

## Geneva Tariff Agreements

As announced in the House of Commons on June 7, new tariff agreements were negotiated by Canada with the United States and twelve other countries in Europe and Latin America at the GATT tariff conference held in Geneva, and were signed on May 23 on behalf of Canada by the Canadian Ambassador to NATO, Mr. L. D. Wilgress, who was chairman of the Canadian delegation.

Twenty-two countries participated in the Geneva negotiations. The new agreements concluded represented a further step in the general reduction of tariff barriers which had been carried forward in earlier conferences held at Geneva in 1947, at Annecy in 1949, and at Torquay in 1951. Under the most-favoured-nation principle, which is basic to GATT, all tariff concessions agreed to at Geneva will become available to Canada whether or not these concessions were negotiated directly with Canada. Similarly, Canada will extend its own tariff concessions to each of the other participating countries, and to non-GATT countries with which Canada has most-favoured-nation agreements.



Signing for Canada.

The complete schedules of all tariff concessions are incorporated in a Protocol of Supplementary Concessions to the GATT signed by representatives of participating countries at Geneva. A detailed summary of the concessions may be found in an Appendix to the Official Report of House of Commons Debates of June 7, 1956.

In a statement made in the House of Commons on June 7, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. C. D. Howe, said that the new GATT agreements represented a further addition to the significant and substantial progress already achieved in previous GATT conferences in the reduction of tariff barriers throughout the world, and that the benefits obtained by Canada would lead to useful, practical gains for Canadian exporters of a wide range of products and in many markets.

Continuing, Mr. Howe said:

"These new agreements will further strengthen the basis of confidence and co-operation so essential in world trade. It is appropriate at this time to reaffirm Canada's view of the usefulness of the GATT as a framework for the conduct of trade and for the development of common trading policies. In this