GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

Tariff Negotiations
Torquay

NEGOTIATIONS UNDER ARTICLE XXVIII

United Kingdom

There is herewith circulated a letter addressed to the Executive Secretary on 31 March 1951 by the United Kingdom Delegation:

"With reference to my letter of the 2nd November 1950, in which I informed you of the proposal by the United Kingdom Government to modify the concession contained in Schedule XIX in respect of fresh strawberries for the period from 1st April to 31st July, I have the honour to inform you that the United Kingdom Government have given further consideration to this proposal in the light of the discussion at the 24th Meeting on 15th December last, of the Contracting Parties of the proposed reservation by the Australian Delegation to the proposal to extend to 1st January, 1954, the date by which a contracting party would be free to avail itself of the provisions of Article XXVIII of the G.A.T.T. in order to modify any of the concessions contained in its Geneva or Annecy Schedules.

2. In this connection I have to state that the United Kingdom Government have received an application from the domestic producers concerned for a review of the tariff on fresh strawberries. Until this review has been completed the United Kingdom Government will not be in a position to decide whether any and, if so, what alteration in the present rate of duty is required. Their purpose in proposing a modification at this time in their commitment on fresh strawberries was to secure sufficient latitude to enable them to adjust the current rate of duty in case they should decide, as a result of the tariff review referred to above, to increase the rate beyond the limit of the present commitment before the 1st January, 1954.

3. As a result of discussions the French Delegation have agreed to a rate of 6d a lb. being substituted for the present commitment in respect of the period 10th June to 31st July, both dates inclusive, and to accept in compensation a binding of a rate of 2d per lb. on mimosa. The French Delegation has, however, expressed its preference that there should not be any immediate modification in the existing commitment in respect of the earlier part of the period.

4. In these circumstances the United Kingdom Government would be prepared, for their part, to revalidate their present commitment in respect of this product for the period from 1st April to 9th June, provided they could have the assurance that, if and when they should decide that an adjustment in the commitment in respect of that period is necessary to enable them to implement the result of the tariff review referred to above, the Contracting Parties would give sympathetic consideration to a request by the United Kingdom for an opportunity to negotiate the necessary adjustment, in accordance with the procedures of Article XXVIII of the G.A.T.T., in the commitment before the 1st January, 1954. They assume that, in accordance with their practice on previous occasions when a contracting party has made a request of this kind and having regard to the facility which has been accorded to the Governments of Australia and Pakistan, the Contracting Parties would be prepared to give sympathetic consideration to such a request by the United Kingdom.

5. I have to add that this matter has been discussed with the French Delegation as representing the contracting party with whom the concession was initially negotiated and that they, for their part, would be prepared to accept the procedure outlined in paragraph 4 above.

6. I should be grateful if you would arrange for copies of this letter to be circulated as a secret document to the Delegations participating in the present Conference."