

INTRODUCTION

THE Charter on Trade and Employment recently completed in Havana was the final outcome of the proposals issued by the United States on 6th December, 1945, which received the general approval of the United Kingdom. These proposals represented the first attempt to draft a code which could govern the pattern of international trade. For a number of years there had been a growing recognition of the need for international co-operation in post-war world trade in order to avoid the restrictive effects of irresponsible unilateral trade measures which since the latter part of the nineteenth century, and more especially between the years 1919 to 1939, had impaired the standards of living and economic development of almost all countries.

The principles contained in the "Proposals" had their origin in the declaration issued by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the President of the United States of America on 14th August, 1941, which was known as the Atlantic Charter. In this Charter the desirability of fullest international collaboration was expressed as a means of securing for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security.

In Article VII of the Mutual Aid Agreement of 23rd February, 1942 (lend-lease), between the Governments of United Kingdom and United States of America the principle was further elaborated.

The proposals were considered by the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment which was constituted on 18th February, 1946, by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. This Committee, which had the task of preparing a draft Charter for consideration by the Conference later, consisted of representatives of the Governments of the following countries; Australia, Belgium - Luxemburg, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Union of South Africa, U.S.S.R., United Kingdom, and United States of America.

The U.S.S.R., however, was not represented at any meetings of the Committee.