

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, announces that the first meeting of the Joint Canada/New Zealand Consultative Committee will be convened in Ottawa on May 31, 1971. The opening session will be marked by an exchange of letters to implement the Protocol to the Canada/New Zealand Trade Agreement.

Under the terms of the Protocol which was signed for Canada by Prime Minister Trudeau during his visit to Wellington in May 1970, a provision is made for a Consultative Committee which will furnish a forum for discussion of subjects of mutual concern and interest to Canada and New Zealand. It is envisaged that the Committee will meet on a regular basis or at least once every two years.

The terms of reference of the Joint Canada/New Zealand Consultative Committee indicate that it can be convened at the request of either country and depending on mutual convenience will meet at the level of ministers or senior officials. The inaugural meeting will be held at the official level, with the New Zealand delegation being lead by Mr. N. V. Lough, Deputy Secretary to the New Zealand Treasury and the Canadian delegation headed by Mr. M. Schwarzmann, Assistant Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

The agenda for this first meeting includes a range of topics of mutual interest to Canada and New Zealand with the focus mainly on subjects of an economic and trade policy nature. It is expected that the discussions will last one and a half days.