

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

TNJ/2

23 February 1955

Special Distribution

CONTRACTING PARTIES

Tariff Negotiations Committee

Statement made by Mr. W. Willoughby, Leader of the
United States Delegation at the Second Meeting of
the Tariff Negotiations Committee
on 22 February 1955

When the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was drafted, it was hoped and expected that it would eventually be adhered to by all of the trading countries of the world. Though it may yet be some time before this hope is realized, great pride may be taken in the fact that the countries carrying on over three-fourths of the world's trade have acceded to the Agreement. Moreover, each country in acceding has negotiated extensive reductions in its trade barriers and has bound itself to internationally agreed upon rules designed to minimize friction in the conduct of international commercial relations. At this Conference the contracting parties are to negotiate for the accession to this Agreement of one of the last great trading countries of the world still remaining outside the agreement - Japan. The United States Government is gratified by this development.

The President of the United States has given high priority toward giving Japan greater opportunities for expanding its external trade and improving its economic condition. This has been prompted by the earnest desire of my Government to assist in the creation of conditions which lead to maximum possibilities for Japan to make its way in the free world. Few, if any other countries, depend so much upon world trade for their livelihood, and thus for both their economic and political stability. Be that as it may, the opportunity we shall have at this conference in negotiating tariff concessions with Japan will not only be to open the door to Japan, but it will also assure our obtaining mutually advantageous concessions leading to an increase in total world trade. Such a growth in trade along with expansion of production and consumption will promote the prosperous conditions we all so earnestly seek.

The United States Government is prepared to do its part. It is prepared to make worthwhile concessions direct to Japan. It is also willing to consider granting of concessions to third countries if it can be demonstrated that such concessions will, in fact, lead to broader agreements between those countries and Japan than would otherwise be possible. While the United States expects to be flexible with respect to granting such concessions to third countries, in the overall, however, a balance between concessions granted and received by the United States must be achieved as required by United States law.

5

I cannot stress too much the importance my Government attaches to these negotiations. We note the great progress that Japan has made in establishing its position as a full and respected partner in the free world. Its trade position, which has not yet achieved pre-war levels, requires substantial improvement if its economy is to become viable again. There is much that Japan must and can do to assist itself, but beyond that, other countries must cooperate to permit Japan to engage in the mutually advantageous trade which will enable it to prosper.

The Government of the United States shall do all it can to make this Conference a success.