

The Government's new Adjustment Assistance Programme is available, and the Department of Trade and Commerce is participating in the administration of the Programme with the Department of Industry so far as exports are concerned.

I have said this many times before, but it bears repeating once again - the Kennedy Round tariff cuts will provide benefits to Canada only to the degree that we exploit the opportunities they have opened up. It is essential that Canadian business actively and aggressively pursue its own efforts and adapt its production and marketing plans, if and as required, to exploit these opportunities.

The interest shown by Canadian businessmen has been intense. You will recall the Kennedy Round seminars last autumn, which attracted some 3,000 participants. Since that time, officials of the Department have participated in many regional and local meetings to discuss Kennedy Round implications with business groups.

U.S. Balance of Payments

In recent weeks, there has been concern over the U.S. Government's consideration of the use of border taxes or surcharges as a measure to improve that country's balance-of-payments position. We are in close touch with the U.S. on this matter and are urging them to take the matter up in international consultations if they deem it necessary to pursue such a programme. As you know, the Canadian Government has said that it will take offsetting action if the U.S. imposes border taxes so that Canadian exporters will not be disadvantaged.

The really important thing is that we do not let any temporary balance-of-payments measures by the U.S. obscure or prejudice the gains made under the Kennedy Round. It would be disastrous if the nations of the world began backsliding into protectionism and high tariffs at a time when so much progress is being made along the road to trade liberalization.

International Conferences

Since we last met, I have represented the Canadian Government on two major international trade conferences and made official visits to 11 countries. Last November, in Geneva, along with officials, I attended the GATT ministerial meeting at which we began the work of charting our course for the post-Kennedy Round era.

I stressed the view of the Canadian Government that it is of prime importance to maintain our forward momentum and start to lay the groundwork for future initiatives towards world trade. Of course, no new major initiative can be envisaged until the United States has new trade legislation. The U.S. is now beginning preparations for such legislation and we shall be in close touch with them during this period.

At Geneva, the ministers of the countries represented agreed on directives for a new work programme oriented to future trade initiatives.