

Editorial

WITH THIS ISSUE the Journal begins its twentieth year of publication. Since its very first article in 1967 by Yoshio Ohara on "Legal Aspects of Japan's Foreign Trade" it has presented to the world a wide panorama covering both national and international economic law. The tone was perhaps set by John Jackson in the second issue of the Journal writing on "The Puzzle of GATT"—a title which has not been bettered, for it was short and enticing without leaking any conclusions—and which had as its sub-title "Legal Aspects of a Surprising Institution". This was a penetrating examination of the function of law in international economic institutions. Professor Jackson wrote then that the fact that GATT managed to survive in spite of its lack of legal formality was instructive "because it tends to indicate that legal structures or institutions have less to do with the development of affairs than dimly understood political or economic forces, aided by the efforts of dedicated men." At the same time Diego Cordovez was contributing "The Making of UNCTAD", and R. Krishnamurti "Tariff Preferences in favour of the Developing Countries". In these early years the Journal received the support of many distinguished contributors, among whom we may mention B. T. G. Chidzero, Kenneth Dam, R. K. A. Gardiner, Harry Johnson, Eric Roll, Dudley Seers and Hans Singer.

This was a period of hope and encouragement for world economic cooperation. UNCTAD had just completed a first successful conference. Part IV was added to GATT, UNIDO was being formed, and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) was soon to be given birth. It cannot be pretended that these hopes have been altogether fulfilled, and only GATT in spite of a period of rising protectionism shows itself to be convincingly persistent. At their meeting in November 1985 the Contracting Parties established the Preparatory Committee which is to prepare by mid-July 1986 recommendations for the programme of negotiations for a new trade round, for adoption at a Ministerial Meeting to be held in September 1986. There will be no pre-conditions and all matters including services will be considered.

That other great survivor, having, in antithesis to GATT, an over-rigid legal structure (and perhaps because of it) is the European Community. At the meeting of the European Council last December there was a move in principle for majority voting in the Council of Ministers and the establishment of the internal market by 1992. A secretariat dealing with foreign affairs is also to be set up in Brussels. A modest increase in jurisdiction was given to the European Parliament. While solutions to other world economic problems do not seem very close at hand, there is no doubt that continued discussion of them in the Journal is essential.

While the status of the Journal is given to it by the contributors, it is the editorial function to provide an independent forum (for the Journal has never received any funds from any source) and also to present its readers with a publication which is not only persuasive but also pleasing. Out of the continual stream of available reading matter a selection has to be made, even if unconsciously. How many readers avoid works printed in typewriter facsimile? And how many eyes shy away, with those of the Editor, from letterpress in *sans serif*? When it was first mooted, the distinguished head of the printers that have given us their constant support said, "The Journal must be printed in Baskerville—the most elegant type-face. And please avoid capital letters and commas as far as possible, for they do so disfigure the page". These precepts we have sought to observe, while the printers for their part remove the white "rivers" flowing down the pages and the "widows" standing alone on a single line.

Despite rising costs of printing and paper we have endeavoured to set and maintain a high standard of production, and as readers will have noticed, we have increased the number of pages during the past year in order to give prompt publication of the articles we accept.

To all our contributors, and particularly those whose employment in international bodies gives them a special expertise, we are most grateful. We are also grateful to those writers who have sent contributions that through no fault of theirs we have decided not to publish, for this gives editorial policy a choice. The names of those to whom we are most indebted appear regularly in our pages, and to many others who give us their anonymous support we extend our heartfelt thanks.