



# Statements and Speeches

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## A CANADIAN VIEW OF THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Remarks by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the Young Presidents' Organization of Ontario, Toronto, February 5, 1979.

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What I thought that I might do this afternoon is to give you an overview of the situation as it currently exists, indicate to you some of the rationale behind not only Canada's actions but those of other participants. I shall try to the best of my ability, and with a rather obscure vision in the crystal ball, to indicate where I think GATT negotiations and various related issues may take us over the next decade or so.

First of all as to timing. We are now getting down to the point where I think it is possible to forecast that we shall have a general agreement wrapping up most of the elements of the multilateral trade negotiations this spring. The date that is being aimed for is some time in April, and it looks now as if that will be met. There are a great many, of course, last-minute and very important details still to be ironed out, but I believe that it is fair to say that the general direction of the negotiations is now becoming clearer and at the very least we have been able to identify some of the major issues that remain to be resolved. One of those is, of course, very much a factor in whether or not that agreement comes in April, and that is the ability of the United States Administration to persuade Congress to extend the limitations that were imposed almost arbitrarily last year because of the conditions of American law with regard to the countervailing duties. You may recall that, just before Christmas — indeed, back in November and prior actually to the Congressional elections in the United States —, the waiver provision that the American Administration had with regard to certain countervails actually expired and Congress adjourned without having dealt with it. We have succeeded through a great deal of very delicate negotiation in "putting in place" the mechanism for keeping it from being harmful in the interim, but the European Community and ourselves have made it very clear that we shall not proceed on to the major body of the MTN and the completion until such time as Congress reimposes (or *restores* is perhaps the more appropriate word) the various capabilities of the Administration with regard to countervail.

...Obviously, in negotiations, as you gentlemen in your business capacities will know, it is not wise in a period such as this to, in a sense, "tip your hand". I can, I believe, give you some background that will be helpful....

Basically, of course, before we start talking about what the MTN are going to do, we really have to understand what they are and there are times when I encounter a fair amount of confusion not only in the business community but in the country at large and, in fact, in some areas of government and provincial governments as to just what is involved here. Actually, it is not a new exercise. It is not a unique approach that is

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