Since the beginning of this year a number of contracting parties to the General Agreement have announced the adoption of measures by their governments designed to facilitate the importation of products from various sources. Included in these liberalization measures have been items of potential interest to less-developed countries.

The following is a brief résumé of recent steps taken by individual contracting parties in keeping with the recommendations of Committee III of the GATT Expansion of Trade Programme (trade problems of less-developed countries) to the effect that "contracting parties, particularly industrialized countries should examine tariffs, revenue duties and internal charges, quantitative restrictions and other measures applied by them with a view to facilitating an early expansion of the export earnings of less-developed countries".

During the first stage of its work Committee III examined barriers to the expansion of their trade in such products as vegetable oils and seeds, tobacco, cotton manufactures, tea, coffee, cocoa, jute manufactures, cotton, timber and lead. In reports to the fifteenth and sixteenth sessions of the Contracting Parties the Committee described and commented on the existence of such barriers to trade in the above-mentioned products as high tariffs, differential tariff treatment between raw materials and semi-manufactured products, preferential tariff treatment, internal taxes, quantitative restrictions, and on the discriminatory application of quantitative restrictions. The Committee proposes to examine in September 1960, in the same light, a second list of products, which includes the following commodities: bicycles, sewing machines, electric fans, diesel engines, electric motors, hides and skins, sporting and leather goods, iron ore, bauxite and aluminium.

**AUSTRALIA**

Effective 1 April 1960 the Australian Government announced the liberalization of imports of timber from all sources. On 20 May 1960 it was announced that imports of footwear would be admitted under the Import Licensing Plan, which means virtually unrestricted importation from all sources.

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

Czecholovakia recently lowered the retail price of coffee by more than 10 per cent.

**DENMARK**

On 1 March 1960 the Danish Government announced the liberalization of imports from all sources of various commodities, including the following of possible interest to less-developed countries: raw hides and skins, leather...
and articles of leather; toys; sports requisites. In addition, during the course of the sixteenth session the Danish delegate stated that the turnover tax on cocoa beans would be decreased in the near future.

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

In accordance with the terms of the GATT decision on the progressive elimination of quantitative restrictions, the Federal German authorities announced the liberalization, effective 1 January 1960, of the following products of possible interest to less-developed countries: flax yarns and woven fabrics of flax; yarns and woven fabrics of true hemp; hand made laces; twine, cordage and rope of hemp, flax or ramie; dolls; Christmas tree decorations; buttons. At the present time, consideration is being given to reducing the internal consumption tax on coffee and tea in Germany. Quotes for the importation of jute manufactures have been increased, and the Federal Republic has undertaken to abolish all quantitative restrictions applicable to jute manufactures not later than 30 June 1964.

**FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND**

The Government of the Federation announced during 1960 that imports of jute yarns were liberalized, and that the remaining import restrictions on jute manufactures would be removed in the near future.

**FRANCE**

The liberalization of imports of tropical timber into France from all sources was announced on 1 January 1960. Effective 13 January 1960, the Government of France announced the liberalization of various items including tea and ramie, raw or processed but not spun. On 5 April 1960, restrictions were removed on agglomerated wood panels and on cork stoppers measuring over 50 mm.

**ITALY**

Early this year the Government of Italy announced the liberalization from all sources of imports of raw cotton, as well as several products of natural rubber. Effective 1 June 1960, the following items were among those newly liberalized: cocoa paste, powder and cocoa butter (unsweetened), various cotton manufactures and certain oilseeds.

**JAPAN**

As of 4 January 1960 the following dollar goods were permitted entry under the Automatic Approval list: lanans, copitons and kapur (timber trees); abaca fibre and waste. In April 1960, coffee beans were added to the Automatic Approval list and dollar discrimination was removed against iron and steel scrap. The Japanese Government announced the inclusion in the Automatic Approval list on 1 July 1960 of cattle hides, kip skins and some waste leathers. At that time a number of items were added to the Automatic Fund Allocation list including: household sewing machines and heads, and horizontal water-cooled diesel engines (not over 30 HP).

**NEW ZEALAND**

Effective 9 March 1960 dollar discrimination was removed in respect of imports of timber. The "Token" scheme has been expanded to include roasted coffee and coffee essences, products for which no allocation existed previously. In addition, the basic allocation has been increased for various leathers.
NORWAY

Effective 1 July 1960 the Government announced the removal of restrictions on the following products of interest: coffee essences and extracts, coffee preparations, cocoa shells and waste, cocoa paste, jute carpets, alloyed lead metal, certain articles of wood, sports equipment. At the same time, the level of internal taxes on chocolate was reduced.

SWEDEN

On 1 April 1960 the Government of Sweden announced the removal of restrictions on a number of products including the following: coffee, woven fabrics of cotton, paintings, drawings and pastels executed entirely by hand.

TURKEY

Effective 15 February 1960 the Government of Turkey announced the liberalization of a wide range of commodities including the following items: bamboo for flour mills, natural cork and waste cork, packing canvas, jute bags, fish hooks, sewing machine parts.

UNITED KINGDOM

Effective 1 February 1960 the United Kingdom announced the liberalization from the dollar area of imports of tobacco and tobacco manufactures (other than cigars). In addition, the mark-up on the bulk of jute goods imported into the United Kingdom by the Jute Control was reduced from 30 to 20 per cent this year. The United Kingdom Government has a programme for the progressive liberalization on a non-discriminatory basis of restrictions on certain other products such as basketware.

During the course of the sixteenth session a number of contracting parties commented on the progress which had been achieved in reducing or eliminating barriers to imports from less-developed countries, at the same time expressing the hope that recent trade liberalization measures such as those mentioned above would soon be followed by further steps in the same direction. Out of a total of twenty-seven countries participating in the work of Committee III, thirteen have thus far this year instituted new measures designed to facilitate the expansion of trade. A review of further progress is to be undertaken at the September meeting of the Committee.

The GATT secretariat will issue further communiqués in this series as and when notification from governments of new measures is received.

END