Tariff Negotiations

Letter from the Head of the Cuban Delegation concerning the negotiations at Annecy

The following letter has been received from the Head of the Cuban Delegation:

"I have the honour to bring the following to your notice and, through your good offices, to that of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

During the third session of the Conference of CONTRACTING PARTIES, the Cuban Delegation had exploratory talks with the majority of acceding States, in order to discover whether there was any basis on which to enter into tariff negotiations with them. In spite of the efforts made, I regret to have to inform you that it proved impossible to enter into negotiations with any of them, except Haiti.

The fundamental obstacles that made such negotiations impossible were the systems of quantitative restrictions on imports and on foreign exchange for their payment, and also the monopolies existing in the majority of those countries; these circumstances especially affect the products constituting the major part of Cuban exports, which, owing to their nature, have been and continue to be subject to the most severe restrictions. Consequently, any tariff concessions which might have been granted to Cuba, a country with a free economy, would have lost their value and been rendered worthless in practice.

The Cuban Delegation hopes that future improvement in international trade conditions will enable it to reach effective tariff agreements, but is for the time being unable to take part in the exchange of concessions which, for the reasons stated, would be unilateral in effect."
The Cuban Delegation therefore desires, on behalf of its Government, to give formal notice hereby, to the CONTRACTING PARTIES, that it invokes its right under Article XXXV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and that, in consequence, the said General Agreement, in its entirety, will not be applicable or come into force between the Republic of Cuba and the following countries: Colombia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Greece, Italy, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sweden and Uruguay.

I have the honour to communicate this information to you for such action as may be necessary."