

I might say that the formal approval of His Majesty the King is necessary before a step of the kind is taken. That approval has been obtained, and the governments of the Argentine and Brazil have been informed, at our request, by the foreign minister of the United Kingdom through the British ambassadors to those countries, that it is the intention of our government to make the appointments in due course. I should say that both countries intimated to the government some time ago that they would like to be in a position to send ministers to Canada. Each of these governments asked whether we would be prepared not only to receive their ministers but to reciprocate in the matter of making appointments to their respective countries. It is just within the last month or two that it has been possible to give them a definite answer on that point.

My hon. friend has asked me to elaborate. I do not know just what he may have in mind. It may be that he refers to the possibility of trade commissioners being able to perform the duties that ministers might perform; I notice there has been some comment in the press to that effect. I imagine, however, this would not commend itself to my hon. friend. I do not think any country has a finer trade commissioner service than Canada has, and the work that is being done by our trade commissioners in the South American republics is satisfactory in every particular. But as hon. members will realize, representatives of the Department of Trade and Commerce as such have not immediate access to foreign governments. In many countries to-day, in order that the ministry may be approached by a representative of another country, that representative must have ministerial standing. Hon. members also are aware that at the present time matters of trade are becoming largely controlled by governments themselves, by means of quotas, prohibitions and restrictions of various kinds, so that it is becoming imperative to have someone with the authority of a minister to gain the contacts that are necessary with governments on these matters. Perhaps I need only add that the importance of the South American republics, both from the political and the economic point of view, is obvious; and the government feels that it would be in the national interest that we should have this representation at an early date.

2. Lt.-Col. George P. Vanier, Canadian Minister to France, has returned to Canada on leave of absence. Colonel Vanier arrived in Canada early in October.

3. Mr. Jean Desy, Canadian Minister to Belgium and the Netherlands, who has returned to Canada on leave, and Mr. Paul Renaud, of the Canadian Legation in Brussels arrived in Canada in the first week of November.