



CANADA

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CANADA AND LATIN AMERICA IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Addressing members of the Canadian Inter-American Association in Ottawa on May 31, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, said he had "no doubt whatsoever that membership in the OAS is part of the ultimate destiny of Canada as a country of the Western Hemisphere".

A partial text of Mr. Martin's speech follows:

...Everyone here is, I am sure, well aware of how Canada's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean have so far developed, and what activities are now more or less commonplace. A brief summary of these relations would include the following items:

- (1) Diplomatic relations with all countries in the Hemisphere;
- (2) a significant trade with many of them, and substantial and growing investments;
- (3) development assistance, in the form of loans made through the Inter-American Development Bank, programmes of aid for the Commonwealth Caribbean countries, and export credit financing;
- (4) a common concern with international affairs, in which there is evidence of a fundamental similarity of outlook on most of the basic issues which face the world community;
- (5) increasingly frequent participation in meetings of regional intergovernmental organizations such as the Economic Commission for Latin America, and in conferences of professional, scientific and other learned societies organized on a Hemisphere basis....

I know that interest in the countries of the Americas is quietly growing in Canada - for example, in institutes such as the host organization this

evening, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, and several universities, both French- and English-speaking. With the help of those of us, both Canadians and Latin Americans, who are in a position to increase knowledge and understanding of Latin America in Canada, interest in that part of the world should grow from coast to coast in the years ahead and, I should expect, will significantly increase in the immediate future....

CANADA AND THE OAS

First, a word about the question of Canada joining the OAS. The fact that the Canadian Government has not yet decided to apply for membership in the OAS may be puzzling to some interested observers in Latin America. I should, nevertheless, hope that our attitude may meet with a large measure of understanding on the part of our Latin American friends, and that they will pay attention to what we are doing and seek to do, even if it falls short of applying for membership in the OAS at present.

It goes without saying that we in Canada are impressed by the constructive manner in which the OAS and its agencies are addressing themselves to the basic issues which confront Latin American countries at this time. I should like to suggest to you that, just as we in Canada respect the OAS, so the Canadian attitude toward the OAS is deserving of respect. It is by no means a negative attitude, for we are, in fact, co-operating with OAS agencies in a number of ways.