

*Oral Questions*

which the minister said on December 9 he would aggressively pursue?

[Translation]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend has pointed out, this is a decision that has just been handed down. The position of the Government of Canada continues to be that we will pursue this as aggressively as possible to ensure that 100 per cent of those bonds will be returned.

**Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley):** Mr. Speaker, we will certainly appreciate the minister's hard and diligent work in getting our money back.

My supplementary is the following. This Thursday another decision is expected on the softwood lumber dispute between Canada and the United States. U.S. lumber lobby representatives have already said that they will challenge any ruling that goes against them. If they lose the challenge they will lobby to change American law to keep Canadian lumber out of U.S. markets.

Will the minister admit that the free trade agreement has done nothing to guarantee access to U.S. markets for Canadian products? Will he admit that it is time to scrap the agreement now?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade):** First of all, Mr. Speaker, let us go back to square one here. How did that particular decision get taken by the GATT panel? Because the Government of Canada took the issue aggressively to the GATT panel we got the decision that came out.

The other point that my hon. friend says is that there has been no access to the United States market under the free trade agreement. Where did that 13.5 per cent increase in exports last year come from in a period of slow economy in the United States? Did it just develop out of fresh air? Did it just happen?

It happened because there was a reduction in tariffs. As tariffs on our Canadian products going into the United States market go down, whereas tariffs to other country's products stay the same, we get an advantage. What have Canadians done to take advantage of that advantage that comes from access to the United States market? Under the free trade agreement we increased our exports—

**Mr. Speaker:** I do want to move on.

**FORESTRY**

**Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Forestry. In last week's federal budget, the government announced that it would not renew the regional economic development agreement for forestry.

Can the minister tell us today if the \$200-million Canada-Quebec forestry development agreement will be maintained until 1996 in Quebec?

[English]

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can give my colleague that assurance. It is true that the budget, as I said yesterday, made a provision that the FRDAs will be phased out over the duration of the present agreements.

In the case of the province of Quebec this agreement has another three and a half years to run and \$76 million of the \$150 million which was allocated to agreements with Quebec is still to be spent.

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• (1500)

**BOSNIA**

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister about the situation in Bosnia.

The Canadian ambassador to Washington has said that Canada opposes any air strikes. At the same time the Secretary of State for External Affairs has said that no military option had been ruled out. Yesterday we had the Prime Minister saying that we are prepared to consider an additional number of troop commitments in Bosnia, but the minister of defence in Calgary on Friday said that no new commitments can be made unless there is new investment in defence spending, but we have reduced the number of ground forces by 35 per cent.

I think the Prime Minister will recognize that these are serious contradictions. I would like to ask the Prime Minister before he leaves on his European tour if he will make a very clear statement in the House on the position of Canada in Bosnia, the mandate of the troops and the resources we would use. Surely Canadians and Parlia-