GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE
Third Session of the Contracting Parties

THE ANNECY PROTOCOL OF TERMS OF ACCESSION

The Annecy Protocol of Accession is the document which will enable the ten governments which completed their negotiations at Annecy to adhere to the General Agreement.

Under the terms of GATT Article XXXIII, a majority of two thirds of the twenty three contracting parties are needed to take a decision to admit each acceding country. The Protocol of Accession, which is opened for signature today at Lake Success, for the admission of each of the ten acceding countries, will remain open for signature by contracting parties up to 30 November 1949. A contracting party is required to sign in respect of each acceding government for which it wishes to record a favourable vote. Therefore, by 1 December, each acceding government will know whether it has received the necessary two-thirds votes of the contracting parties to permit its accession to the General Agreement.

The arrangements for bringing the acceding governments within the obligations of the Agreement and for bringing the Annecy tariff concessions into effect are necessarily somewhat complicated. The main fact is that the acceding governments, which have received a two-thirds majority by 1 December, will have until 30 April 1950 to sign the Protocol of Accession, which implies that they will enforce the Agreement provisionally within 30 days of signature and that they will put into force the tariff concessions which they have negotiated at Annecy.

The Schedules

The Schedules are the lists containing the new, reduced rates of import duties, item by item, established by each participating country, as a result of the Annecy negotiations. They are reproduced as Annexes to the General Agreement. There are 28 so-called Annecy schedules. These will be added to the schedules negotiated in 1947 at Geneva and incorporated in the Agreement, as Annexes. The 28 schedules set out the rates of duty negotiated by the 10 acceding governments (omitting the negotiations of Colombia which remain uncompleted) and the rates of duty negotiated with the acceding governments by 18 contracting parties.
It will be noted that in the list of schedules which follows among the Contracting Parties, Burma and Southern Rhodesia did not undertake negotiations; their trade with the acceding governments was not such as to provide an opportunity to exchange offers for tariff reductions.

Annex A contains the schedules of Australia, Benelux, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, India, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Syria-Lebanon, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, United States.

Annex B contains the schedules of Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, Greece, Haiti, Italy, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sweden and Uruguay.

Each schedule is set out in three columns. First the tariff item number as specified in the Tariff of each country concerned. Secondly, the description of product. And lastly, the new, reduced rate of duty established in the Annecy negotiations.

The description of product lends itself to almost infinite variety, since it covers the whole, vast range of products entering into international trade. It may be simple, such as, for example "sheep" or "butter" or "quicksilver". But it is more often very detailed, as for instance "tomatoes, from March 1 to April 15, inclusive", or specific sizes of plywood cases of birchwood; or wines and spirits by alcoholic strengths. Textiles, silks, and chemicals, for instance, are often subdivided into very numerous separate tariff items. For this reason, it is difficult to assess the results of the Annecy tariff negotiations by ascertaining the number of items covered. Some items may represent annual imports valued at millions of dollars, others may represent a comparatively small amount of trade.

The "Rate of Duty" in the third column of the Schedules is usually shown either as a specific duty, that is so many dollars (or the appropriate national currency) per unit of number, weight or measurement; or as an ad valorem duty, which is a percentage of the value of the product; or as "free" which means that the product can be imported free of customs duties.