Mr. Lange, Minister of Trade for Sweden, argued in favour of a strong and efficient GATT. In particular Mr. Lange proposed that the old GATT technique for negotiating tariff reductions should be abolished and that a new plan be worked out for linear tariff reductions. The general goal should be an overall 50 per cent reduction within the next five years. Special rules had to be applied for the less-developed countries.

Mr. Lange paid special attention to the problems of these countries. He gave information showing to what extent Sweden had been able already to implement several of the recommendations worked out by GATT Committee III (dealing with the trade problems of the less-developed countries). He argued in favour of a general and speedy universal implementation of the Committee III recommendations. If necessary, a general plan of implementation could be worked out to liberalize conditions on a non-discriminatory basis for imports from the less-developed countries.

Speaking of agriculture, Mr. Lange stressed the need to give food to a rapidly growing world population. In the long run we had to look to the efficient producers to provide the necessary growing volume of food. At the same time the standard of living of agricultural producers in the industrialized countries had to be safeguarded. The reconciliation of these two needs might lead to temporary "surpluses". But, asked Mr. Lange, could these not be moved into consumption where demand is not effective on a commercial basis because, although hunger exists, the means of payment do not?

The full text of Mr. Lange's remarks will be issued in due course.