

necessary preparations for the holding of the first annual Conference (General Assembly) of the International Trade Organization. Certain unsolved questions, such as the relations with the International Court of Justice, the Swiss problem, and the avoiding of overlapping with other intergovernmental organizations concerned with economic development, also had been referred to the Interim Commission. Any country participating in the Conference was given the right of membership on the Interim Commission. All those countries who later signed the Final Act, with the exceptions of Bolivia, Ireland, Portugal and Switzerland, exercised this right. Mr. Max Suetens of Belgium was elected Chairman of the Interim Commission. Its sole task was to elect an Executive Committee of eighteen members composed on the same basis as that provided for the composition of the Executive Board of the Organization. Consequently, the election of the Executive Committee provided a useful test of the somewhat complicated formula agreed upon for the election of the first Executive Board. The formula survived this test with flying colours. Australia, Benelux, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States were elected members of the Executive Committee. The Interim Commission delegated all of its functions to the Executive Committee, which will report to the first annual Conference of the Organization. I was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee and the Vice-Chairmen are Mr. Jean Royer of France, Sir Raghavan Pillai of India, and Mr. Ramon Beteta of Mexico. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on August 25, 1948, at Geneva.

65. This review of the difficult problems that confronted the Conference and of the manner in which they were solved will serve to explain why it was necessary to remain four months in Havana. The Charter that emerged as a result of these lengthy deliberations, while it represents some weakening from the Geneva draft, still maintains as the basic rules for the conduct of international trade those principles which must be respected if the world is to enjoy once more the benefits of multilateral trade. As we have seen, the concessions made at Havana in order to secure a Charter acceptable to the great majority of the countries participating in the Conference did not go very far beyond the concessions made at Geneva in order to smooth the way for the deliberations at Havana. If any harm had been done in the direction of watering down the rules embodied in the original United States proposals, this had been done at Geneva to an even greater extent than at Havana. Nor can we consider the additional concessions granted at Havana to be so serious as to represent "the straws that break the camel's back".

66. The Canadian Delegation, in considering the discharge of its responsibility of recommending to the Canadian Government the acceptance of the Charter emerging at Havana, had decided on the axiom that "no Charter is better than a bad Charter". They came to the conclusion that the Havana Charter is not a bad Charter. Its attainment can be regarded as a magnificent achievement when account is taken of the conditions prevailing at the time it was being framed. These conditions were much worse than those who conceived the original proposals had anticipated they would be, because recovery from the aftermath of war had proved to be slower than even the most pessimistic of prophets had predicted. The Charter is a good Charter in that it is flexible enough to take account of the varying needs of many different countries. It permits the setting up of an International Trade Organization whose eventual success may prove to be because of, rather than in spite of, what now