

"Valais House" or find representatives of a German land or Mexican state in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver. There have, however, been delegations from Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes in London for many years. There are provincial representatives in New York and many other American cities. Quebec also has a delegation-general in Paris, and another in Milan; and this list is by no means exhaustive. Some of these provincial delegations abroad have been in existence for many years, and their existence has never posed any problems or caused the Federal Government to object. Yet they concern themselves with a host of matters that could be considered rather directly connected with international relations. Anything, in fact, can be considered as coming under the heading of international politics and anything can, moreover, change its nature under certain conditions and become highly political. That is why, for example, commercial or cultural relations with a friendly country are not in themselves political matters. But if the same type of relations are established with other countries, the case may be quite different. Recall, if you will, the uproar caused by the sale of trucks to Cuba by France and Britain a few years ago. Imagine the reaction in certain countries if Canada or one of its provinces decided to negotiate a cultural agreement with Communist China. In any case, these provincial houses or delegations in other countries have concerned themselves for years with tourism, immigration, trade, teacher exchanges, investment, etc. - all matters that may serve the interests of the provinces concerned and come within provincial jurisdiction.

No problems arose, since these provincial delegations did not claim to be embassies or consulates. These provinces were successfully engaged in promoting their own special interests. The Federal Government has encouraged, and continues to encourage, the international activities undertaken by the provinces to promote their own interests in matters within their jurisdiction. This is a reasonable approach; yet very few federal countries allow such freedom of action on the international scene to their provinces. Such an arrangement does not and should not create any conflict between the Federal Government and the provincial governments as long as both respect the basic principle that, on the international plane, there is only one Canada. Basically, what this means in practice is that only representatives of the central government may represent the country in its dealings with other countries or on international organizations and that only the representatives of the central government may sign international agreements. Essentially, this is all a question of procedure, and heaven knows how important procedure is in diplomacy.

In substance, Quebec loses nothing in respecting this procedure; on the contrary, it is in Quebec's interest to play a role both on the world scene and in Canada - to play its part in the French-speaking community of the world, benefiting from the cultural enrichment which it may derive from exchanges, and also to play its part in the national life of Canada. There would, of course, be a conflict between these two aims if the Federal Government opposed the movement toward closer relations with the French-speaking community. But the fact is that Canada is becoming bilingual; it is opening its doors to French culture. Quebec was isolated for many years. This is no longer true. From now on other provinces are going to be bilingual and therefore increasingly interested in the French-speaking world, as has been the case for some time now with the governments at Ottawa and Quebec. What was once a dream can now become a reality. It is this