

United Nations

I would be wrong if I did not draw special attention to the close co-operation which has existed between Canada and Latin American states at the United Nations and in other international bodies. Latin American statesmen have played outstanding roles in many of the United Nations organs. The names of Galo Plaza of Ecuador, Padilla Nervo of Mexico, Sosa Rodrigues of Venezuela (the current President of the General Assembly), Victor Belaunde of Peru, José Figueres of Costa Rica, Raul Prebisch of Argentina (the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development) and many others are known throughout the diplomatic world for statesmanship and forthright idealism.

Brazil has made a very significant contribution to the work of the UN Force in Gaza, where General Chaves of Brazil, who has unfortunately just fallen ill, has been the Commander. Brazil has also taken part in the Congo Force. Argentina and Ecuador participated in the Congo and Argentina, Chile and Ecuador in the Lebanon operation. Colombia participated in the UN action in Korea.

On many other issues at the United Nations Canada and Latin American countries have worked closely together. It would not, I think, be wrong to say there have been times when Canada was regarded as an honorary member of the Latin American caucus. We share a history with these countries which links the Old and the New Worlds in a way which has often resulted in opportunity for useful initiatives.

Commonwealth Caribbean

To round out the picture of Canada's role in hemispheric affairs, something should be said of our association with the Commonwealth countries and territories of the Caribbean. Historically Canada has been closely associated with what was formerly referred to as the British West Indies. We have had special preferential trading arrangements and close educational links with Jamaica and Trinidad. These countries have now emerged as sovereign states and are members of the United Nations. Other territories, such as British Guiana, are approaching independence. The Honourable Milton F. Gregg was recently appointed Canada's Commissioner in British Guiana. It is natural and appropriate, therefore, that we have made a special effort to extend both technical and capital assistance to the independent Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean and to those which are moving towards independence.

Entry into the OAS

On the fundamental question of the membership of Canada in the Organization of American States my own views are well known. There are, of course, many factors that have to be examined closely in reaching a decision on such an important matter. Among these is the curious situation that the OAS does not at present have any established and agreed procedure for the admission of new members.