

*External Affairs*

the American nations organization, more often called the Pan-American Union, and our representation abroad.

May I be permitted first to congratulate the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) upon the manner in which he performed his task during his recent trip around the world. We can expect that from now on the voice of Canada will be particularly heeded in the international sphere; this will give more importance to our country which, moreover, seems called upon to bridge the gap between nations of greater importance which are proportionately farther apart on account of various ideological, racial, economical and historical factors. Thus is verified in the international field the truth of the popular maxim: "We often require the help of one smaller than ourselves." I see in that fact a wonderful opportunity for Canada to win the friendship of a number of nations in such a way as to get help in various fields, since isolationism is out of place in the present world.

Caracas, in Venezuela, was recently the site of an important Pan-American conference, but unfortunately Canada as usual was conspicuous by its absence. Our country has repeatedly been invited to send representatives to the Pan-American Union which includes every American country but ours. Canada sent observers to some of the conferences held by this organization, which at least augured well for the future. But, at this last conference, Canada was completely conspicuous by its absence, which is to be regretted, for, as an American country, Canada should first of all, in my opinion, study the problems facing the continent to which it belongs. Peace, good will and the struggle against communism, all matters which concern us and to which we devote our efforts and sacrifices, should in my opinion be of primary interest to us in relation to the continent where we live and of which our country is a part, whether we like it or not.

As far as I know, only one Canadian attended the Pan-American conference in an unofficial capacity; without an official mandate he could not speak for Canada, although, at Caracas, our voice would have been listened to even more than that of our immediate neighbour, for the good reason that no friction ever arose between our country and any of the Latin American countries.

On the occasion of the Caracas conference, the countries of America, anxious to share in the betterment of their own populations, decided to create an institute for inter-American economic co-operation, and asked three universities—two of which are Cana-

dian, namely Laval University of Quebec, and St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish—to send delegates among whom would be chosen the director of this institute. They have thus recognized the magnificent achievements of the co-operative movement in Canada, as well as the important place we have acquired in the eyes of our continental neighbours, and have shown by the same token the services which our country could render its neighbours by taking an active part in the Pan-American Union.

Last year, a group of Canadian businessmen, headed by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe), visited certain South American countries on a commercial and economic mission. Our country needs new markets and it would seem that we have interest in making bids for the markets of several countries at the same time. The Canadian mission did not fail to see the numerous possibilities for trade with these various countries with which we do not have enough relations.

By becoming a member of the Pan-American Union, I am confident that Canada, while making an act of faith in pan-Americanism, would consolidate and improve her foreign trade. I would also see in such a move a means of helping countries that seek our friendship, which would also benefit Canada herself. Moreover, all those Latin American countries have a culture similar to that of the French-speaking element of Canada. Since French culture has been and continues to be an asset to our country, I do not see why it could not be permitted to make its influence felt more fully abroad, which would tend to enhance still more the prestige of our bilingual and bi-racial nation.

If Canada deems it advisable to subscribe to the United Nations, to the Atlantic treaty and to many other international organizations whose aim is to maintain peace in the world, which is also Canada's concern; if, on the other hand, Canada thinks it advisable to have ambassadors in most American countries, then, I fail to see why our country would stand aloof any longer from the Pan-American Union, in which we are immediately interested and in which Canada, being both an important country and an American country, could play a very important part. As far as I am concerned, I will be doubly proud the day Canada joins the Pan-American Union, because we will then have paid more attention to problems in which we are interested from every point of view, to the problems of a continent of which our country is a part.