"TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE"

THE REPORT BY A PANEL OF EXPERTS

ESTABLISHED BY THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO GATT

"Trends in International Trade" is a comprehensive, up-to-date report on a number of vital questions in the field of international trade. The report is the outcome of an intensive study made in 1958, under GATT auspices, by a Panel of four internationally known economists, established by the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade at their Twelfth Session in November 1957.

After a detailed examination of the short-term fluctuations and long-term changes in the structure of world trade the report focuses attention on certain specific problems: first, the trade and payments difficulties of the non-industrialized countries, particularly in their commercial relations with the industrialized countries; secondly, the need for stability in the world markets for primary products, especially in the industrialized countries; thirdly, policies of agricultural protectionism in the industrialized countries and the way in which the harmful effects of such policies could be minimized. The protective role played by revenue duties in the industrial countries is discussed and the conclusion is reached that alleviation of revenue duties could improve the export proceeds of the non-industrial countries. The effects of the European Economic Community on trade in raw materials and foodstuffs, and, in particular, the results of the agricultural arrangements in the Community and of the linking of the overseas associated territories with the Community are also analyzed.

The report makes a number of recommendations for improving the prospects in international trade of the primary producing countries. Among these are the provision of funds for buffer stock action, a reduction of certain revenue duties in countries consuming tropical foodstuffs and beverages, a moderation of agricultural protectionism in Western Europe and North America, a reduction of protection against the import of minerals, and the avoidance of trade-diverting measures in regional arrangements such as the European Economic Community.

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The Panel considers how the issues discussed in the Report affect the commercial policies of the highly industrialized countries; they consider that some of these policies are relatively unfavourable to the primary producing countries and that in some cases protectionism has been carried too far by the industrialized countries. The conclusion is reached that further progress depends on the willingness of the industrial and the non-industrial countries to negotiate on a wide range of their economic and financial policies.

The members of the Panel of Experts were as follows:

Roberto de Oliveira Campos, Director of the Brazilian National Bank for Economic Development and Professor of Economics at the University of Brazil.

Gottfried Haberler, Professor of Economics at Harvard University.

James Meade, Professor of Political Economy, University of Cambridge.

Jan Tinbergen, Professor of Development Programming at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Economic Studies, Rotterdam.

The report represents the unanimous views of the members of the Panel.

"Trends in International Trade" is published by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Geneva; October 1958, Price $2.00 (or equivalent in other currencies).


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