

The ministers present were asked to consider the technique to be followed in the next round of multilateral tariff negotiations, often referred to as the "Kennedy round" in view of the initiative taken by the United States following the enactment of the U.S. Trade Expansion Act last year. By the provisions of this Act, the United States Administration is authorized to negotiate substantial reductions in its tariff in exchange for concessions by other countries. It is expected that most important trading countries will engage in the negotiations, which could lead to a general lowering of tariff barriers throughout the world.

Ministers also concerned themselves with the question of how restrictions and other barriers to world trade in agricultural products should figure in the negotiations, as well as with trade measures that might help further the economic growth of the under-developed countries.

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### CREDIT STATISTICS IN FEBRUARY

At the end of February 1963, balances outstanding on the books of sales-finance companies (for both consumer and commercial goods), small-loan companies (for both cash loans and instalment credit), department stores, furniture and appliance stores, and chartered banks (for personal loans) were higher than at the end of February last year.

Balances outstanding were (in millions): sales-finance companies for consumer goods, \$766 (\$732 a year ago); sales-finance companies for commercial goods, \$423 (\$387); small-loan companies for cash loans, \$650 (\$563); small-loan companies for instalment credit, \$44 (\$35); department stores, \$394 (\$370); furniture and appliance stores, \$186 (\$185); and chartered banks for personal loans, \$1,593 (\$1,453).

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### AIR FORCE BENEVOLENT FUND

A record year for grants and loans was reported at the twentieth annual meeting of the Royal Canadian Air Force Benevolent Fund, held on May 13 in Ottawa.

Educational assistance to university and vocational students increased during 1962, helping to equip the recipients eventually to earn better than average incomes. Despite the increased coverage of hospital and medical insurance, the reduction in demands on the fund for these purposes has not been as great as might be expected. This was largely because some people were unable to afford complete coverage, while others, through ignorance or inertia, failed to cover themselves.

At the close of 1962 the Fund totalled \$3,711,527. The contributions of the Active Service units helped maintain so healthy a financial position. During the year, the Fund extended grants and loans to the sum of \$466,000 to service and ex-service applicants. Settlements achieved and help obtained from other sources increased this figure to a total of nearly two-thirds of a million dollars. Of the 1,144 applications for help received during the year, only 55 were rejected.

### FURNITURE MISSION TO EUROPE

The Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. Mitchell Sharp, announced recently that a technical mission, consisting of representatives of the Canadian furniture industry and specialists working with it, would visit Britain, Denmark, Sweden, West Germany and Italy. Its purpose would be to study the latest trends and developments in design, management techniques, materials procurement and preparation, production methods, plant and equipment and marketing in these countries. The mission will leave Montreal on June 7 and return to Canada on July 6.

Mr. Sharp stated that the mission would be sponsored jointly by the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Canadian furniture industry. An extensive programme had been arranged, he said, in each of the countries to be visited to enable the mission to see furniture-manufacturing plants and design schools and design centers, as well as associations and machinery and material supplying firms connected with the manufacture of furniture.

On the return of the group to Canada, its members will prepare a report on their observations, that will be made available to the furniture industry and related associations. It is further proposed that the findings of the mission, which have application to Canada, be incorporated into a report now being prepared on the Canadian furniture industry.

The members of the mission will be: Mr. Laurence G. Daignault, President, Dufresne, McLagan, Daignault Inc., Montreal; Mr. J.A. Doyle, Assistant to the Director, Forest Products Research Branch, Department of Forestry, Ottawa; Mr. Ben Fiber, Editor, "Furniture and Furnishings", Southam-MacLean Publications Ltd., Toronto; Mr. Jan Kuypers, Product Design Unit, Stewart & Morrison Ltd., Toronto; Mr. Bruce McPherson, President, The Gibbard Furniture Shops Ltd., Napanee, Ontario; Mr. Allen Segal, President, Segal Furniture Manufacturing Ltd., Vancouver; Mr. H.C. Jellicoe, Chief, Forest Industries Division, Industrial Promotion Branch, Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa. Mr. Jellicoe will be secretary of the mission.

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### NEW SWISS ENVOY INSTALLED

On May 9, His Excellency Hans Wilhelm Gasser presented to the Deputy Governor-General, Chief Justice Robert Taschereau, his letter of credence as Ambassador of Switzerland. The ceremony took place at the Supreme Court of Canada. The Chief of Protocol of the Department of External Affairs, Mr. Henry F. Davis, presented the Ambassador to the Deputy Governor-General.

The Ambassador was accompanied by the following members of the Swiss Embassy in Ottawa: Mr. Jacques Mallet, Counsellor; Colonel Karl Enry, Military and Air Attaché; Mr. Max B. Dahinden, Secretary; Mr. Jean-Pierre Saurer, Attaché (Administration).

Mr. Gasser was born in Nunningen, Canton of Soleure, Switzerland, in 1904. He joined the Swiss

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