

Over the past three days, the Joint Canada/New Zealand Consultative Committee has been meeting in Wellington. This was the second meeting of the Committee and the first at the ministerial level. The Committee was established in 1970 when Prime Minister Trudeau visited New Zealand. It provides a forum for periodic discussions between the two countries on matters of common interest, particularly in the trade and economic fields. The first meeting was held in Ottawa in 1971. The Canadian Delegation was led by the Hon. D.C. Jamieson, Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, who was accompanied by the Canadian High Commissioner, Mr. J.A. Dougan, as well as by a number of senior officials and advisers from the Canadian Departments of Industry, Trade and Commerce, External Affairs, Finance, Agriculture, and Regional Economic Expansion. The Hon. J.A. Walding, Minister of Overseas Trade and Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, headed the New Zealand Delegation. He was assisted by the Hon. M.A. Connelly, Minister of Customs and Associate Minister of Finance; Mr. B.P. MacDonell, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Trade and Industries; and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Trade and Industries, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Ministries of Energy, Resources, Customs, and Treasury.

The talks at the ministerial and official levels ranged over a number of bilateral and multilateral issues of concern to Canada and New Zealand. The two delegations considered recent developments in the Pacific/South-East Asian area and in their relations with Europe. Attention was also given to the situation in the Middle East and its effect on the world-wide energy shortage. Other subjects of discussion included disarmament issues, in particular that of the cessation of nuclear testing, on which there is close and warm collaboration between New Zealand and Canada, and prospects for the Law of the Sea Conference at which both governments look forward to fruitful co-operation aimed at obtaining adequate recognition of rights of coastal states. Views were exchanged on their respective programmes of aid for developing countries.

Particular importance was attached to the economic exchanges. The meeting of the Consultative Committee offered an opportunity for a broad exchange of views on current trends in the international economy and world trade. Matters relating to bilateral trade between Canada and New Zealand were discussed and opportunities for further expansion explored. The delegations reviewed the Canada/New Zealand Trade Agreement and the exchange of letters of July, 1973. The letters provide for continued exchange of preferential tariff treatment over a broad range of products. They agreed that in general these arrangements provide important continuing incentive for development of trade between the two countries.

Ministers and officials discussed the outlook for the forthcoming round of multilateral trade negotiations to which both countries attach major importance in providing a better framework for trade in both industrial and agricultural products and in which both will be making a major effort to secure significant liberalization of trade in agriculture. As efficient agricultural producers, the two countries recognized that they have an important role to play in the World Food Conference to be held in November. The conference will have as its primary tasks the assessment of world food needs over the next decade and consideration of how these needs can be met through stable supplies at prices reasonable for both producers and consumers.