

fortunes of war might result in a transfer of sovereignty over some American colony of a non-American power to another non-American power. If this happened, a new consultative meeting was to be convoked immediately. It is obvious that what the American foreign ministers were really afraid of was that Germany, which possessed no colonies in America, might acquire a base for propaganda and eventual military activities.

On the economic front, the most important act of the meeting was the adoption of a resolution to the effect that every effort should be made to make Latin America less dependent on Europe by encouraging inter-American trade. The same resolution established the Inter-American Financial and Economic Advisory Committee.

HAVANA MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS (1940)

The Second Consultative Meeting took place at Havana in July 1940. This meeting was precipitated by the sudden change in the character of the war and the German sweep across Western Europe. In the weeks that followed the capitulation of France, even the Western Hemisphere no longer seemed safe from Nazi-fascist aggression. In these circumstances comparatively little was heard of a neutrality that was fast becoming academic. The primary concern of the foreign ministers was now the defence of the hemisphere.

In a resolution on Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for the Defence of the Americas, it was agreed that "any attempt on the part of a non-American State against the integrity or inviolability of the territory, the sovereignty or the political independence of an American State shall be considered as an act of aggression against the States which sign this declaration." This was fighting talk and perhaps the most important declaration ever made at a Pan American conference. Less than 18 months later the American republics were to be given an opportunity to show what they would do to implement it. We will discuss what they did do directly.

In the meantime, something must be said about the relationship of Canada to the developing system of inter-American defense. In the first place, it may be noted that the resolution was drawn up in the most general terms possible. While Canada was not specifically mentioned, there is reason to believe that she was covered by the resolution. Canada was, at that time, the only American State at war with the Axis powers. She was therefore a more likely object of attack than any other American State.

It would have been ridiculous under the circumstances to have excluded the possibility of an Axis attack on the Americas through the St. Lawrence valley. The use of the word "State" rather than "republic" in the resolution was therefore probably intentional. It can hardly be a coincidence, moreover, that less than three weeks later, the United States and Canada entered into the so-called Ogdensburg Pact which set up the Permanent Joint Board on Defence which, according to the joint declaration issued by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister King, was, amongst other things, to "consider in the broad sense the defence of the north half of the Western Hemisphere."

In some respects this was one of the most important events in the history of Canada's foreign relations. Not only did it put our relations with the United States on an entirely new basis; it