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PAN AMERICANISM:

Pattern of Regional Cooperation

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THE Organization of American States, comprising twenty-one republics of the Western Hemisphere, is certainly the oldest and doubtless the most successful regional agency functioning on the international scene today. Formally organized in 1889 it traces its origins to the first of a series of inter-American conferences which was held in 1826. Through the years it has perfected its organization and broadened its scope to such an extent that its members now undertake commitments more demanding than those of the United Nations and on a par with those of the North Atlantic Treaty.

The Organization of American States (often called the Pan American Union by Canadians) resembles in some respects the North Atlantic structure and the story of its development might shed much useful light on the more recent regional agency. It is particularly interesting in that it affords an opportunity of appraising an international body in which the United States has long played a prominent role. In the early years after 1889 the movement was completely dominated by the United States, but in the past twenty years Washington's hemispheric diplomacy has developed a maturity which has allowed for the creation of a viable organization, based on genuine inter-American cooperation.

While it is only in the past few years that the United States has assumed the commanding position in world diplomacy, her leadership in the hemispheric organization has been long-standing. The record of its performance in the more limited role might be well worth studying by those who doubt the ability of the United States to give true leadership to the free world.

Simon Bolivar, the greatest of Latin American revolutionaries, may properly be regarded as the spiritual father of Pan Americanism. It was the great liberator's imaginative genius which conceived the idea of holding the Panama Congress in 1826, a meeting he hoped might usher in a new and greater unity among the several infant nations which had so recently severed their connection with Spain. Bolivar, who at the time was Dictator of Peru, as well as Titular President of Great Colombia (comprising the territory of modern Equador, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama), had hopes of broadening the base of cooperation until an actual federation would be achieved. At one time he envisioned a union of the new states with the British Empire and looked even beyond that to a world federation. Although some of his projects were somewhat grandiose, Bolivar did see clearly the economic and political hazards which would follow the disjunction of the territorial units of the Latin American world.

Of even greater importance than the dangers of centrifugal action within the area was the peril from without. In Europe, Metternich and the Quintuple Alliance were still dedicated to the doctrine of legitimacy which could not countenance the forcible detachment of Spain's American Empire. The Spanish government was naturally eager to activate the alliance to joint action against the rebels. It was to meet the threat of any European intervention that Bolivar suggested his scheme of collective security.

Bolivar's appreciation of the existing state of power politics was evident in the role assigned to Great Britain in his conference of American nations. Aware of the decisive influence of the Royal Navy and appreciative of London's prompt recognition of the independent republics, he looked to Britain rather than to United States as the logical protector of the fledgling states of Latin America. He saw clearly that it was in Britain's economic interest to have the region free from the commercial restrictions imposed by Madrid. The British would derive no comfort from Spain's reestablishment on continental America, especially if this were brought about by the joint action of other European powers.

Great Britain thus became a willing and welcome participant in the Panama Congress and her representative took a prominent part in the discussions and indicated that his government considered itself an interested party in Latin American affairs. While refusing to countenance any European efforts to upset the results of revolution, Great Britain was also anxious to frustrate any ambitions of the United States for establishing a commercial or political hegemony over the area.

Bolivar himself was not anxious for representation from Washington, but an invitation had been extended by the government of Great Colombia. However, the Northern delegates (like those of Chile and Bolivia) failed to arrive in time. There was considerable suspicion among Latin Americans concerning the motives of their powerful northern neighbor, but most observers regarded the Monroe Doctrine as a shield against possible dangers from Europe. To have obtained both Britain and the United States as underwriters of their independence was a worthwhile achievement and gave the new states a degree of security far out of proportion to their own strength.

The first Pan American conference, despite the lofty ideals and high-sounding aims of its founder, accomplished nothing tangible. Four conventions were adopted and the delegates departed with plans for a meeting in Tacabaya, Mexico, after their governments had given ratification to the conventions. Since only Colombia took such action the conventions never went into effect. The Tacabaya meeting was not held.

Attendance at the Panama Congress had been far from "Pan American." In addition to those whose delegates had arrived too late there were several countries which had shown no interest in the gathering from the beginning, and had not appointed representatives. Paraguay, under the notorious dictator Francia, was effectively isolated from the rest of the world. Brazil and the United Provinces of Rio de la Plate (Argentina) were on the verge of war over possession of Banda Oriental (Uruguay) and therefore not disposed to attend a gathering to discuss perpetual union and concord! The conference was poorly organized, no agenda had been prepared and consequently delegates arrived without instructions from their governments. It is not surprising that the abysmal failure of his cherished project added to the gloom which overwhelmed Bolivar as he saw many of his high hopes dashed by the realities of Latin American politics.

Perhaps the most one can say of this inglorious conference is that it set the precedent for consultative assemblies of New

World states and was thus the harbinger of the full-blown Pan Americanism of the modern era.

In 1847 a new threat from Spain caused the Latin Americans to go into another conclave. The establishment of Maximilian's empire prompted a meeting in 1866. Nor were all the dangers from beyond the hemisphere. As their powerful Northern neighbor fulfilled its "manifest destiny" by southward expansion, the weak Latin republics counselled together in the hope of finding joint remedial action. In 1856 a meeting was called to discuss *Yanqui* filibustering expeditions against Central America, and Mexico.

Beyond a few pious expressions of goodwill and solidarity, none of these gatherings accomplished anything. Such resolutions as were adopted failed of ratification by the governments of the states concerned.

No further conferences were held until 1889 when the Pan American movement entered its modern and more highly organized phase. It must be admitted that the various *ad hoc* gatherings held between 1826 and 1889 had accomplished little that was tangible or significant. They had not provided for any continuing organs of cooperation in the interim between conferences, nor had even the most meagre form of secretariat been set up. Not one important resolution had been ratified by the governments whose representatives had attended the conferences.

Simon Bolivar had hoped for a union or confederation of the newly-independent states, but instead of unity there had come greater diversity as areas which had come through the revolution as national units were splintered by centrifugal political forces. Bolivar's New Granada community soon was broken up into four republics, while in Central America the old captaincy-general of Guatemala disintegrated and in its place no less than five tiny republics were established.

Yet despite their meagre accomplishments these early conferences under the aegis of the Latin Americans did at least develop and foster the tradition of intrahemispheric consultation. Upon this sentiment the later more successful series of meetings was to build.

It is significant that all the early conferences had been held without the benefits of participation by the United States, the most populous and most powerful country of the New World. While her Latin American neighbors had been putting forth their inefficacious efforts toward political cooperation the

United States had been passing through a period of tremendous expansion. Her growing commerce and industry required new markets and the southern part of the hemisphere seemed ripe for economic penetration. Realizing that peace was essential to the extension of their commerce in the area, American businessmen and politicians urged the government to assume active political and diplomatic leadership over the hemisphere. In 1889 Congress, by resolution, authorized the President to call a conference to deal with arbitration, the improvement of business intercourse, and the encouragement of reciprocal commercial relations.

The conference series beginning with the Washington meet of 1889-90 was far more highly organized than those held before the United States had become a participant. In order to promote closer relations among the republics an International Union of the American Republics was set up, with a permanent secretariat known as the Commercial Bureau of the American Republics, (renamed Pan American Union in 1910). This was to be located in Washington under the American Secretary of State. The bureau's function was the dissemination of commercial information and for this purpose it published a bulletin in the three languages of English, Spanish, and Portuguese. For the maintenance of the bureau a pro rata levy was laid on all members with the United States advancing $36,000. It is significant too that the Washington conference was attended by eighteen of the nineteen republics existing at the time and this made it far more representative than any inter-American conference previously held.

The Washington conclave was the first of a series of meetings held which henceforth were known as the International Conferences of American States. The later conferences were held in other centers; Mexico City in 1901, Rio de Janeiro in 1906, Buenos Aires in 1910, Santiago de Chile in 1923, Havana in 1928, Montevideo in 1933, Lima in 1938, and Bogota in 1948. The tenth International Conference was held in Caracas in March 1954.

After the first meeting in 1889 it was obvious that the Northern giant had "taken over" the Pan American movement. But while it gave organizational leadership the United States pursued policies which fostered deep distrust and suspicion in the Latin American world, and destroyed any chance of genuine solidarity. For many years the American foreign policy was characterized by economic imperialism and "big stick" diplomacy. Arrogant high-handedness in 1891 almost brought on a war with Chile and caused that republic to remain outside the inter-American organization for another decade. In 1895 a border dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela brought forth from Washington a statement which Latin Americans read with interest. In a note to the British government State Secretary Olney declared: "The United States is practically sovereign on this continent and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition."

During the Spanish-American war the sympathies of Latin America were generally with the former mother country rather than their hemispheric neighbor. The seizure of Puerto Rico was viewed with disfavor, as was the insistence upon the Platt amendment to the Cuban constitution by which the new republic was forced to grant special privileges to the United States. Among these was the use of naval bases and the right of intervention in the interests of preserving order and independence in the island.

The diplomacy of the Big Stick was much in evidence during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. His seizure of the Panama Canal Zone in 1904 showed a complete disregard for the sovereign status of Colombia, and his "Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine" met with bitter resentment everywhere in Latin America. Roosevelt's interpretation of the old doctrine was ingenious. Since it forbade European nations to interfere in Latin American affairs, then it was the duty of the United States to take police action in the face of "chronic wrong-doing or impotence." From time to time the property of Europeans had been destroyed in Latin American revolutions, and in order to prevent such destruction and to maintain order American forces had often been sent in. This police action was particularly common in the Caribbean and Isthmian areas.

Latin Americans had long been subjected to heavy diplomatic pressure by European powers with nationals in their countries. At the Washington conference they had all supported a resolution which stipulated that no country need extend towards foreigners any privileges not granted to their own citizens. Not for forty years would the United States accept this point of view.

Aware of Latin American resentment the United States kept political questions off the agenda of Inter-American Conferences and concentrated on less contentious issues in the economic and cultural field. But the harmony thus obtained was a mere facade and in the Great War the much-vaunted solidarity of the Americas did not appear. The United States had a few Latin American allies, and some of her Southern neighbors were sympathetic to the Germans.

After the Great War Pan Americanism entered a crucial stage and there were many who thought the movement would collapse, and the Latin Americans transfer their support to the new and broader League of Nations. The unpopularity of the United States had been increased by the Senate's insistence that the Monroe Doctrine be specifically mentioned in the Covenant as a regional undertaking.

The Sixth International Conference met at Santiago in 1925 and here the Latin Americans made some headway against Washington's veto on political discussions. The Colombian delegate sharply criticized the unilateral interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. The presidency of the Governing Board of the Pan American Union, long reserved to the Secretary of State, was made elective. More important was the changed basis for membership on the Governing Board. Previously this was made up of members of the Latin American diplomatic corps accredited to Washington. A country whose government was not recognized by the United States would thus be without representation on the Board. With the frequency of Latin American revolutions, and American tendency to equate diplomatic recognition with moral approval, such situations arose often. At Santiago it was provided that any country could appoint representatives directly to the Governing Board.

At the Seventh Conference, at Havana in 1928, there was much acrimonious discussion, especially on an Argentine motion which condemned United States intervention in the internal affairs of other states. This was an old and painful issue and was made more so by the fact that American marines were in Haiti at the time. Twelve countries supported Argentina, but Secretary of State Hughes was able to have the question shelved. The Argentine delegate led an attack on American tariff policy, but on this he won little support, and left the conference in chagrin.

The 1928 Conference saw Pan Americanism at its lowest ebb and the future of the movement in doubt. That a complete breakdown did not take place may be attributed to the financial dependence of many of the small republics on the Northern Colossus, together with the fact that the Latin Americans were unable to present any solid front against their Anglo American neighbor.

But if 1928 brought the movement almost to its demise it also saw the beginnings of a new attitude in the United States —a change of heart which ushered in a new phase of Pan Americanism, and gave it a vitality which entitles it to a high place in any chronicle of international organizations.

The hostility manifest at the Havana Conference caused the State Department to re-examine its Latin American policies, and although it was the Roosevelt administration which introduced a sweeping reorientation, there were some conciliatory gestures during the Hoover regime. In 1928 the president-elect made an extensive tour of Latin America and after he took office the marines were withdrawn from Nicaragua. The State Department's Clark Memorandum repudiated Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and restored the ancient declaration as a shield against European interference, but not a cloak for American intervention.

Franklin Roosevelt knew Latin America well and was, even before his election, a popular figure in intellectual circles there. In 1928 he had written an article in *Foreign Affairs* in which he advised the United States to renounce all territorial conquest, arbitrary intervention, and diplomatic pressure in support of vested interests. These were the things which Latin Americans had been saying for years and they looked hopefully to the northern statesman who now had an opportunity to put such policies into effect. Under the direction of Secretary of State Hull and Undersecretary Sumner Welles, the new Democratic administration pursued the Good Neighbor Policy designed to win the friendship of the peoples and countries of the hemisphere.

Tangible evidence of the approach was soon forthcoming. Colombia was given $25,000,000 as compensation for the Canal Zone, the marines were ordered home from Haiti, and Cuba's restrictive Platt Amendment was abrogated. Panama was given fuller sovereignty and the Washington government ceased all attempts to deny the American republics the right to change governments by revolution.

The new posture of goodwill was much in evidence at the Seventh Conference at Montevideo in 1933. Secretary Hull accepted the resolution on tariff reduction which his predecessor had rejected at Havana five years earlier. Pledges of non-intervention were given, and Washington withdrew its long-standing opposition to the Calvo Doctrine on the treatment of aliens. At Montevideo the United States welcomed the discussion of political questions and listened sympathetically to Latin American grievances. The 1933 conference ushered in a new era of Pan Americanism, an era of effectiveness and solidarity which made possible the development of a meaningful regional organization. Latin Americans saw the United States transformed from the stern policeman to the good neighbor.

In 1936 President Roosevelt, seeing the gathering war clouds elsewhere, called a special Conference on the Maintenance of Peace to meet in Buenos Aires. His action in going to Argentina to open the conference was widely acclaimed and the meeting produced a wide measure of agreement. The delegates accepted a declaration of solidarity which stated that an act against any republic would be regarded as a hostile act against all.

The eighth regular conference met at Lima against the background of increasing world tension. Restating the concept of solidarity adopted at the Buenos Aires meeting, the delegates set up an organ of consultation to be utilized in the case of a threat to the hemisphere. This was to be a meeting of the twenty-one foreign ministers.

In 1939 an unrealistic attempt was made to draw a 300 mile neutrality zone around the hemisphere, but in the 1940 meeting practical measures were adopted for thwarting any transfer of Dutch or French colonial territory to the Axis powers. After Pearl Harbor the foreign ministers consulted and made recommendations favoring diplomatic breaks with the enemy states and close cooperation with Washington's war effort. Argentina and Chile stood aloof but the other republics gave strong backing to the United States. Many of them declared war and Mexico and Brazil sent troops overseas. The evidences of cooperation were far more impressive than during the first war, and while admittedly the danger was greater, the enlightened diplomacy of Roosevelt must be credited with much of the improvement.

In 1945, before the end of the war, the republics, excepting Argentina, met in special conference to plan for a reorganization and strengthening of the inter-American system. After months of preparation by continuing committees a plan was ready and another meeting was called for Rio de Janeiro in 1947. Here the twenty-one nations signed the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance which was more binding and explicit than anything previously adopted. By its terms the signatories were pledged to peaceful relations one with another, the adoption of arbitration as a settlement technique for all disputes, and a guarantee of joint action against an attack upon any state. The defence area covered by treaty obligations embraces the whole hemisphere, including Canada. Any threat to the peace of the area is to be followed by an immediate consultation of the foreign ministers or the Governing Board of the Pan American Union *ad interim.* Defence measures are decided by a two-thirds majority of the consultative body, and once decided, are binding upon all members, except that no state will be required to use armed force without its consent. This exception is dictated by constitutional provisions in many of the republics but would have been insisted upon in any case. Nevertheless the Rio treaty represents a considerable surrender of sovereignty and involves commitments which the American nations had eschewed for many years.

The treaty makes reference to article 52 of the United Nations charter and describes itself as a regional understanding under the provisions of this article. In this and other structural features it resembles the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed some months later.

Eight days after the Rio treaty came into effect in 1948 its provisions were invoked to forestall threatened hostilities between Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The Governing Board acting as organ of consultation took steps which settled the trouble effectively and quickly. Thus the new techniques of joint action had passed their first test.

At the Ninth Inter-American Conference in Bogota in 1948 the twenty-one republics voted to adopt an elaborate charter for their organization which became officially the Organization of American States. Committees of the Pan American Union had done extensive pre-Conference work and the charter sought to embrace in one comprehensive whole the vast array of conventions and provisions under which the organization had previously functioned. It consolidates in a single document what had heretofore been an abstract union of nations. As a document it is far more thorough than anything previously produced by statesmen of the inter-American system and stands a fitting culmination to fifty years of cooperative effort.

The charter enunciates the old familiar goals of Pan Americanism, continental solidarity, national sovereignty, an international order based on law, juridical equality of states and a strict adherence to the policy of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of member states. The principles of the Rio treaty are incorporated and along with an elaborate Bill of Rights there are clauses dealing with economic and cultural collaboration.

The Organization of American States accomplishes its purposes through six organs: The Inter-American Conference, the Meeting of Consultation of Foreign Ministers, The Council, the Pan American Union, the Specialized Conferences, and the Specialized Organizations. The two last-mentioned will strive to coordinate the scores of technical and cultural agencies and organizations which have long functioned on an inter-American basis. The inter-American Conference, the supreme organ, meets every five years and bears to the Organization of American States a relation somewhat analagous to that of the General Assembly to the United Nations. The Foreign Ministers' meeting may be called at the request of any state and a two-thirds vote of the Council, except in the case of external aggression when it must be called immediately.

Undoubtedly the most effective organ is the Council (successor to the Governing Board) which is in continuous session at the seat of the Pan American Union in Washington. It is composed of one representative from each republic who may, but need not, be his country's ambassador to United States. It meets regularly every two weeks and takes cognizance of political matters which may arise from time to time. The Council also coordinates the work of the Specialized Organizations and is in effect the permanent executive of the Organization of American States.

The Pan American Union, maintained by pro rata contributions from member states, is the secretariat of the hemispheric organization. By provision of the Charter and from long practice it recruits its personnel on as broad a geographic basis as possible. The Secretary General of the Organization is the Director of the Pan American Union. He is elected by the Council for a ten-year term and may not be reelected or succeeded by a person of the same nationality. The post until recently was held by a distinguished Colombian, Dr. Alberto Lleras, the first Latin American to head the secretariat. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States has been close and harmonious and the world body was officially represented at the Bogota Conference and other meetings of the hemispheric organization.

This brief chronicle does not attempt to deal with Canada's relationship to a regional agency which embraces all its hemispheric neighbors. In general Canadians have not been very interested or well-informed about the inter-American system although their country participates in several of the specialized agencies. Nor can we here relate the post-Bogota developments within the inter-American system. The hemispheric machinery, developed over many years, stands today as one of the most perfect instruments of international cooperation yet devised, but some of the present day realities of power politics have caused a decline in its effectiveness and harmony. The oft-strained relations between the United States and Argentina, together with widespread Latin American complaint about Washington's neglect of economic aid programs in their countries are two of the factors contributing most to this decline. The State Department, in the last few years, has pursued policies which have not met with the warm and friendly response so much in evidence during the Good Neighbor days. Although Mr. Dulles found general approval of his anti-Communist resolutions at the Caracas Conference, Washington's role in the Guatemala revolution three months later is seen by many Latin Americans as unilateral interference in the internal government of a member state of the OAS. Failure to use the Organization's machinery during the dispute can only be regarded as weakening the hemispheric structure.

On the other hand, the special mission of Dr. Milton Eisenhower is one of several recent moves which indicates that Washington, although much absorbed in the cold war tensions elsewhere, is anxious to restore its reservoir of good will among its fellow members of the Organization of American States.