At this Eighth Session of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the attendance of members from governments of countries concerned with trade should be the occasion for an exchange of views, which I think should be profitable on problems raised by the development of world trade.

The remarkable document on international trade in 1952 published by the Executive Secretary, who should be warmly congratulated for this study, demonstrated that in the course of recent years, international trade had not increased in the same proportions as production in the various countries.

Therefore from the standpoint of Western Europe, at a time when American economic aid is coming to an end, the GATT is increasingly important.

It is indispensable for us to increase our exports towards the dollar areas, despite the reversal of United States' balance-of-payments mentioned by Mr. Waugh, and in regard to which there is no assurance that it may be durable. Furthermore, according to a remark by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we must endeavour to replace aid by trade.

We are gratified at the extension by the United States Congress of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, and at the adoption of the Customs Simplification Act. We trust that these are the initial signs of an overall policy which we should like to stress as urgent. We are therefore following most carefully the work of the Foreign Economic Policy Commission set up by President Eisenhower and mentioned by our American and Canadian colleagues, in the firm hope that its activities will be concluded by adopting a co-ordinated, well-defined and efficacious programme of development of trade between the United States and the rest of the world.

But the problem of trade with the dollar area should not obliterate the more international problem of world trade. I should like to restate in this connection our attachment to the aims and objectives of the Geneva Agreement.

According to practice, and one might say the tradition of the GATT, the present Session should have coincided with a new international tariff conference. But, doubtless justifiably, it was feared that the method of bilateral negotiation which had been successfully used at Geneva, Annecy and Torquay, was henceforth out of date.
It should not be surprising that by 1951, France had proposed a world plan for automatic lowering of tariffs, the measures for implementation of which might be debated, but the general trend of which we trust may be maintained. France is aware of the difficulties arising out of an integral application of the plan in certain new countries which are in process of industrialisation. She therefore sought to establish schemes which would enable those countries to take part in such a plan under special conditions, having wide regard for the requirements of their economies.

We can already bring a substantial contribution to the development of world trade by undertaking not to raise the tariffs we have already bound, for a further period of one year or 18 months. It would likewise be desirable that the trends towards intensification of agricultural protectionism, for which we are all responsible to a certain degree, and to which the Executive Secretary rightly drew the attention of the Committee on Primary Commodities of the Food and Agriculture Organization, should not be confirmed.

Some of the contracting parties may have considered there was a certain contradiction between the efforts of France to promote European economic integration, and her advocacy of measures for lowering tariffs at world level by all contracting parties.

At last year's session, the French representatives succeeded, I think, in convincing the contracting parties who are not members of the Coal and Steel Community, that these two methods, far from being contradictory, were in reality complementary. The resolution granting to member countries of a community the right to refrain from applying the most-favoured-nation clause to coal and steel was adopted practically unanimously.

Moreover, we felt it would be desirable that the General Agreement be completed by provisions relating to raw materials which were more clearly defined than those contained in the text of the General Agreement or the Havana Charter.

Stabilization of prices of basic raw materials is henceforth an up-to-date subject; in the course of the next few months, a certain number of international conferences will deal with those problems. For our part, we hope for the conclusion of stabilization agreements on basic raw materials.

We also hope that an international convention on restrictive business practices, which are sometimes as serious an obstacle to international trade as quotas and customs duties, will come into force.

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to certain recent signs of improvement in French foreign trade. Although their volume is still lower than their record level of 1951, our exports have nevertheless increased.

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substantially since the beginning of the year. Our adverse balance within the European Payments Union - a deficit which must be paid in full in dollars - continues to be a source of concern to us, but a slight improvement during the past few weeks is discernable. It should be noted, in particular, that despite the social unrest which took place in our country last month, our currency has remained stable. We are doubtless still far from having overcome all the difficulties which stand in the way of a restoration of equilibrium in our balance of payments on a sound and lasting basis, to quote the established formula in Article XII of our Agreement.

We are conscious of having to make a great effort to develop our sales in the sterling and dollar areas, where they are still confronted by serious obstacles.

The above are the remarks which the representative of France felt it incumbent upon himself to make at our present Session. They testify to the desire of my country that the problem of foreign trade be given an important place in the negotiations and debates which are taking place within specialized international bodies, and to our concern for an ever greater expansion of international trade.

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