"1. After the expiration of three years from the day on which this Agreement enters into force, a contracting party may, without withdrawing from the Agreement, negotiate a variation in the treatment provided for an item by Article VIII with only such other contracting parties as are the principal suppliers of the product.

2. Subject to the provisions of Article XIX, the contracting parties agree that they will accept such variation in the treatment provided for in Article VIII as may be agreed between the other contracting parties referred to in paragraph 1.

Comment.

1. Para. 1 of the amendment gives to any party the right at the end of three years -

(a) to select the principal suppliers of a commodity
(b) to negotiate a variation in the tariff of the item without denouncing the whole agreement or seeking the consent of all the signatories to the variation.

2. Article VIII refers to the tariff rates to be applied to the trade of members. Paragraph 1 of the above amendment provides a machinery for negotiating with some only of the members a variation in the rate for any one item. It seems necessary therefore to incorporate, formally, an acceptance by the other members of the results of the negotiation. Otherwise their individual consent to the modification of the original agreement would still have to be sought and the purpose of the amendment is to avoid that. Paragraph 2 is designed to meet this requirement.

3. Provision is made in Article XIX which would enable any contracting party that is dissatisfied with the choice of principal suppliers or with the extent of a negotiated variation to seek consultation and the intervention of the Interim Tariff Committee."