YUGOSLAVIA AND GATT

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The Thirteenth Regular Annual Session of the GATT plenum will open at Geneva October 16. As in previous years, the plenary meeting of the member-countries is arousing an understandable interest. This time the interest is greater because this year the problems of Common Market and Free Trade Zone stand still more expressively in the center of the general problems which will be dealt with at the session.

For Yugoslavia, this session is of a particular interest, because conditions are ripe for her hitherto status of an observer in this organisation to be changed by a form of a closer cooperation which would represent a step forward in the development of the relations between our country and this important organisation in the realm of international trade. Concrete proposals in this direction, too, are expected at this year's session. Those proposals will certainly require further working out in the circles of experts of both sides. The thing is that the Yugoslav approaches proceed from a kind of so-called associate membership as a transitory period from the status of an observer to a full membership. This means that they proceed from a specific form of cooperation for which, it is estimated, conditions already exist. However, the General Agreement does not provide for such a form of cooperation, although it does not exclude it.

Among the member-countries there had already been concrete proposals to make it possible for the countries which are outside of the Organisation to regulate their relations with GATT in a specific transitory form. Thus, at the last regular plenary session the Swedish delegation seriously pointed out this problem and proposed that this possibility be taken into consideration, since in that way it would be possible to get to cooperate together many of the countries which for one reason or another are yet unable to accept the status of full GATT membership.