GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Ninth Session

Working Party 3 on the European Coal
and Steel Community

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE DELEGATES OF AUSTRIA,
DENMARK, INDIA, SWEDEN, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES
AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY
ON 3 NOVEMBER 1954

I. TARIFFS

Harmonization of tariffs

Has any progress been made in the harmonization of the steel tariff rates contemplated in the preamble of the Waiver?

Can the Italian Representative indicate the reasons why the steps necessary for such harmonization have not yet been taken?

What are the intentions regarding the harmonization of the Italian rates applied to imports from third countries?

Can the Member States indicate when they will achieve a complete harmonization of their customs tariffs?

II. BENELUX TARIFF QUOTAS

Common steel products

Have any changes been made since the Eighth Session in the quotas introduced in 1953?

What has been the level of imports into Benelux?

Are the quotas adequate?
On special steels

(d) On what basis have the figures outlined in Annex 9 of the Report been established?

(e) Do the quotas introduced in 1954 appear now to be adequate?

III. TARIFFS APPLIED TO SPECIAL STEEL PRODUCTS

(a) What were the customs duties actually applied by the Member countries on those imports
   (i) during the period leading up to the creation of the common market for this type of steel on 1 August 1954
   (ii) after that date?

(b) In particular a comparison between the new German rates with the previous nominal and effective rates would be of assistance.

(c) What has been the effect of the changes in tariffs on imports of special steel from third countries on the volume of such imports in the Community?

IV. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

(a) What kind of reciprocity the High Authority expects from third countries when they negotiate with them?

(b) In assessing such reciprocity, does the High Authority intend to take into account the fact that third countries have agreed to the Waiver?

V. SCRAP TRADE WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

Subsidization of scrap imports

(a) In view of the fact that the Authorities of the Community have set up a system for subsidization of scrap imports into the Community, it is desirable to obtain information as to how this system operates, whether it results in pooled purchases and what measures are taken to ensure that the import system does not result in discriminatory purchasing.

Controls on scrap exports

(b) (i) What are the reasons motivating the maintenance at the present time of restrictions on exports of scrap from the Community to third countries?
(ii) On what criteria is based the application of such restrictions? and

(iii) What are the responsibilities exercised by the Brussels Scrap Office in respect of the export of scrap and to the delivery of export licences?

VI. CARTELS AND PRICE AGREEMENTS

(a) If the High Authority and the representatives of the Member States agree that the cartels directly or indirectly influence normal competition within the Community's market, how do they then reconcile this fact with the undertakings mentioned in the Waiver, to prevent any restrictive or discriminatory practices impeding normal competition so far as they relate to coal and steel products?

(b) It would be helpful if the Member States could describe the specific measures they have taken or are currently envisaging with regard to practices impeding normal competition.

(c) Information is specially desired on the scope and status of the steel export price agreement, its effects on prices and availability of ECSC steel to third countries.

(d) What measures have been taken by the authorities of the Community regarding that price agreement?

(e) What is the basic position of the High Authority on the problem resulting from the existence of export price agreements? Does the High Authority consider that the existence of that agreement is consistent with Article 65 of the Treaty in view of the fact that steel exports of France, Belgium and Luxemburg represent about 35 to 50 per cent of the total steel production of these countries?

(f) The Member States are requested to give information as regards the studies which have been undertaken on the activities of the various European coal cartels, especially as to the influence of these cartels on the coal prices inside and outside the Community.

VII. EXPORT PRICES

(a) On the basis of which criteria does the High Authority decide whether the export prices are equitable or not?

(b) In making such determination, does the High Authority take into account the rebates which, according to the press reports, are granted to German shipyards (special rebate of 50 DM per ton of steel used for the construction of ships to be exported) or, in France, on wire rod for indirect export (rebate of 7.5 per cent)?
(c) Could the High Authority give detailed information concerning:

(i) the export prices as well as the prices applied on the common market for wire rod, merchant bars, ship plate, black plate (2, 5-3 mm.) and galvanized plate (Thomas quality), compared with the corresponding prices applied within the Community countries, also, when eventually existing rebates are taken into account.

(ii) and in particular the export prices for steel exports to India on merchant bars and thin sheets on the following dates:

1952: July, December
1953: April, August, October
1954: April

VIII. PARTICULAR QUESTIONS

(a) Can the Member States reassure the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the effect that, in fulfilling commitments now being undertaken by them with third countries to furnish supplies, in times of shortage, they will comply with their obligations under the GATT (see paragraph 6 of document L/247)?

Subsidies

(b) Could information be supplied by the Italian Government on their subsidies on ship plates for their shipyards?