

The duration of the General Agreement is for three years but it contains the usual provisions for continuance after Jan. 1, 1951, subject to six months notice of termination. (For more detail regarding the Geneva negotiations and concessions see pp. 873-877 of the 1948-49 edition of the Year Book.)

The draft of the Charter prepared during the Geneva conference in 1947 prepared the way for the full United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, held at Havana, Cuba, from November, 1947, until the end of March, 1948. At this meeting, further changes in drafting were made since many nations were participating for the first time in this work and presented new points of view. Of the 56 nations at Havana, 53 signed the final Act which authenticated the text of the Charter.

Article 103 of the Charter provides that the International Trade Organization shall be brought into existence if a majority of the signatures to the Final Act have deposited instruments of acceptance by March, 1949, or, failing this, when 20 acceptances have been made. Since neither of these two provisions had been fulfilled the Charter had not entered into force by the end of 1949.

Since the object of the General Agreement is to expand trade on a multilateral basis, invitations were sent out in the autumn of 1948 by the contracting parties to a number of other countries asking them to participate in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Eleven of these countries accepted the invitation and in April, 1949, they met with the contracting parties at Annecy, France, to carry out tariff negotiations. The acceding countries were Colombia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Greece, Haiti, Italy, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sweden and Uruguay. During the course of the conference, Colombia found it necessary to suspend its negotiations until a later date.

The negotiations at Annecy were conducted between each of the existing contracting parties and the acceding governments. The latter group also negotiated with one another. In all, 140 negotiations between pairs of countries were carried out. As at Geneva, the resulting tariff concessions apply to all members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade under most-favoured-nation provisions. Canada carried on negotiations with all the acceding countries and concluded agreements with each.

Before an acceding country can become a contracting party it must receive the approval of two-thirds of the existing contracting parties. Approval is signified by signing the "Annecy Protocol of Terms of Accession to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade" on behalf of each new country. When the two-thirds majority have signed on behalf of a country, it becomes a full-fledged member, provided that it has itself signed the protocol. The opening date for signature was Oct. 10, 1949, and Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States signed on that date on behalf of all the ten new countries.

The Annecy Schedules come into force for each country when it gives notification of its intention to bring them into effect. This step must be taken by Apr. 30, 1950. There is a 30 days delay between the time of notification and the date when the schedule comes into force.

The new schedules contain a large number of tariff concessions of importance to Canada. The most important of these are as follows:—

*Denmark.*—Denmark, which already had a low tariff, agreed to reduce its duties on lobster; crayfish; shrimps; fresh, salted or canned salmon; and artificial silk stockings.