

This is an extremely unpalatable proposition, since it entails first of all a bold action within our own countries, and also a willingness to assume delicate political and economic consequences. It is in fact a double-edged blade, because we should decide gradually to eliminate within our own economies certain productions, even though the most elementary, and at the same time open our doors to the imports of the same products from abroad.

In the process, domestic production and import production will have to compete on an uneven basis, and instead of pursuing protectionist policies which would be called for according to classical patterns, we should extend a preferential treatment.

This is undoubtedly one of the hot issues which will be reiterated in Delhi after Geneva. Are we prepared to face it? I have singled out this problem and will not take any more of your subcommittee's time in elaborating on others. The question that this problem arouses is whether the road which has been taken by UNCTAD at Geneva is going in the right direction. At a time when aid is declining and is becoming increasingly unpopular, both in donor and in recipient countries, the question is whether enough groundwork has been done in order to have trade replace aid. My own view in this connection is that too little has been done to establish the necessary technical and structural prerequisites, and too much political theory has been thrown on the world's lap.

One important fact should be borne in mind, that is that international trade is no longer going to be governed by a purely mercantile basis. International trade requires a more complex and sophisticated approach: industrial and financial investments, consultative activities and technical assistance become part and parcel of the commercial activity at large. Trade demands nowadays a global participation in the challenging venture of economic development.

Turning now to the general situation of developing countries, as it appears to be in realistic terms, I should like to emphasize another conviction of mine. To lump together Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and to label them as all underdeveloped, provides one of the greatest misconceptions of which the international community suffers nowadays. You, gentlemen, know, as I do, that the countries within these wide areas are much more different than similar in very many ways. Their level of development is a widely apart among them as in certain cases it is apart from us. We must use a different yardstick. We must rationalize our interventions and our contributions.

I may add that, if the Atlantic nations want, as I hope, to adopt a long-term trade policy with respect to the less-developed countries, they should (a) realize that the issues of trade are strictly intertwined with those of aid, technical assistance, and development at large, and cannot be shored from the fundamental and increasingly serious worldwide problems of population growth and education; and (b) be prepared to define priorities because their resources, however great, are not enough to do everything everywhere.

They must also objectively assess which of the great world regions is more likely to reach, with our help, self-sustained development in the near future.

In this context, in my opinion, we should concentrate a great part of our efforts in Latin America.