratitude of the Chilean people for this assistance.

In October Canada became a member of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History. Canada is already a member of the Inter-American Statistical Institute and the Inter-American Radio Office; Canadian observers have also attended meetings of a number of other Inter-American organizations. Furthermore, Mr. Green announced in Parliament in May that the Government planned to send an observer to the next Inter-American Conference to be held in Quito, Ecuador, in the spring of 1961.