

Team Canada Makes Headlines — Continued from page 1

"These missions show Canadians just how well this country can function when we all pull together in the same direction. To our hosts, they represent something concrete in the way of solid partnerships," he explained.

Mr. Marchi also stressed the federal government's intention to form lasting trade relations with our Latin American partners. "Latin America has begun to captivate the imagination of our business people. The government wishes to help them get even more involved and is using the next Team Canada mission and follow-up team in the four countries visited to do so." While visiting the Lester B. Pearson Building, the journalists also met with senior officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, including Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Donald Campbell.

Canada's commitment: free trade for the Americas

During their visit to Ottawa, the journalists were introduced to Canadian economics, history and politics with the assistance of the Conference Board of Canada, the Canadian Council of Business Leaders, the Bank of Canada and the Privy Council Office. The activities culminated in a meeting with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

Mr. Chrétien took the opportunity to affirm the Canadian government's determination to press on toward the removal of obstacles to the movement of capital and goods into the countries of Latin America.

"Canada is an integral part of the Americas," said Mr. Chrétien. "The

agreements signed with Mexico and Chile clearly illustrate our desire to become involved in this part of the world. Right now we are working on forming closer ties with the MERCOSUR countries."

Canada already has productive relations with the MERCOSUR group. Canadian exports to this part of the world annually total \$1.5 billion, while our investments are \$6 billion.

During the meeting, Mr. Chrétien



Prime Minister Chrétien meets with eight Latin American journalists on their visit to Canada

also expressed Canada's desire to join with its Southern partners to create a framework for trade within the Americas. "Canada is confident about the creation of a hemispherical free trade zone. However, we also have to consider the special needs of the smaller members, by adopting an approach suited to their interests in the negotiations."

This meeting with the Prime Minister has already resulted in articles in four Latin American dailies.

The attraction for Latin America

The journalists continued their Canadian visit in Montreal, where they met with leaders of Canada's main telecommunications companies, Bell Canada International, Telesystem

and Teleglobe; later, in Toronto, they met with Royal Bank executives.

Mr. Derek Burney, Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Bell Canada International, aptly summarized the interest of Canadian companies in the Latin American market: "We are looking at these markets mainly because of the potential offered by this part of the world," he said. "Of course there are risks, but by affiliating with reliable local partners we will achieve our objectives."

This attraction for Latin America is what most Canadians invited to meet the journalists had in common, regardless of the activity sector in which they were involved.

Also on the program for the journalists were visits to, among others, le Cirque du Soleil, Montreal; the University of Sherbrooke;

Nova Gas International, Calgary; Innova Technologies Corporation, Toronto; and Nortel, Brampton; as well as meetings with various Canadian journalists and the governments of Ontario and Quebec.

The Canadian mission — the stage is set

The Latin American journalists who visited Canada are doubtless taking advantage of Team Canada's visit to their countries to consolidate the relations formed here in December.

In addition the *Buenos Aires Herald*, Argentina's only English-language daily, is publishing a feature on Canada during the mission.

Without a doubt, Canada is making the headlines.