

The Government attaches great importance to our trade with the British West Indies. During 1950 we made strong representation to the United Kingdom for the creation of the Trade Liberalization Plan, which was put into effect on January 1 of this year. Since then we have taken advantage of a number of opportunities to request the United Kingdom authorities to expand the existing arrangements. Members will recall that we had the honour in Ottawa in the early summer of being hosts to a visiting delegation of parliamentary representatives from various British West Indian colonies. The talks which took place at that time were useful to all parties concerned. When I visited London in September, I made a special point of carrying the negotiations on this matter a further stage ahead, through direct contact with the appropriate ministers of the United Kingdom Government.

The following statement is being made public today in the United Kingdom and Canada:

"Following discussions between the United Kingdom and Canadian Governments and representatives of the British West Indies, which started early last summer, arrangements have now been worked out for extending and amending the existing scheme for 'token imports' into the British West Indies and Bahamas from Canada and the United States.

"So far as the Canadian side is concerned from 1st January, 1952, the list of items covered by the scheme has been expanded to include a much wider range of commodities, including food products, leather, metal, electrical and textile manufacturers, etc. Also the percentages for exporters' quotas for most of these commodities will be raised from 33 1/3 per cent to 40 per cent.

"The expanded trade liberalization arrangements will, as from the 1st January, 1952, operate differently for British West Indies and Bahamas trade with the United States. Instead of a system of commodity quotas based on a percentage of past trade, the West Indies and Bahamas will be able to license additional imports from the United States up to a specified total value.

"North American exports should also benefit from the authority recently given for colonial governments to introduce a system of world open general licences for certain commodities. These are mainly of a kind essential to colonial development. The list of goods to which open general licences may be applied covers for example a wide range of finished steel items and semi-manufactures of copper, zinc, and nickel but also includes dried, pickled, salted and smoked fish, onions, potatoes, certain animal feeding stuffs and jute goods.

"In spite of the grave balance of payments position of the sterling area, it has been thought right to recognize in these arrangements the great importance of good commercial relations between the British West Indies and North America and they represent a substantial easing of import restrictions on goods exported by Canada and the United States."

Mr. Macdonnell (PC, Greenwood) commented briefly on this statement.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Accession of Greece and Turkey

On December 29 the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson, made the following motion:

That it is expedient that the Houses of Parliament do approve the protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Greece and Turkey, signed by Canada at London on October 17, 1951, and that this House do approve the same.

Before speaking on this motion, Mr. Pearson made a general statement on recent NATO developments:

... The Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization met a month or so ago in Rome. It was, I believe, the eighth meeting of the Council. Some very important