

condemning important sectors of our economy to inefficient and higher costs for the foreseeable future with all that entails for the cost structure of Canadian industry and for the number of jobs in Canada.

I want to turn now to a problem of critical importance in the trade in certain products, such as wire and cable, that are within the product scope of our "sector" approach. That is the growing issue of how to get agreement on some rules about government procurement practices as they affect trade.

In Paris at the OECD, national representatives have been trying for some years to draft an agreement on this subject. It has now been decided to add this issue to the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, and the first meeting of the new sub-group will be held shortly.

In Canada and the United States federal procurement policies and practices are relatively open and the preference given national producers has not been of great importance to our trade partners. By contrast, Canadian exporters are not allowed to even try to compete - to make a bid - for government contracts in certain other countries, and this in countries whose producers compete vigorously for Canadian Government orders. This does not seem to me to be fair or indeed viable.

Moreover, tariff reduction by those countries