UNITED STATES PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF INDUSTRIAL NON-TARIFF BARRIERS IN THE GATT TARIFF STUDY

In line with the agreement that delegations might submit suggestions for consideration by the Steering Group in advance of its forthcoming meeting on 25 September, concerning organization of future work (see COM.IND/W/31), the delegation of the United States has submitted the following proposal which it has asked to have circulated to those attending the Steering Group meeting.

The GATT secretariat would be asked to identify each notification in the industrial non-tariff barrier inventory against any of the eleven countries included in the Tariff Study with the specific tariff item number(s) of that country's tariff schedule to the extent that specific identification is feasible. In cases where specific tariff item information is not available, the notification would be identified as covering a portion of a particular four-digit BTN heading(s). If the non-tariff barrier applies to all products within a heading(s), it would be identified at that level. For example, quotas, voluntary restraints, State trading, and various licensing systems could be pinpointed to specific items, headings, or identified as applicable to a portion of a heading. Non-tariff barrier notifications which apply to all or nearly all of a particular country's tariff schedule, such as border taxes, valuation base, documentation requirements, non-conformity of tariff classification to the BTN, or government procurement would be covered by a general headnote; only those products excluded from coverage would be identified with specific tariff items or BTN headings.

Some of the information for this project is already available from the work of the Joint Working Group on Quantitative Restrictions (L/3391 and its addenda; COM.IND/W/28). No assessment would be made of the trade incidence of particular non-tariff barriers.

The secretariat would be asked to incorporate these non-tariff barrier notifications which have been identified with specific tariff items or BTN headings into each of the three tabulations produced for the industrial tariff study by a set of codes which identify the type of restriction, such as used in the Joint Working Group tables. The codes should be as detailed and give as much specific information as possible, for instance, differentiating between bilateral and global quotas, distinguishing various types of licensing systems, designating application of the restriction by or to only a particular country or area.
The symbols would appear in conjunction with or as a separate column by the tariff averages shown for the particular country in each of the three tabulations. There should be an indication, perhaps by an "ex" or an asterisk, by the code for restrictions that apply to only certain items within a BTN heading in Summary Table I or to only certain products or headings within a product category or stage of processing in Summary Tables II and III. A general headnote to each of the tabulations would list the non-tariff barriers by country which cover all or nearly all industrial items in that country's tariff schedule (the exceptions also being shown) which must also be kept in mind when using the tabulations.

The secretariat would also be asked to prepare an annex to be attached to each of the three tabulations for the Tariff Study. This annex would consist of a listing in BTN order of each heading and specific tariff item number(s) to which a non-tariff barrier has been coded in the Tariff Study. The corresponding notification number(s) in the non-tariff barrier inventory would be listed in country columns arranged horizontally across the page in the same order as the countries appear in the Tariff Study. Notification numbers for non-tariff barriers which apply to all or nearly all of a tariff schedule would also be listed in country columns, without identification with BTN numbers, in a separate section.

The purpose of the annex would be to provide a cross reference to far more descriptive information than can be incorporated in a set of symbols about individual restrictions. It would also provide greater specificity in some cases as to individual tariff item numbers subject to restriction than can be shown in the tabulation.