

PREFACE

This work is an adaptation in English – brought up to date to the end of 1984 – of a series of lectures delivered at the Hague Academy of International Law and published in French in its ‘Collected Courses’ 1983 – IV, Volume 182.

For a practitioner in the field of trade policy, an invitation to the Hague Academy was an honour to which he could not fail to be responsive.

It was at the same time an intellectual challenge which it was tempting to accept. For a former Director-General of GATT, it was also an invitation to draw on his twelve years experience and to weigh the relationship between law and policy in the international trade system.

GATT is sometimes considered an organization surrounded by a certain secrecy. The reason is evident. The complexities of GATT law, the particularity of its procedures, and the important rôle of negotiation in its operation, make it difficult for those without a knowledge of the workings of GATT from the inside to unravel its mysteries.

The purpose of this book is to throw the maximum light on the GATT, to show what it is, what it does and how it functions. It aims to present GATT in its essentials without, however, neglecting the individual characteristics of its rules, procedures and *modus operandi*.

This English version would not have seen the light of day without the invaluable co-operation of Mr. Harry Reed, C.B.E., whose contribution goes well beyond rendering the French into English, itself already a sufficiently delicate task. His long experience and extensive knowledge of the GATT have enabled him to propose important additions of substance, to improve the organization of the material and to give more depth to certain aspects. He has spared neither his time nor his talent in refining the text and in making it more accessible to the English reader.

Mr. Alexander Elkin, C.M.G., of London generously offered to read the manuscript. With his vast experience of the elaboration of international treaties, he has brought a greater degree of clarity and precision in expressing the concepts and in the legal language used in the book. Moreover, his extensive knowledge, as legal adviser, of international organizations, added to his intellectual curiosity, have throughout been a stimulating challenge for the author.

Several officials of the GATT secretariat have contributed to the development in depth of certain points. In particular, Messrs. A. Lindén, E.-U. Petersmann, S. Robinson and F. Roessler have been prepared, despite their heavy professional commitments, to examine the text and discuss many of its

X

aspects. Thanks to their profound knowledge of GATT law and procedures many precisions have been introduced, and certain inaccuracies avoided, in a subject matter difficult to grasp in all its implications by those not involved with it on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. A.B.D. Guibeb has prepared the index. He has carried out this arduous exercise with perception, precision and patience.

Last but not least, the ladies who performed the onerous task of typing the manuscript are to be greatly commended for the high quality of the work that they have accomplished with such reassuring good grace.

I extend my deep thanks to all those concerned for their generous contributions to this undertaking.

Geneva, June 1985

Olivier Long