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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

FRENCH IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

Import Programme for April - September 1953

1. The French Government has transmitted a copy of a memorandum which it has circulated to the governments of the OEEC countries, setting out its import programme from OEEC countries for the second and third quarters of 1953. The programme is summarised in paragraphs 3 to 5 below.

2. The proposed reduction of imports has been considered by the Chairman and the Executive Secretary under the intersessional procedures adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the Seventh Session. In the circumstances, it is not considered necessary to convene a meeting of the Intersessional Committee. However, should any contracting party consider that a meeting of the Intersessional Committee should be held to examine this matter, it is open to that contracting party to ask that a meeting be convened in accordance with the intersessional procedures.

3. The French programme for imports from OEEC countries in the second and third quarters of 1953, as set out in the memorandum, retains the general structure of the previous programmes and is based on the same principles.[1] As a result of the development of its position in EPU, France has found it impossible to maintain the monthly ceiling of $130 million laid down in the preceding programme. The size of France's deficit in EPU in the last six months would call for the fixing of the monthly ceiling at $100 million, but the French Government considers that so large a cut might endanger the French economy and might seriously affect the interests of France's trading partners. Taking into account the expected improvement in exports, the French Government, therefore, has decided to avoid any further reduction in "traditional" imports.

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[1] See GATT/CP/144 and Add.1, L/10 and L/21.

4. The monthly ceiling for the six months beginning 1 April 1953 has been fixed at $116 million. The cut of $14 million as compared with the preceding programme is concentrated wholly on the "irreducible" sector. The following table, based on a new classification of the affected imports, shows the changes:

Monthly Ceilings of Imports from OEEC Countries
(millions of EPU account units)

	1952 Quarter IV 1953 Quarter I	1953 Quarters II and III
Irreducible	100.6	86.6
Traditional, ex-freed	11.4	11.4
Traditional, quota	18.0	18.0
Total	130.0	116.0

5. The $14 million reduction is spread over a wide range of goods. Of the 21 categories into which the irreducible imports are classified, 14 categories, (food and agricultural products, coal, pitch, petroleum and products, non-ferrous metals, non-ferrous metal ores, non-metallic minerals, general chemicals, organic chemicals, hides and skins, timber and cork, pulp, metal semi-products and transport equipment) have suffered cuts ranging from 2 to 60 per cent. Four categories (spare parts, books, certain industrial raw materials and defence equipment) are not affected, while quotas for three categories have been increased (textile raw materials, by 9 per cent; iron and steel by 29 per cent; and certain special chemicals by 10 per cent).