REPORT ON CONSULTATIONS HELD UNDER THE PROCEDURES OF MTN/AG/4

UNITED STATES

At its meeting on 20 December 1976, Group "Agriculture" agreed that delegations having participated in consultations should endeavour, in advance of the next meeting, to send to the secretariat summary notes with respect to the consultations in which they had participated. The secretariat would assemble and distribute the summaries in order to facilitate a decision concerning the further work of the Group.

In accordance with this procedure, the UNITED STATES has sent the secretariat the following note.

Report on Consultations held Between the United States and the European Economic Community and its Member States

In accordance with the decision taken by Group "Agriculture" on 16 December 1975 (MTN/AG/4), consultations took place on 17 and 18 March 1977 between the United States and the European Economic Community and its member States. These consultations were based on the United States notifications contained in MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10 and MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10/Suppl.1; and on the EC notifications contained in MTN/AG/W/11/Add.5. This note is being submitted in accordance with the decision on reporting reached by Group "Agriculture" at its meeting on 20 December 1976 (MTN/AG/5).

The consultations gave a better understanding of the import measures and trading systems which were the subject of the notifications. They also brought to light that certain import restrictions notified are no longer applied.
With regard to the EC notifications - the consultations permitted the Community Delegation to express their concern over what they consider to be the trade restrictive effects of various United States import measures. The United States declared its willingness to examine any specific access problem encountered by the EC or its member States.

With regard to the United States notifications, the consultations permitted the United States Delegation to discuss the Community's and member States import régimes and to question the rationale and method of application of individual import measures, in particular the elements of uncertainty and arbitrariness inherent in the variable levy and reference price systems of the Community. The United States also expressed concern over the residual quantitative restrictions maintained by certain member States.

The Community and the member States took note of the United States views.

The consultations proved useful for the further work of Group "Agriculture".

Report on the Consultations Between the United States and Switzerland

Under the procedures of MTN/AG/W/10 consultations were held on 4 April 1977 between the United States and Switzerland covering their respective notifications contained in MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10 and MTN/AG/W/11/Add.18.

Notification by Switzerland to the United States

The consultation covering the Swiss notification to the United States provided the United States a better understanding of Swiss interests in the measures notified and allowed the United States to explain the reasons for those measures.

Notification by the United States to Switzerland

The consultation regarding measures notified by the United States allowed a useful exchange of views and information between the two countries. The United States gained valuable knowledge about the method of operation of several of the Swiss import systems notified which will be of benefit in future negotiations.
Report of the Consultations Between the United States and Austria

Under the procedures of MTN/AG/4, consultations were held on 17 May between the United States and Austria covering the notifications addressed to Austria by the United States contained in document MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10 (and Supplement 1). The consultations provided additional details on the import régimes applied by Austria to the products notified and allowed the United States to indicate the items in which it has a specific interest. Austria, for its part, took the opportunity to indicate groups of products of general export interest to Austria.

Report on the Consultations Between the United States and Japan

Under the procedures of MTN/AG/4, consultations were held on 15 March between the United States and Japan covering their respective notifications contained in MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10 (and Supplement 1) and MTN/AG/W/11/Add.16.

Notification by Japan to the United States

The notification by Japan concerned one item (tuna) and the consultation permitted a useful exchange of information and views on the United States tariff applying to that product.

Notifications by the United States to Japan

The consultation regarding measures notified by the United States confirmed the correctness of information available to the United States on a wide range of items and also clarified the status of certain other items for which information was either lacking or out-of-date. In addition, Japan was able to inform the United States that the quotas for canned corn and walnuts are not applied.

The consultations were regarded as useful for future work of the Group "Agriculture".

Report on the Consultations Between the United States and the Nordic Countries

Under the procedures of MTN/AG/4, consultations were held on 8 June 1977 between the United States and three of the Nordic countries covering their respective notifications contained in MTN/AG/W/11/Add.10 and Supplement 1, and MTN/AG/W/11/Add.20.
Notification by Finland to the United States

The United States was able to inform Finland of several modifications of its tariff schedule involving items subject to consultations, and to indicate the correct tariff headings for certain items notified by Finland.

Notification by Norway to the United States

The United States provided Norway with the relevant TSUS numbers for the products notified and explained United States requirements in order for one product notified (hardened marine fats) to be certified as "GRAS" (generally regarded as safe) by the Food and Drug Administration.

Notification by the United States to Norway

The United States gained a clearer picture of the various import systems applied by Norway to the products notified. The United States learned that many of the restrictions form an integral part of Norway's tightly controlled food marketing system. The United States was also able to get a better understanding of the specific details concerning the operation of Norway's system of import restrictions.

Notification by the United States to Sweden

The consultation allowed the United States to update information available to it regarding current Swedish import practices. Sweden provided a detailed explanation of its seasonal import restrictions on certain products, and its variable levies applying to various other products.

The consultations between the United States and the Nordic countries were useful and will be of benefit in the future negotiations.