

the apparent contradiction in statistics is that it is more one of dealer perception than hard facts.

F. The Import Controversy

The U.S. furniture industry has become increasingly concerned at the flow of imports into the country, primarily from the Far East, but they are well aware that next to Taiwan, Canada is No. 2 on the list. At an annual rate for 1984, the dominant country shipping into the U.S. was Taiwan, with \$135.75 million. Canada's No. 2 position was at \$80.01 million. It is interesting to note that almost all retailers interviewed stated that they were not opposed to buying Canadian furniture.

Imports now claim over 10% of the total U.S. furniture market and are heading for a \$2 billion mark. In the wooden dining room and occasional area, it is estimated that the imports have captured 25-30% of that business. All of this has happened while exports of U.S. furniture declined by 8% in 1983. Chuck McKee, a writer for Furniture/Today says, "Observers within the furniture industry have suggested the severely negative import/export trade balance is due not only to the strength of the U.S. dollar which makes U.S. goods less attractive overseas - but to the inclination of U.S. manufacturers to concentrate on the domestic market during the economic expansion and consider the export market only during lean times."