

made by our Prime Minister at the prime ministers' conference with regard to this question, when he made a proposal which I think can roughly be described from the following notes of his comments:

"I propose that this conference should declare its intention to extend an invitation to all member nations of the Commonwealth, of the EEC, EFTA, the U.S.A. and Japan and other like-minded nations, indicating a desire to participate, to meet at the earliest practicable date to give consideration as to how to deal with the trading problems before us in a way which will be to the mutual advantage of all."

That idea, or something very much like it, may very well be the course that is followed eventually. However ... in October of last year, the United States Congress approved important new trade legislation under which the United States was to participate in forthcoming international tariff negotiations. At that time, in an exchange of letters between our Prime Minister and President Kennedy, it was agreed that Canada and the United States should take the initiative in proposing a meeting of the ministers of the GATT contracting parties to discuss important trade developments and to make plans for the GATT tariffs and trade conference. That has now been carried out. A joint Canada-United States proposal for such a ministerial meeting was accepted in November of 1962 and the GATT Council, which is not, of course, a ministerial council, is to meet on February 18. It will set a date for this ministerial meeting, and it is expected that the ministerial meeting of GATT will be held about the middle of May.

World Trade Conference

Then at about roughly the same time in the United Nations the under-developed countries were pressing for a United Nations world conference. There was a good deal of discussion about that in the Second Committee, and finally it was decided that there would be a United Nations world trade conference, which will be concerned primarily with the broad range of trade and development problems of the less-developed countries; and this conference is to be held early in 1964. Canada, by the way, took a very prominent part in bringing about agreement on the terms of that resolution in the United Nations. There was a dispute between the less-developed countries and the large trading countries as to the time at which the conference was to be held, but we were able to bring about a settlement of that difficulty. All these movements are going on, or are about to go on, in the field of trade. I suggest that this will be an extremely significant trade year for all parts of the world, and particularly for Canada, because we are as vitally interested in world trade as any other country.