Committee III - Expansion of Trade

DRAFT REPORT OF COMMITTEE III

Redraft of section on participation of less-developed countries in the general round of tariff negotiations

4. It was brought to the attention of the Committee that less-developed countries had not made full use of the possibilities which were open to them in the forthcoming tariff negotiations to request tariff and other concessions on the products examined by the Committee. In this connexion, some less-developed countries explained the difficulties which they envisaged in participating in the negotiations. They were, in the first place, rarely principal suppliers of the products on which they would seek concessions. Secondly, if such products became subject to negotiation they felt that the present system, based as it was on reciprocity, required them to grant tariff reductions in exchange, which for developmental and fiscal reasons they could ill afford. In addition, a large part of the import outlays of less-developed countries was often for capital goods for which duties were in any case low or negligible.

5. With regard to these problems, the attention of the Committee was drawn to a number of ways in which less-developed countries may usefully participate in tariff negotiations. A detailed explanation of the facilities available to less-developed countries in participating in the tariff negotiations is contained in Annex A.

6. In view of the possibilities which did exist for meeting the difficulties envisaged by less-developed countries, the Committee urged the less-developed countries to
avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the negotiation procedures for obtaining reductions in the barriers confronting their exports by submitting request lists of items of interest to them. Industrialized countries in turn, when preparing for and entering into negotiations, should bear in mind and give sympathetic consideration to the needs of less-developed countries. In this regard, the Committee expressed the hope that industrialized countries would not require full reciprocity.

7. The Committee felt that because of the technical difficulties which had again been voiced by less-developed countries concerning their ability to participate in the forthcoming negotiations, the attention of the Tariff Negotiations Committee should again be directed to this problem. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the Tariff Negotiations Committee seek solutions to these problems so as to enable all contracting parties to participate effectively in the forthcoming tariff negotiations.