

INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT

INTRODUCTION

FOLLOWING the failure of the proposed International Wheat Agreement of 6th March, 1948, because of insufficient ratifications, a meeting of representatives of the signatory countries held in Washington on 6th-7th July, 1948, appointed a Preparatory Committee to keep under review the prospects of concluding a new agreement, and invited the United States Government to convene an international conference to negotiate a new wheat agreement if the Preparatory Committee recommended that such a conference be held.

In pursuance of this arrangement, the United States Government convened an international conference to open in Washington on 26th January, 1949. The New Zealand Government accepted the invitation to participate in the conference, and Mr. R. W. Marshall, New Zealand Trade Commissioner, Washington, acted as New Zealand delegate.

The conference succeeded in negotiating a draft agreement which was open for signature from 23rd March to 15th April, 1949. Of the 42 countries listed in Annexes A and B to Article III of the draft agreement, all signed except Paraguay. The New Zealand delegate signed the draft agreement in Washington on 25th March, 1949.

Under the provisions of Article XX, the Agreement was subject to formal acceptance by the signatory Governments, and instruments of acceptance were to be deposited with the United States Government not later than 1st July, 1949. Provision was made, however, whereby the International Wheat Council, established under Article XIII for the purpose of administering the Agreement, may grant an extension of time to any signatory Government which did not accept the Agreement by 1st July, 1949.