Committee III - Expansion of Trade

FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME OF COMMITTEE III

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. In accordance with the decision contained in paragraph 50 of the Fourth Progress Report of Committee III (L/1321), the Committee held a short meeting during the seventeenth session to consider further its future work programme.

Third list of products

2. The Committee was of the view that the commodity-by-commodity examinations carried out by the Committee on the first and second lists of products has revealed many of the major difficulties confronting exports of less-developed countries and considered that rather than conduct detailed examinations of further lists of products, a concentration of efforts on the prompt removal of these difficulties would be the best method of achieving a more rapid expansion of the exports of less-developed countries. It was, nevertheless, recognized that certain less-developed countries, particularly those which had more recently acceded to or associated themselves with the work of the CONTRACTING Parties, might wish the Committee to undertake an examination of the difficulties confronting certain other products. The Committee, therefore, invited less-developed countries to submit any additional requests to the secretariat at the earliest possible date. In order to facilitate the early preparation of documentation, requests for inclusion in a third list of products should be submitted before 15 January 1961.

Consolidation of information on trade barriers

3. The Committee recognized that the general round of tariff negotiations, which was scheduled to commence in February 1961, would provide an important opportunity for the removal of many of the barriers affecting the trade of less-developed countries. The Committee, therefore, requested the secretariat to prepare before the end of 1960, for the reference of countries participating in the negotiations, a document containing a consolidation of the information contained in the reports of the Committee on the major trade barriers which, in the view of the less-developed countries, impeded the expansion of their exports. The Committee felt that such a document might also prove useful to other work of the CONTRACTING Parties such as that undertaken by the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions or by Committee II on the Expansion of International Trade in Agricultural Products. This document will be circulated shortly.
Review of progress

4. It will be recalled that the Committee agreed (paragraph 46 of L/1321 refers) "that it would be desirable once again at its next meeting to review the progress made by contracting parties in eliminating the obstacles to the trade of less-developed countries which had already been identified by the Committee". To facilitate this review the secretariat was requested to prepare, on the basis of information supplied by individual contracting parties concerning steps taken by them, a report of progress achieved. Contracting parties are requested therefore to inform the secretariat of measures introduced by them which remove or reduce obstacles to the expansion of trade of less-developed countries with respect to the products which have been examined by the Committee as outlined in the Annexes to the Third and Fourth Progress Reports of the Committee. These products are cocoa, coffee, copper, cotton manufactures, jute manufactures, oilseeds and vegetable oils, tea, timber, tobacco, bicycles, sewing machines, electric fans, diesel engines, electric motors, finished leather, leather footwear and leather goods, iron ore, aluminium, alumina and bauxite, and sport goods.

Channelling of expansion of existing industries or starting of new industries by less-developed countries

5. As stated in paragraph 48 of the Fourth Progress Report of the Committee, "a thorough and comprehensive study of this section of the work programme would make it necessary for the Committee to be furnished with supporting information about plans which might exist in individual less-developed countries for the development of their industries and export targets for various products. The Committee agreed that it would also help if contracting parties could give an indication of overall foreign currency requirements and of estimated exchange receipts from exports. The secretariat was requested to prepare the necessary background information in consultation with the less-developed countries". The Committee noted in this respect that the Government of India had recently submitted to the secretariat copies of the Third Five Year Development Plan, containing details of the types of manufacturing to be undertaken, production and export targets, etc. Information relevant to the work of the Committee will be extracted by the secretariat and circulated to contracting parties in due course. The Committee noted that other less-developed countries had similar plans and invited these countries also to supply details of these plans to the secretariat.

Future meetings

6. The Committee considered that before its next full meeting it would be desirable to hold a shorter meeting to consider in detail the future work programme of the Committee and the best ways of implementing this programme. It was envisaged that this preliminary meeting would take place in March 1961.