with a government which challenges their actions as being against its trade interest. There are many such challenges and even more such reports. There is an almost continuous discussion of them, not only in the GATT but also in other intergovernmental forums.

THE PUBLIC INTEREST IS "DEFINED" BY CURRENT AGREEMENT AMONG GOVERNMENTS

In these discussions, what is sought is agreement—not adherence to rules. The GATT exemption (from any of its rules) for actions taken under an international commodity agreement openly arrived at has, in practice, been extended to any action which no substantially interested government complains of. Thus, agreement satisfies the rules even if it is no more than "negative" agreement—i.e., failure to object. Seeking agreement, or averting complaint, sets up a wide compass of discussion at many levels which prefigures the international extension of the mixed-economy process. Each government, in its actions affecting trade, finds itself forced to consider in some measure the public interest as it is seen by the governments of the other mixed economies involved; and all of the interested governments together are constrained to persuade one another in the perspective of the whole dynamic economic process—the "bigger pie." The result is a beginning of a mechanism for focusing the expression of world public interest in trade matters. It is proposed that such a mechanism now be consciously employed so that its functioning can be widely understood and continuously improved. It is proposed that the intergovernmental forums originally dedicated to the reduction of intervention be now rededicated to distinguishing between needed intervention and unneeded intervention.

BARGAINING FAVORS BAD BARRIERS

INTERVENTION NOT NECESSARY IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST SHOULD BE SCHEDULED FOR ELIMINATION

Thus far in this paper, the argument for an agreed intergovernmental process to make the distinction between needed and unneeded intervention has been presented largely on the basis of the imperatives for trade intervention that (even when yielded to) are not formally accepted as part of our trade policy. We have seen that unilateral government responses to those imperatives must be coordinated if they are to accomplish their objectives. Let us now turn to the other side of the coin—intervention which is avoidable because it is not needed in the public interest. This includes the barriers most commonly in mind when discussing present trade policy. It is almost tautological at this point to state *as our third principle* that such barriers should be discontinued—i.e., not reduced but eliminated.[5] This can be accomplished more effectively through a nonadversary intergovernmental examination of the barriers than by bargaining.

[5] It will be recognized that a reduced barrier—whether a very low tariff, a large quota under which licenses to import are granted freely to all applicants, or other measure modified so as to approach freedom of trade—is substantially more restrictive than no barrier at all. The administrative processes involved and the psychological situation faced by the trader are themselves barriers.