

Mr. Anderson



PRESS RELEASE

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

NO. 9

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

February 9, 1950.

The Department of External Affairs announced today that the following officials will compose the Canadian delegation to the fourth meeting of countries which are members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. This meeting opens in Geneva on February 23 and is expected to last four weeks. Mr. L. D. Wilgress, Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom will head the delegation. He will be assisted by Mr. Louis Couillard, Economic Division, Department of External Affairs; Mr. J. J. Deutsch, Director, International Economic Relations Division, Department of Finance; Mr. C. M. Isbister, Director, International Trade Relations Division, Department of Trade and Commerce; and Mr. H. R. Kemp, Special Trade Adviser, Department of Trade and Commerce.

By agreement between the member countries, the agenda of the Fourth Session cannot be made public at this time. The Canadian representatives, however, expect to take part in discussions on a wide variety of subjects which are governed by the General Agreement. Of these, probably the most important will be the question of import restrictions imposed by member countries for balance of payments reasons. Canadian representatives also expect to discuss the question of extending, for a further firm period, the tariff concessions exchanged at Geneva in 1947 and at Annecy in 1949. There will be no negotiations at the forthcoming meeting. There is bound to be, however, some discussion of the third round of tariff negotiations which will begin next September.

Under the terms of the General Agreement, the countries members to it, meet from time to time for the purpose of giving effect to those provisions of the Agreement which involve action and, generally, with a view to facilitating the operation and furthering the objectives of the Agreement. The forthcoming meeting is officially known as the Fourth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The General Agreement was concluded at Geneva in 1947. It entered into provisional effect on January 1, 1948, and is now being applied by some twenty-four countries. It is expected that the membership will increase to thirty-three within the next few months, as a result of the tariff negotiations which were held under the General Agreement at Annecy, France, last year.