

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE
COMMISSION INVESTIGATIONS

Ceramic Tableware

The following communication has been received from the mission of United States.

The United States International Trade Commission on 31 March reported to the President that, in its opinion, "the termination of the import relief applicable to certain ceramic tableware would adversely affect the competitive position of the domestic industry producing earthen table and kitchen articles." In the first case under Section 203 of the Trade Act of 1974, Commissioners Will E. Leonard, Daniel Minchew, George M. Moore, Catherine Bedell, and Joseph O. Parker formed the majority. Commissioner Italo H. Ablondi dissented.

The Commission's investigation followed receipt of a petition filed by the American Dinnerware Emergency Committee on 30 October 1975. The petition requested the continuation of the import relief scheduled to terminate on 30 April 1976. Relief in the form of increased rates of duty was granted by presidential proclamation in April 1972.¹ It has generally been effective in assisting the domestic industry to adjust to import competition. However, certain unforeseen factors have delayed complete adjustment.

Imports of these items, which are subject to import relief, have decreased substantially since the imposition of the escape-clause rates. Currency revaluation, foreign inflation, and increases in energy costs have resulted in certain articles, originally subject to the escape-clause rates, being priced out of the escape-clause ranges.

¹The 1972 Article XIX action in respect of ceramic tableware was notified in document L/3700, dated 5 May 1972.

It is expected however, that the termination of import relief at this time would probably result in increased imports of earthen and china table and kitchen articles.

Production centres of earthen table and kitchen articles are located primarily in Ohio, West Virginia, California, and Pennsylvania. More than 5,000 jobs were provided by the industry in 1975.

The volume of imports affected by this import relief was \$6.9 million out of \$78.1 million worth of imports of earthen table and kitchen articles in 1975.

After taking into account the advice of the Commission, under Section 203 of the Trade Act, the President may extend import relief for one three-year period. The relief cannot exceed the level currently in effect.

Executive agencies will analyze report and formulate a recommendation to the President.