

INTERNATIONAL TRADE ORGANIZATION

The second session of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade opened in Geneva on August 16. The first session was held in Havana during the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment. Mr. L.D. Wilgress, Canadian Minister to Switzerland, Chairman of the first session, was again elected for the second session. Mr. Wilgress is also Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization. The Executive Committee, which comprises representatives of eighteen governments drawn from the signatories to the Final Act of the Havana Conference, also met in Geneva, the session opening on August 25.

Of the twenty-three governments whose representatives signed the General Agreement in Geneva on October 30, 1947, all but Chile have now accepted the Protocol of Provisional Application, and have thus put this Agreement into provisional effect between themselves; fully as regards negotiated tariff concessions and general exchange of most favoured nation treatment, to the fullest extent compatible with existing legislation as regards Part II, which comprises certain key sections of the Charter.

PROTOCOLS AND DECLARATION

During the first session of the Contracting Parties at Havana, it was necessary to draw up four Protocols and one Declaration which made certain textual rectifications in the General Agreement bringing it into harmony with the new draft of the Charter, and to provide for emergency supersession of certain provisions by the appropriate Articles of the Charter when the latter should come into force.

The most important matters to be dealt with at the second

session of the Contracting Parties are, the scheduling of future tariff negotiations; consideration of requests from additional governments wishing to accede to the Agreement (Greece has already presented such a request); discussion of the advisability of replacing all or some of Part II of the General Agreement (which, with the exception of the Sections amended by the Havana Protocols, is based upon the Geneva draft of the Charter) by the relevant portions of the Havana text; clarifying of the relationship between the Contracting Parties and the International Monetary Fund and the drawing up of special exchange agreements between the Contracting Parties as a whole and those countries which are not members of the International Monetary Fund. This last item arises under Article XV of the Agreement (Article 24 of the Havana text), by which Contracting Parties undertake to be governed in exchange matters by the rules of the Fund or, in the case of non-members, by the terms of specially negotiated exchange agreements.

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the Interim Commission, which followed that of the Contracting Parties, is chiefly concerned with procedural questions, both those regarding the internal work of the Organization and those which touch upon the relationship between the International Trade Organization and other international organizations whose work lies in similar fields.

MULTILATERAL TRADE

The International Trade Organization itself will not come into existence until the majority of the fifty-three governments signatory to the Final Act of the Havana Conference have secured legislative approval of the Charter,

that is, probably not before 1949 at the earliest. Until that time, therefore, by undertaking to put the General Agreement into immediate provisional effect, some of the major trading nations of the world are making an important contribution to the development of the multilateral trading system which is the ultimate goal of the International Trade Organization. They have not only extended the benefits of the system to a large part of the world, but have also given the Organization the advantages of an experimental period of provisional work which will afford valuable experience when the Charter as a whole finally goes into force.

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D. S. O. FOR MILITARY ATTACHE

Mr. Emile Vaillancourt, Canadian Minister to Yugoslavia, at Belgrade, August 24, conferred on Lieut-Colonel Hogarth, Canadian Military Attaché, the Cross of the Distinguished Service Order in recognition of especial services in action. At the request of Mr. Vaillancourt, Mrs. Hogarth pinned on the Cross.

Present at the ceremony were diplomatic and military representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States, Turkey, the Netherlands and France.

In thanking the guests, Mr. Vaillancourt said: "I thank you for your presence at this function held on the soil of Yugoslavia in the liberation of which the Canadians have participated with their fellow-countrymen of the Commonwealth, witness their tombs amongst the five hundred in the Belgrade cemetery of those of the Commonwealth who gave their lives that the Yugoslavs may live."