

QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS

(Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade,
Mr. J. McEwen.)

The Minister for Trade, Mr. McEwen, said today that the Government had no intention whatever of re-introducing import licensing as previously understood. The Prime Minister had intimated that in respect of a quite restricted category of Australian manufactures it appeared that an element of quantitative restrictions could be a most useful addition to other tariff protection.

Mr. McEwen denied that he would detail rigid quotas on a number of imported items within the next few days.

He was referring to certain published reports of what he described as of a purely speculative character, that there would be the imposition of quantitative restrictions on about 40 items.

Mr. McEwen said there was no intention of substituting a widespread system of import licensing for the temporary tariff system. He added that he would make a statement within the next few days in further explanation of the Prime Minister's announcement that the Government intended establishing a Special Advisory Authority. Mr. McEwen stated that the Government's policy in this regard was designed to operate within the framework of the Tariff Board but in such a manner as to permit decisions being quickly reached and quickly applied.