

26 MAR 1957

GATT/AIR/109

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN CUSTOMS UNION - MEETING OF
INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON 24 APRIL

1. SINCE THE DESPATCH OF GATT/AIR/106 OF 20 FEBRUARY, THE SIGNATURE OF THE COMMON MARKET TREATY HAS BEEN FURTHER POSTPONED AND ACCORDINGLY THE BASIS FOR RECOMMENDING THE CONVENING OF A SPECIAL SESSION ON 23 APRIL NO LONGER EXISTS. I HAVE RECENTLY CONDUCTED AN EXTENSIVE SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONTRACTING PARTIES WHICH REVEALS THAT THERE IS AT PRESENT NO GENERAL AGREEMENT ON THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN DEALING WITH THIS MATTER. HAVING CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE QUESTION IN THE LIGHT OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE CONTRACTING PARTIES, THE CHAIRMAN AND I HAVE DECIDED THAT THE BEST COURSE TO FOLLOW IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE TO CONVENE THE INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE TO MEET IN GENEVA AT 10.30 A.M. ON 24 APRIL. AT THIS MEETING THE INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE WOULD CONSIDER THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMON MARKET TREATY BY THE CONTRACTING PARTIES. IT HAS BEEN INDICATED BY A NUMBER OF CONTRACTING PARTIES THAT IF SUCH A MEETING IS TO BE HELD, THEY WOULD WISH THAT IT SHOULD ALSO BE THE OCCASION FOR A PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES WHICH ARE LIKELY TO ARISE IN THE SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS BY THE CONTRACTING PARTIES IN PLENARY SESSION, AND THAT THEY WOULD HOPE THAT THE REPRESENTATION AT THE INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING WOULD BE AT A LEVEL APPROPRIATE TO THIS PURPOSE.

2. ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF THE PROCEDURE SUGGESTED ABOVE IS THAT BY 24 APRIL CONTRACTING PARTIES SHOULD HAVE HAD THE TREATY IN THEIR HANDS FOR SOME LITTLE TIME. COPIES OF THE TREATY CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTRACTING PARTIES ON APPLICATION TO: CONFERENCE INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE POUR LE MARCHÉ COMMUN ET L'EUROPE, CHATEAU DE VAL DUCHESSE, 259 BOULEVARD DU SOUVERAIN, BRUSSELS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT COPIES (IN FRENCH) WILL BE AVAILABLE ON 29 MARCH AND COPIES OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION ON 5 APRIL.

3. I HOPE THAT THIS REVISED SUGGESTION WILL BE GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE TO CONTRACTING PARTIES, BUT I WOULD POINT OUT THAT IN THE EVENT THAT ANY CONTRACTING PARTY IS NOT SATISFIED IT WOULD BE OPEN TO IT TO REQUEST AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE WHICH COULD TAKE PLACE UPON TEN DAYS' NOTICE.

4. IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS QUESTION, I WOULD REMIND CONTRACTING PARTIES THAT THOSE WHICH ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE ENTITLED TO BE REPRESENTED AND, UPON REQUEST, TO BE CO-OPTED.

5. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD TAKE THE OCCASION OF A MEETING IN APRIL TO DEAL ALSO WITH A FEW OTHER QUESTIONS, AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) THE INTENSIFICATION OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND (GATT/DIR/102).
- (2) PROCEDURES TO BE ADOPTED IN THE LIGHT OF THE EXPIRY ON 31 DECEMBER 1957 OF THE DECLARATION OF 10 MARCH 1955 ON THE CONTINUED APPLICATION OF SCHEDULES. (A NOTE WILL BE ISSUED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.)
- (3) PLANS FOR BUILDING AN EXTENSION TO LE BOUAGE.
- (4) REPORT ON PLANS OR PROSPECTS FOR:
 - (a) ARTICLE XII:4(b) CONSULTATIONS IN JUNE AND OCTOBER
 - (b) NEGOTIATIONS ON THE NEW BRAZILIAN TARIFF
 - (c) TARIFF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND
- (5) ARRANGEMENTS FOR A MEETING IN JUNE TO DEAL WITH OTHER QUESTIONS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE:
 - (a) RESTRICTIVE BUSINESS PRACTICES
 - (b) ANTI-DUMPING AND COUNTERVAILING DUTIES
 - (c) FRANCE-TUNISIA CUSTOMS UNION
 - (d) THE GREEK INCREASE IN A BOUND DUTY.

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