

PRESS RELEASE



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March 7, 1969

SEMINAR ON CANADA'S RELATIONS
WITH LATIN AMERICA

Attached are a copy of a Press Release issued today in Toronto by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and a copy of the introductory remarks to be made at the seminar by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The conference chairmen, Mr. Gordon Hawkins and Professor Paul Painchaud, together with Mr. Sharp, will be available to the press at the Guild Inn on Saturday, March 8, at 6:00 p.m.

The discussions at the seminar will be based on a series of papers, some written by Government officials and some by private participants in the seminar. These will be available at the same time.

The press will also have an opportunity to speak to any other participants in the seminar who agree to be interviewed.

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 1969

SEMINAR ON CANADA'S RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA - MARCH 7 TO 9, 1969

The C.I.I.A. is continuing its present policy of helping to sponsor a number of discussions, both public and private, on aspects of the foreign policy review currently being carried out by the Canadian Government and people. Mr. Gordon Hawkins, the Executive Director of the C.I.I.A., announced today that the Institute, in consultation with the Department of External Affairs and with the advice of a number of organizations and individuals with special interest in the area, has arranged a seminar on Canada's relations with Latin America. It is being held this weekend from Friday, March 7, to Sunday, March 9, at the Guild Inn, Scarborough, Ontario.

A series of short working papers have been prepared both by officials within the Department of External Affairs and by non-governmental authorities who will be taking part in the seminar. Among the topics to be discussed are: How important to Canada is Latin America compared with other parts of the world? Should Canada's relations with Latin America be increasingly bilateral or multilateral or perhaps directly with regional groupings? In what ways can Canada best strengthen its trade and economic relations with Latin America? In what way can Canada best strengthen its cultural relations with Latin America? What should be the future level and nature of Canada's development assistance programmes for Latin America? In what ways can improvement be effected in the public information about Canada available in Latin America and vice versa? What role can non-governmental organizations and groups play in developing closer relations between Canada and Latin America and how can Government best facilitate their efforts? What consideration should guide Canada's long-term policies towards Latin America?

The following are those who are able to accept the C.I.I.A.'s invitation to participate:

- Prof. Paul Bouchard - Head, School of Hispanic Studies,
Laval University
- Prof. Francis Bregha - Department of Social Work
University of Toronto
- Prof. Irving Brecher - Director, Centre for
Developing Area Studies,
McGill University
- Prof. Paul-Yves Denis - Department of Geography
Laval University
- M. l'Abbé Gérard Dion - Faculté des sciences
sociales,
Université Laval
- Mr. Jeffrey Frost - Brazilian Light and Power
Company Limited,
25 King Street West,
Toronto 1
- Msgr. Jacques Garneau - Association of Universities
and Colleges in Canada,
Ottawa
- Mr. John Harbron - Associate Editor, "The Telegram"
Toronto
- Mr. Arthur Irwin - Publisher, Victoria Daily Times
Victoria, B.C.
- Prof. D. Jones - Chairman,
Latin American Studies Programme,
University of Calgary
- Mr. Kevin Le Morvan - Director of Programmes
Coady International Institute
of St. Francis Xavier Univ.
- Prof. Kurt Levy - Associate Chairman,
Dept. of Italian and Hispanic
Studies,
University of Toronto
- M. André Mailhot - Documentation and Training Centre,
CUSO,
333 Mary Road, Montreal

Mrs. Delores FacFarlane - Commentator and
Story Editor,
Public Affairs, C.B.C.,
Edmonton, Alberta

Prof. J.C. McKegney - Department of Classics
and Romance Languages,
University of Waterloo

Prof. Jack Oglesby - Department of History,
University of Western Ontario

Mr. John S.B. Shaw - Regional Manager,
Latin America Sales Department,
De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd.,
Downsview, Ontario

Mr. John Sokol - Canadian Institute of International
Affairs

Prof. Harold A. Wood - Department of Geography
McMaster University,
Hamilton, Ontario

The Co-Chairmen of the Seminar are: Mr. Gordon Hawkins,
Executive Director of the C.I.I.A.; Prof. Paul Painchaud,
Département de Sciences Politiques, Université Laval, et
directeur pour le Québec, Institut Canadien des Affaires
Internationales.

I would like to thank the Chairman for giving me this opportunity to say a few words as we open this seminar on relations with Latin America. As I see it the seminar is made up of four elements. First there is the Canadian Institute of International Affairs which has convened it and worked out the programme of study. Next there are the academics, businessmen and others from outside government service. They have been chosen by the C.I.I.A. with the advice of other organizations. The third element is made up of officers from my department who have special responsibilities for relations with Latin America or are generally concerned with our foreign policy review, including our ambassadors in Mexico and Cuba. Last, but by no means least there are representatives of other government departments and agencies having a special interest in Latin American matters. So, under the bonnet provided by the C.I.I.A. officials from a number of government departments and agencies sit down with academics and other knowledgeable citizens for what I hope will be useful discussions.

When the Government decided to undertake a fundamental review of foreign policy it did so because of the profound changes that have been taking place in Canada and in the world around us in recent years. We want to be sure that Canada's foreign policy is appropriate to the situation in which Canadians find themselves today, that our foreign policy effectively serves Canada's current interests, objectives and priorities, and enables us to make an effective contribution to world stability and prosperity. In rendering judgements on these matters we want to have the benefit of the fullest possible consultation with informed and interested persons and organizations outside government.

As you know, the foreign policy review covers a number of areas, of which Latin America is one. Early this year, speaking at a seminar on Canada's relations with Europe, I said that in the near future we hoped to convene a similar meeting to discuss Canadian relations with Latin America. Well, here we are.

Most of the officials here today are members of the task force on relations with Latin America, and most of them were members of the ministerial mission which visited nine Latin American countries around the end of last year. It was my privilege to lead that mission, and - like everyone else - I found the tour stimulating and rewarding. We demonstrated Canada's intention of drawing closer to the countries of Latin America; we had extremely valuable conversations with Latin American leaders on matters of common interest, both between ourselves and in the broader realm of international affairs generally; and we were able to explore a great many possibilities for the development of a closer tie between

Canada and Latin America in many important respects: political, economic and cultural.

A little more than a month ago the preliminary report of the ministerial mission was tabled in Parliament. I understand that you have copies of this report and that it is available to others interested in Latin American affairs. The Latin American task force is now engaged in preparing a report in which it will make recommendations to government. The consultations which we are starting today may be expected to have a direct effect on these recommendations.

In our review of relations with Latin America our starting point is a belief that it is a part of the world with which Canada should have a closer relationship than in the past. We think that this must be beneficial both to Canada and to the Latin American countries. For us, it could mean a relatively new dimension in our foreign relations, a broadening of the external basis on which our national identity rests and some strengthening of our position in international councils. There would also be economic benefits and opportunities for enrichment of our cultural life. It is not my place to suggest what advantage would accrue to the Latin American countries from closer ties with Canada but it seems probable that they too would find a closer relationship worthwhile from the political, economic and cultural points of view.

To define Canadian interests in Latin America is to state what is obvious and well known to you. There is a significant Canadian investment in some Latin American countries, and Canadian trade with Latin America - though still only a very small part of our total trade - has substantially increased in recent years. In several Latin American countries there is a sizeable number of resident Canadians, composed principally of businessmen, bankers and volunteer workers both lay and religious. But our greatest interest is in the people of the Latin American countries themselves, our neighbours who share with us a common heritage.

Canadian objectives in Latin America are not quite so easily defined. One of the main purposes of the ministerial mission was to help the government to determine the real possibilities for strengthening relations with Latin America and the best means of doing this. Similarly, part of our task at this seminar is to consider what Canadian aims in Latin America should be - in broad policy terms and in terms of concrete steps which may usefully be taken in the short term.

Limiting myself to the broad policy aspect, I might provide a starting point for discussion by outlining what seem to me to be important principles for the development of a new and more effective Canadian policy toward Latin America.

First, a closer relationship - whether it be bilaterally with one Latin American country or multilaterally with all or a group of them - can flourish only if it is based firmly on the national interest of both parties to the relationship.

Second, a closer relationship must to a large degree be between governments but not exclusively so since the more it extends to the spontaneous and enterprising interest of private institutions and groups the more it will have real depth and substance.

Third, each party to the relationship should seek in the other those special elements it can most characteristically provide, thus providing for mutually beneficial exchanges on the basis of intelligent selection.

The Government, on considering recommendations for the betterment of our relations with Latin America, must keep in mind the priority that should be given to this aspect of our foreign policy in the light of the financial resources available to it in a period of budgetary stringency. If, with respect to relations with Latin America or to any other area of official activity, the Government decides to pursue policies or to activate projects which require financial or manpower resources for their successful execution, these resources must be provided. When we examine our actual and potential relations with Latin America we find that, especially in the short term, this could be done more easily in some ways than in others. I can assure you, however, that the Government will consider every recommendation carefully and on its merits.

I look forward with pleasure to the discussions at this seminar and, thereafter to further consultations on this and other aspects of our foreign policy. Very shortly, for example, I expect to participate in a seminar similar to this one on United Nations questions. If at the conclusion of the present seminar, there should be a general desire to continue the dialogue on Latin America I am confident that, with the assistance of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, this could be arranged.

I cannot state too strongly how greatly Ministers value the views and suggestions which we receive not only from our professional advisers but also from interested members of the public. Advice of this latter kind reaches us in a variety of ways - for example at meetings such as this, in public interviews and in letters. More particularly, I expect that the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs and Defence will in due course hear witnesses on our relations with Latin America as it now is doing on our NATO policy. I hope that this is just the beginning of a process which, in the months and years ahead, will provide an increasingly articulate and constructive environment for the conduct of our relations with Latin America.