

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

LIMITED B
GATT/CP.5/14
30 October 1950
ORIGINAL: English

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Fifth Session

CONTINUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE NEWS BULLETIN

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. Representatives of Contracting Parties will recollect that general approval for the continued publication of the Bulletin was given at the Fourth Session and it was agreed that the matter should be re-examined at the Fifth Session.
2. By the end of 1950, the International Trade News Bulletin will have been in existence for one year. The demand for copies is steadily increasing, both from governments and from other quarters, although no attempt has been made to obtain wider distribution in view of the experimental nature of the publication. It seems probable, in view of corrections and other comments which have been received by the Secretariat, that the Bulletin is finding a welcome and is proving useful.
3. That the Bulletin in its present form has certain limitations as to its effectiveness is obvious: the principal limitation being that its contents are drawn from other publications - governmental periodicals, specialized journals, and the public press. These sources probably yield a fair picture of the major events which can be related to the operation of the Agreement. But there is no doubt that the effectiveness of the Bulletin would be increased if representatives of Contracting Parties could arrange for the appropriate departments of their governments to send short items directly to the Secretariat for publication in the Bulletin. In this connection it may be noted that the official publications of governments relating to the field of international trade vary greatly in their scope. As readers of the Bulletin can judge, such a publication as the U.S. Foreign Commerce Weekly which reproduces extensive despatches from its commercial representatives in many parts of the world often yields valuable reports on changes in commercial policy. The Board of Trade Journal and the *moniteur Officiel du Commerce et de l'Industrie* are also standard sources of information. It will therefore be valuable from an editorial point of view if, when making proposals for the improvement of the Bulletin, some thought can also be given to the extension or improvement of sources from which information can be drawn. Representatives may also wish to suggest the ideal, practical length of the various items in each issue, the extent to which editorial comment may be found useful; and the coverage which should be given to the activities of other governmental or non-governmental bodies (O.E.C.C., for example; or the U.N. Regional Economic Commissions; or the International Chamber of Commerce) whose work enters the field of international trade.
4. In so far as the Trade News Bulletin may be regarded as part of the information work of the secretariat, it may be appropriate to note the successful reception of the pamphlets, "The Attack on Trade Barriers" and "Liberating World Trade". The Secretariat has received and continues to receive laudatory comments on these pamphlets, particularly in their attempt to express in simple language the somewhat intricate matters which arise out of the administration of the Agreement. Both these pamphlets have been distributed and sold (through United Nations sales agents) in English and French editions. A Spanish edition of both pamphlets has been prepared and distributed at their expense in all Latin American countries by the Consejo

Interamericano de Comercio y Produccion, Montevideo, Uruguay. A German language edition of both pamphlets was prepared in Geneva, these being probably the first pamphlets in German published by any international agency since the end of the war.

While the two pamphlets have, it would seem, proved of interest to governments, and have been rather extensively quoted in the press, sales have not been as satisfactory as had been hoped. In the event of further pamphlets in this series being produced, any assistance which governments can bring to bear in promoting sales or a free distribution limited to responsible readers will be welcomed. It is hoped, therefore, that in considering the future of the International Trade News Bulletin, representatives of Contracting Parties will also consider the distribution policy for other publications which are addressed to the general public.