GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Fifteenth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES

Gatt Liberalization Communiqué No.2

UNITED KINGDOM REMOVES MOST OF REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON DOLLAR IMPORTS

The following statement was made in a plenary meeting of the CONTRACTING PARTIES on 5 November by the Leader of the United Kingdom Delegation, Mr. W. Hughes.

"At the time of the Conference of Commonwealth countries in Montreal just over a year ago, the United Kingdom was able to announce substantial relaxations of the import restrictions maintained for balance of payments reasons. At the end of the last Session of the GATT in May, we were able to tell the CONTRACTING PARTIES of further important relaxations.

"I am now glad to be able to inform the CONTRACTING PARTIES that, as was announced in the House of Commons on 4 November, my Government have decided on another big step towards the final freeing of our import trade.

"As from 9 November most of the remaining restrictions imposed on imports from the dollar and relaxation areas will be removed. The following items will be liberalized immediately and in full:

Machinery - remaining items not yet liberalized
Electrical equipment and apparatus, including valves
Glass fibre and manufactures
Oil
Scientific, industrial and optical instruments, including cameras and binoculars costing more than seven pounds ten shillings
Amusement machinery
Chain
Diamond dies
Laboratory and decorated glassware
Wire cloth
Calcium carbide
Stockings
Stationery
Sports goods and toys
Cutlery
Imitation jewellery
Paper manufactures
Smokers' requisites
Clocks, parking meters
Textiles and clothing

MORE
Cheap books and newspapers with comic supplements  
Photographic and cinematograph equipment and films  
Lace  
Apparel containing cashmere  
Jewellery, precious stones and gold and silver goods  
Worked stone and slate  
Vehicles including motor cars  
Fresh and frozen salmon  
Meat other than pig meat  
Fresh citrus other than grapefruit  
Fruit juices (other than grapefruit and orange juices)  
Dried fruit  
Flower bulbs  

"This measure will bring us very near to the end of the programme of liberalization and non-discrimination which, as the CONTRACTING PARTIES know, it has been our declared policy to carry through and which was recently restated by our representative at the Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund. Attention has recently been particularly directed both here in the GATT and elsewhere towards the removal of discrimination - and in the case of the United Kingdom this has meant in the main discrimination against the dollar. One object of the present measures is to remove most of our remaining dollar discrimination, but we have gone substantially further than this. We are liberalizing imports of many consumer goods (for instance motor-cars) which have hitherto been subject to quota limitations not merely in respect of dollar supplies but also in respect of supplies from other areas.

"My Government consider that the action which I have just described is a major step forward. There are a few imports from the areas I have mentioned on which restrictions will remain: to abolish controls which have been in force for twenty years now gives rise to transitional problems which in some cases will take a little time yet to resolve. But I believe that by the action which we have taken we have broken the back of the problem so far as the United Kingdom is concerned and we intend to make further progress with the relaxation of outstanding restrictions as soon as we can. I hope that what I have said will prove a happy augury for our further discussions today."