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SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT.

VERB. TIM REPORT.

ELEVENTH MEETING IN EXECUTIVE SESSION  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 30 MAY 1947, AT 10.30 A.M. IN THE

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA.

M. MAX SUTENS (Chairman) (Belgium)

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CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): The meeting is called to order. We are met today in Executive Committee in order to examine document 76, which is recommendations of the Working Party on Tariff Negotiations on communication of information concerning the changing of the lists of tariff concessions offered. I invite Mr. Wilgress, Chairman, to present the report.

Mr. L.D. WILGRESS (Chairman of Commission A): Mr. Chairman, I have the honour, on behalf of the Working Party on Tariff Negotiations, to present our recommendation concerning the communication of information on changes relating to lists of tariff concessions offered. Our first report provided a satisfactory method for the exchange of original offers, but there was no machinery set up whereby various delegations could be kept informed of changes in these offers. The Tariff Negotiations Working Party considered this question over several meetings, and eventually we decided upon this recommendation which is designed to provide the necessary machinery for keeping delegations informed regarding changes in the lists of offers, but was the least possible burden on the delegations. Provisions were made for certain forms to be provided by the Secretariat which will be filled in by the delegations at fortnightly intervals. We have also provided that delegations should have two options of providing that the information regarding changes in tariff rates should be notified to other delegations with which they are in negotiation. One alternative is that this information should be provided by the Secretariat, and the other is that the information should be provided by a member of the delegation submitting the offers. It will be up to each delegation to decide which of these two methods

it prefers. The Working Party on tariff negotiations believes that this arrangement, if followed by the various delegations, will fill the gap which existed in the machinery for the tariff negotiations in order to assure the multilateral character of the tariff negotiations, and at the same time will involve the least possible burden on the delegations concerned.

I therefore have much pleasure in presenting this recommendation to the Preparatory Committee in Executive Session.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): Is there any delegation wishing to speak on this document?

Mr. HAWKINS (United States): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could take a few minutes to explain the joint report of the Charter Steering Committee and the Tariff Negotiations Working Party. If you will recall, the previous statement was found not suitable to the situation of some delegations because of the continuous meetings of the Commission and the fact that it conflicted with the tariff negotiations. The matter was, therefore, referred to the Tariff Negotiations Working Party and the Charter Steering Committee and document 81 represents the report. We feel, and I am sure everyone agrees, that it is very important to get a more or less reliable schedule of meetings as soon as possible so that delegations can make their plan. The joint steering group proposes that the discussions on the Charter in Commissions A and B take place only in the afternoons; also, in order to allow a little more time, that the afternoon sessions begin at 2.30 instead of 3 o'clock. Now, since the time available for discussion each day is reduced, the number of days allotted for the discussion of each group of Articles has to be increased. We met that problem by adding one day to the time allowed for the discussion of each group of Articles.

The effect of that would be to extend the time required for completing the discussions on the Charter until practically July 14th, as compared with June 25th, when the discussions would have been completed under the previous schedule.

I would like to call attention in the Schedule to the fact that intervals of three or more days have been allowed between the meetings on each group of articles. That is true in the case of both Commission A and Commission B. The purpose of that is to allow the calling of meetings to consider the reports of sub-committees as they come in.

It will ~~also~~ be noted that there is no conflict between the meetings initially scheduled for the two Commissions. However, since additional meetings will have to be scheduled in the interval, it may be that conflicts in the meetings between the two Commissions cannot be entirely avoided as the scheduled meetings develop.

It will also be noted that we have scheduled no meetings for Saturdays or evenings. If it should turn out that three afternoons are not enough to cover the subject matter allotted, it would be possible to take more time, either by scheduling a meeting for Saturday or in the evening. In that way it would be possible to give the Schedule some flexibility and to prevent the latter part of the Schedule being disrupted if we ran over the time at any point in the earlier part.

I would also call attention to the fact that Article 15 has been transferred from the Working Party on Technical Articles to Commission A. It will be dealt with along with Articles 14 and 24, to which it is closely related.

I should also like to call attention to the fact that Article 30, on Subsidies, has been transferred from Commission A to Commission B, to follow immediately the discussion on Chapter VII,

to which it is closely related. That transfer also tends to even up the load of the two Commissions.

The Reports of the Sub-committees of the Working Party on the Technical Articles, when ready, will be made to Commission A on dates to be arranged for the purpose.

Finally, the Joint Steering Group recommends that the Working Party on Tariff Negotiations should begin a study of the general provisions of the general agreements on tariffs and trade, with a view to explaining the issues involved and having a report ready for consideration by the Preparatory Committee after the Schedule as now laid down has been completed.

There is only one further point that you should know; that is, that we are beginning this whole Schedule on Tuesday the 3rd rather than on Monday the 2nd. The reason for that is that the amendments to Articles 14, 15 and 24 will not be in until today and it seemed to us that a little more time was required for Delegations to study them.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that is all I need say on the Report. I am sure it would be helpful to all Delegations here if a schedule could be established as soon as possible and, if it were possible, to act on this now.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): I had promised to you that we should not discuss any document unless we had had 24 hours notice of the existence of such document. Therefore we shall discuss this document T.81 only if all delegations here present agree to do so. There are, however, important reasons why we should try to reach a solution today on this Report. First of all, because it is next week's programme and we are already at Friday, and secondly because a Joint Committee has already entered into contact with all, or most delegations, and this document only confirms existing agreements with delegations.

M. ANGEL FAIVOVICH (Chile) (Interpretation): It is with great pleasure that we accept the working plan that has just been submitted to us. We think that such a programme will tend to facilitate our work and especially the work of comparatively small delegations. Therefore the delegation of Chile, which is one of those, is particularly interested and wishes to thank the other delegations for the effort they have made to approve this plan, which will facilitate greatly our work in general.

As for the proposal itself, I agree to its content in general and welcome it. I have only one observation to present: I am speaking of page 2, the last sentence of the first paragraph where it is said: "It is therefore essential that Delegations be prepared to provide sufficient representation for conflicting meetings of Commissions A and B when necessary." In that case a serious difficulty might occur for a comparatively small delegation and we only wish to point out that in the event of Commissions A and B meeting simultaneously the dates and times of meetings should be first discussed and agreed upon by the delegations and especially by the small delegations. Subject to that observation I see no objection to the general Report.

Mr. L. GOTZEN (Netherlands): I should like to raise the following question. During the course of the discussions on Chapters 3 and 4 we have been obliged to nominate some sub-committees, and the same thing also happened yesterday in Commission B. Now, if we look at this schedule, I wonder when we are going to discuss the reports in Commissions A and B of all those sub-committees? As far as I can see, there is no time left for it.

Mr. HAWKINS (United States): The Joint Steering Group had that consideration in mind in framing the Schedule. You will note that an interval of at least three days has been allowed between the discussions of each group of Articles. One of the purposes was to leave space for the calling of meetings of the Commissions to consider the reports of the Sub-committees. Now, it is possible that the intervals are not long enough but we felt that we should not make them any longer because we are already running the meetings to the 11th July, and that would extend the time still further. We would also like to point out that we have scheduled no meetings for Saturdays and therefore meetings of the Commissions could be called for Saturdays to receive and discuss the reports of the Sub-committees. Finally, I might suggest that there are also the evenings.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): Does this satisfy the delegate for the Netherlands?

MR. L. GOTZEN (Netherlands) (Interpretation): Entirely.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): The delegate for New Zealand.

MR. J.P. JOHNSON (New Zealand): Mr. Chairman, there is one amendment I would like to suggest in connection with the proposed programme of meetings which I hope it will be possible for the Committee to agree to.

The New Zealand delegation has submitted amendments in connection with Articles 4, 13 and 33. We also had some suggestions to make in connection with Article 25. As explained by Mr. Nash at the time when Chapter III was under consideration, and also when Article 13 came before the Committee, we had not proposed to proceed with our amendments to Articles 4, 13 and 25 if we could obtain accommodation in respect to our amendments to Article 33.

It would be extremely helpful to us, therefore, if it could be arranged that the discussion on Article 33 could be taken before the discussion on Article 25. We feel that in that event it might have the effect of avoiding a lot of subsequent discussion on Articles 4, 13 and 25, and would expedite the work of the Committee generally.

I would like to suggest, therefore, that the time allocated for discussions on Articles 31, 32 and 33 might be arranged so that such discussions might follow the discussions on Articles 34, 35, 36 and 38, and the discussions then on Articles 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 be dropped to a later date accordingly. It is noted that in respect of each of those groups, the time allocated is three days, and it would seem that that adjustment could be made without

upsetting the programme to any material extent.

I should be glad, therefore, if the Commission could agree to that suggestion.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): The delegate for the United States.

MR. H. HAWKINS (United States): Mr. Chairman, as far as the work of the Steering Committee is planned by the joint Steering groups concerned, that shift could be made. In other words, we could put Articles 31, 32 and 33 in the place of Articles 25 and 27 and simply move Articles 25 and 27 and the following Articles down.

However, the Charter Steering Committee follows, as far as possible, the numerical order of the Articles, because we think that delegations probably prepare their discussions in the order in which the Articles are listed. We have also found that every time any change is made to meet one delegation's problem, it creates a problem for someone else.

If, however, there were no objections here by any delegation, I think the change could be made.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): Are there any objections?

In that case, the Report is then approved with the amendment proposed by New Zealand.

MR. E. COLBAN (Norway): Mr. Chairman, in the schedule we have not Articles 16 to 23 and Article 37, but on the second page of the document it is said that the Commission concerned will consider the sub-committee's reports, including that of the Working Party on technical Articles as soon as they become available, insofar as they can be fitted into that schedule. I wonder whether it is the intention to discuss these Articles of the technical sub-committee in the morning meetings, or whether it

is intended, if possible, to fit them in in the ordinary afternoon meetings of Commission A.

I would like to have these discussed as early as possible, because of the very great importance for the tariff agreements, and in the technical sub-committee we have only discussed them in what we call "a first reading". We were then interrupted, because Commissions A and B had to be set up, and we instructed the sub-committees we had established on Articles 17 and 18 to report direct to the Executive Committee, or to such Commission as the Executive Committee might set up. So, as I understand that Article 17 is practically arranged - Article 18, not yet - that should not prevent an early discussion of the whole set of these technical Articles because of their intimate connection with the tariff agreements.

CHAIRMAN: (Interpretation): The Delegate of the United States.

Mr. HAWKINS (United States): Mr. Chairman, I think that the meetings to consider the Reports of the Working Party on the technical articles should be in the afternoon. They must be fitted in in the afternoons so far as possible, otherwise there will be conflict with the tariff negotiations for which the mornings are being set aside.

Could I just add one comment on the remarks made by the Chilean Delegate. I should like to assure him that the Steering groups will make every effort as the Schedule develops to avoid conflicts between meetings of the two Commissions and that personally we would be quite ready to state in this Report that in consideration of the personnel problems of the small Delegations the Steering Committee will try to avoid such conflicts.

Mr. JOHNSON (New Zealand) I would just like to record the gratitude of the New Zealand Delegation for the favourable consideration given by the Committee to our proposal.

CHAIRMAN (Interpretation): Does any other Delegate wish to speak?

Therefore the Report is adopted as amended in accordance with the suggestion made.

The Executive Committee is now going to be adjourned, and I am about to declare open the meeting of Commission "A". I would like, however, to point out before we part, that the Executive Committee shall meet either on Monday or Tuesday, the exact date being announced later, to study the Fifth Report of the Tariff Negotiations Working Party Document EPC2 79 and 79(a).

The Meeting adjourned at 11.25 a.m.