Committee II - Expansion of Trade

CONSULTATIONS ON AGRICULTURAL POLICIES

(November 1961)

Note by the Executive Secretary

The contracting parties were informed by Airgram GATT/AIR/254 of 22 September 1961, that there had been delay in receiving background information for the country consultations and that in consultation with members of the Committee it had been agreed that the meeting of Committee II, which had been scheduled for the week commencing 9 October 1961, should be postponed until the nineteenth session. It is intended that Committee II should commence its work at the beginning of the session. A further notification will be circulated in the near future advising the dates which have been arranged for the individual country consultations.

In accordance with the procedures for consultations on agricultural policies outlined in document COM.II/4 and adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES during the fourteenth session, the secretariat has invited Argentina, Chile, Nigeria, Portugal and Uruguay to make available to the secretariat, for circulation to contracting parties, the necessary background and commodity information on which the consultations should be based. Material on non-tariff measures for the protection of agriculture or in support of incomes of agricultural producers and commodity information has already been received from the Governments of Argentina, Chile and Portugal. The documents on Chile and Portugal have been circulated to contracting parties (COM.II/2(y)/Rev.1, COM.II/101, COM.II/40(k), COM.II/125). The information received from the Government of Argentina will be circulated in the very near future (COM.II/40(l)).

As proposed in paragraph 2 of COM.II/4, the Governments of Argentina, Chile, Nigeria, Portugal and Uruguay have been requested to supply commodity information on dairy products, meat, cereals, sugar, vegetable oils and fish. Contracting parties who wish to do so are asked to notify any additions to this list of products that they would wish to see included in the consultations. In order that the countries being consulted may have sufficient time to prepare material, the contracting parties wishing to suggest additions are asked to notify the secretariat as soon as possible and not later than 25 October.
The study group on the measurement of agricultural protection met in Geneva between 3 and 6 October 1961 to resume its examination of this subject. The Second Report by the Study Group will be circulated to contracting parties and will be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

The representative of New Zealand requested at the last meeting of the Council, from 25 September to 3 October, that the proposal submitted by his Government providing for periodic reviews of developments in agricultural policies and measures of contracting parties (COM.II/122) be inserted as a specific point for discussion by Ministers in the draft agenda for the Ministerial meeting.