

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

CONFIDENTIAL

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Sub-Committee on Non-Tariff Barriers
Group on Quantitative Restrictions

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NON-TARIFF BARRIERS AFFECTING THE IMPORTATION OF UNITED STATES COAL

Joint Note by the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community

The High Authority, acting in the name of the member States of the European Coal and Steel Community, has the honour to present below their opinion on the document regarding imports of United States coal into various countries which was presented by the United States on 8 July 1964 to the Group on Quantitative Restrictions established by the GATT Sub-Committee on Non-Tariff Barriers (TN.64/NTB/23).

1. The member States of the European Coal and Steel Community feel bound to express a fundamental reservation as to the procedure followed by the United States delegation in raising several very different questions in its note which, by their very nature do not concern only the Group on Quantitative Restrictions. Such a procedure, which amounts to dealing with very different problems affecting a single product from a single region, does not seem consistent with the basic principles governing the organization of our work, since in practice it would mean instituting negotiations on a product-by-product basis.
2. As regards the actual statements in the note concerning the member States of the European Coal and Steel Community, the following comments are called for:

The tremendous change which the Community has been traversing in the past few years in the utilization of energy sources has caused a decisive modification which is still continuing, in the Community's supply structure in this field, to the benefit of imports.

The combined action of these factors has been to the considerable disadvantage of Community coal, which for a very long time past has been the main resource of several large areas of the Community, and consequently the backbone of their economy. The serious difficulties which the coal industry of the countries concerned have been facing for several years now have repercussions of a special nature because of the great economic and social implications of this situation on the regional and national level.

The governments of the member States concerned have countered the difficulties in various ways, according to the particular characteristics of each situation. In taking appropriate measures and thus meeting a situation envisaged by GATT, they have tried to ward off the risk of fundamental economic disturbances and the serious social repercussions which they imply.

The member States of the European Coal and Steel Community nevertheless wish to emphasize that despite the delicate situation of their coal market the Community has never ceased, even at the height of its difficulties, to be a substantial importer of United States coal.

In conclusion, the member States concerned consider that the measures in force are essential for their coal policy.