

the focusing of public knowledge and reason on trade-intervention decisions? What seems to be needed is an independent agent, as nearly omniscient as possible, with responsibility and authority for maintaining constant pressure on those involved in the governance of international trade to reveal their actions and show publicly that they have considered all facts bearing on the public interest in the effects of their decisions. He needs to have authority to obtain all relevant facts and to disclose them. He would have no right to guide policy but would give the public—individually and collectively—a substantial measure of insurance against hidden maladministration and malfeasance. It is proposed, therefore, that each country joining in the continuing review of trade intervention appoint an officer for trade information with the power and status necessary to carry out this function.

In addition, there should be an adequate statistics staff, and a fact-finding body on trade barriers. On the international level, there should be a committee of the national officers for trade information, with an independent secretariat, to carry out the information and public consideration function vis-a-vis the intergovernmental conversations and collaboration proposed here. They should have the right to receive reports and complaints from individual traders as well as from governments. This arrangement would be an invaluable adjunct to the search for intergovernmental understanding in trade intervention matters. Without changing any powers or relationships, these officers should force emphasis on openness, trust, and reliance on reasoning where the present arrangements militate toward secrecy, maneuver, and resort to bargaining power.

ECONOMIC UNITY AND POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION

THE ETHIC OF ECONOMIC AGREEMENT

Much of the international structure for the governance of trade sketched in this paper is evolving rapidly. Although it does not recommend itself to trade-policy ideas based on assumptions of a separate national economy and a separate national public opinion, it has been evolving through (and, therefore, consistently with) existing political forms and power structures. It expresses the emerging realization that nations (especially industrial nations), while remaining formally independent, are economically interdependent; their governments cannot afford either the national loss caused by withholding cooperation in such surveillance as is required by the common international economy or the strain on political harmony and coexistence caused by trying to dominate that economy at the expense of one another's interests.

Of course, on the international level, each government must remain, as far as its own acts are concerned, the final judge of the interest of its own public—its electorate. Hence, there probably would be little point at this time in seeking further formal agreement on a definition of the general concept of international public interest in trade matters. Criteria enough have been elaborated and given intergovernmental status in GATT, FAO, UNCTAD, ECOSOC and elsewhere. Perhaps a restatement of some sort would have to emerge, in connection with the proposed forum for the examination of acts of intervention in relation to their declared public purposes, but the practical way to move forward with the proposal is through the intergovernmental