

ing territories always distinguish between "colonies" and "occupied territories." For the first, which they consider as legally belonging to another country, they favor independence. The second, various American States claim as their rightful property which has been illegally occupied by non-Latin American powers. In this category, Guatemala claims British Honduras, and Argentina the Falkland Islands.

At the Bogota Conference of 1948 a declaration was approved calling for "colonialism and the occupation of American territories by extracontinental countries to come to an end."² An American Committee on Dependent Territories was thereupon created to study the problems of colonialism in the New World. In March of 1949 this Committee met at Havana. Here Argentina reaffirmed her claims to the Falkland Islands and the Conference proposed that the United Kingdom, France, and Holland give up their colonial possessions. Realizing that some of the latter were unprepared for self-government, they recommended U.N. trusteeship. The United States and several Latin American States did not attend the meetings.

At the Caracas Conference of 1954 the Latin American Republics again passed a strong resolution against colonialism. The United States opposed it on the ground that relations with the three European colonial powers were outside the jurisdiction of the OAS.

Puerto Rico has a peculiar position in the inter-American system. Since 1952, she has enjoyed commonwealth status and full self-government, but she is not sovereign. She cannot, therefore, legally join the OAS and deal on an equal basis with the republics of the hemisphere. When the Havana meeting on dependent territories was held, Gov. Muñoz Marín declined representation and declared that Puerto Rico could not be considered a colony. All the same, the Nationalist and Independent Parties of Puerto Rico were permitted to bring their case for independence before the Committee.³ There is no doubt that today a large majority of the Puerto Rican people favor the commonwealth status. They appreciate the trade and taxation advantages that such status assures them. In general, however, the Latin American countries are more cautious in dealing with Puerto Rico than with the European possessions, if only because the case involves a dependency of an American State.

C. PROSPECTS

Future development of the West Indies Federation would be enhanced by the membership of British Honduras and British Guiana. It is too early to report on any basic accomplishments of the Federation, but it does appear to represent a step in the direction of increased trade and more self-government. In British Guiana, domestic political conditions are still deeply troubled. So long as the PPP retains its present leadership there is little hope that a responsible government will be restored to the colony. In British Honduras, the dominant People's United Party is adamantly opposed to joining the federation, because undesirable immigration from the islands and unemployment might result. Besides, British Honduras has strong

² Gantenbein, *op. cit.*, p. 840.

³ Inasmuch as the Bogotá resolution of 1948 referred only to European colonies, many delegates felt that the Committee was not empowered to act on the request.