

CABINET VISIT TO LATIN AMERICA

Five Cabinet Ministers are at present on an official visit to Latin America.

The mission, which will return to Ottawa on November 27, is visiting Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Guatemala and Costa Rica. Its members are Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Mr. J.J. Greene, Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Mr. Gérard Pelletier, Secretary of State, and Mr. Otto Lang, Minister without Portfolio with special responsibilities in the field of industry, trade and commerce. The five ministers were chosen to represent the broad range of Canadian interests in Latin America.

Prime Minister Trudeau, in announcing the mission to the House of Commons recently said: "...The Government regards our relations with the countries of this Hemisphere as a matter of high priority. The mission, which will shortly visit nine countries of Latin America, should be viewed not only as an indication of our desire to strengthen our bilateral relations with those countries but also as a clear demonstration of the importance we attach to our relations with all our neighbours and with the Hemisphere as a whole.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

"The ministerial group will be equipped to pursue all important aspects of our relations with Latin

American countries - political and cultural as well as economic and commercial. It will enable ministers to have direct talks with Latin American leaders and it will give them an opportunity to see at first hand something of what is happening in those countries. Ministers will make a voyage of exploration during which they will not only make Canada better known but during which, I hope, they will also lay the groundwork for better understanding of Latin America on the part of Canadians. Perhaps, most important, the experience gained will be invaluable in assisting the Government to determine what new avenues may now be opening up for closer relations with Latin American countries, both bilaterally and with respect to our common interest in the world at large.

"The work of the mission is part of a review of Canadian policy toward Latin America which is already under way. I am confident that this review will demonstrate that there is real scope for strengthening Canada's relations with Latin America to the mutual advantage of both. The ministerial mission...will help the Government to determine what the real possibilities are and how best to proceed."

The group includes senior officials of the Department of External Affairs; the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, the Department of the Secretary of State, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Export Credits Insurance Corporation, the Canada Council, the National Gallery of Canada, the National Film Board, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

SEAWAY IMPROVEMENT TESTS

Hydraulic engineers at the National Research Council of Canada are co-operating with Department of Transport employees in improving the St. Lawrence River waterway for its future role in shipping.

Investigations of tidal hydraulics are necessary to promote scientific research on tidal phenomena as they affect the waterway. They are necessary also in the study and development of engineering projects that might form part of the Transport Department's plans for river improvement to meet the growing needs of modern shipping and to permit safe, efficient marine traffic.

HUGE TIDAL MODEL

A highlight of these studies is research by the Hydraulics Laboratory of the NRC Division of Mechanical Engineering on a giant tidal model of the stretch of the St. Lawrence from Montreal 350 miles downstream to Father Point, near Rimouski, Quebec.

The model, which is to be housed in a building the length of two city blocks, will be 750 feet long and will measure 75 feet at its widest. Its size will

be such that a staff of five engineers and six technicians will use an electric golf-cart to check measuring instruments located along its entire length.

Experiments are in progress on the first stage of the model (from Montreal to Quebec City) which was begun in 1966 and has been completed. The second stage, representing the stretch from Quebec City to Father Point, is expected to be ready in January, the entire model being operational next July.

Dr. Simon Ince, head of the Hydraulics Laboratory, says the hydraulic resistance of the St. Lawrence River, which has been lessened as a result of many years of dredging to improve the channel from deep water to Montreal, has resulted in a corresponding drop in the water-level of Montreal harbour and the possibility of further dredging of the harbour itself. These factors, with steadily-increasing traffic and a continuing growth in the size of vessels using the St. Lawrence waterway, have created a serious problem for the future, Dr. Ince says.

The tidal model will be used to determine the influence of various changes in the river such as widening and deepening of the channel, building of breakwaters and dredging of shoals.