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*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
à l'ambassadeur aux États-Unis*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Ambassador in United States*

TELEGRAM EX-2073

Ottawa, November 16, 1954

CONFIDENTIAL

Reference: Your WA-1939 November 11.

Repeat Brazil No. 105

RIO ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

Clearly our position at the Rio meeting is not going to be an easy one.

2. On the one hand we are naturally not anxious to be manoeuvred into the position of having to take sides in the controversies which may develop between the United States and Latin American delegations. Neither would we be willing to subscribe to a regional approach to some of the subjects on the agenda in the unlikely event that the United States and the Latin American countries might agree on such an approach. Moreover we would not wish our conduct in Rio to give rise to a possibly misleading impression concerning the prospects for future Canadian participation in the OAS. In short, we think that we should not play an active or vocal role in the Conference.

3. On the other hand we would not want to seem unappreciative of the action of the members of OAS in inviting us to be present at this particular economic conference. We are also conscious of the fact (as no doubt the United States is) that this meeting may be a critical one in terms of future relations between the U.S. and Latin America. Only the Soviet Bloc (and possibly Argentina) would welcome, or profit by, any deterioration in relations resulting from deep differences over economic issues at this meeting. For reasons such as these we are concerned that our part in the conference should not be unhelpful.

4. On balance our conclusion is that it would be wise for our observer to be relatively passive, although we would not expect him to refrain from providing information which might be relevant to the discussions and which he might consider to be useful. The brief which is being sent to Mr. Pierce would seem to contain most of the information which it would be appropriate for him to supply. We are also letting him have our comments on the various items on the agenda for his information and judicious use.

5. We should be grateful if you would explain the situation again to the State Department and thank them for their cooperation. We would hope that they would understand our reasons for taking this position and would agree that such an attitude on our part is likely to be in the best interests of all concerned.