

Minister of Industry,
Science and Technology and
Minister for International Trade



Ministre de l'Industrie, des
Sciences et de la Technologie et
ministre du Commerce extérieur

News Release

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MINISTER SAYS U.S. BEER THREATS ARE INAPPROPRIATE

The Honourable Michael H. Wilson, Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade, today dismissed as premature and inappropriate a notice issued yesterday by the United States spelling out actions the U.S. might take against Canada in support of a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) panel critical of provincial beer-marketing practices in Canada.

"Canada has already advised the U.S. government that it intends to agree to the adoption of the panel report at the GATT Council Meeting next February," said Mr. Wilson. "The U.S. announcement is inappropriate because it threatens action on a GATT panel report before that report has even been considered by the GATT Council. Any action by the U.S. without the authorization of the GATT would violate U.S. obligations under both the GATT and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement."

Mr. Wilson, who met last week in Moncton, New Brunswick, with his provincial counterparts, pointed out further that the federal government is working with the provinces and industry on implementation of the GATT panel's recommendations.

"While the GATT panel has found certain provincial practices inconsistent with international trading rules, it has recommended that Canada report back to the GATT on actions taken with respect to certain of those practices by March 1992 and with respect to others by the end of July next year," the Minister said. "We intend to meet those deadlines. The Government of Canada would take appropriate measures if in the interim retaliatory action were taken by the U.S."