

Thin wood produces fat sales throughout the world



Logs to be processed into veneer are gobbled by a log-loader.

Those elegant panelled walls in board-rooms and executive offices, and the groomed look of much furniture today, have one common element: veneer. It ranges in tone and texture, and each veneer has an individual expression.

Canada's biggest producer — and the second largest in North America — is Interforest Ltd., with a two-hectare plant located in the western outskirts of Durham, northwest of Toronto. Annual sales are a sizeable \$25 million.

Ontario and US logs (half-tree size) such as oaks and hard maple, black cherry (used in Toronto's new Stock Exchange) and knotty pine are processed into veneers; the more exotic hardwoods, including mahogany, teak, Santos rosewood

and Macassar ebony, are bought already "sliced" and resold by Interforest.

About 50 per cent of output is shipped in containers from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Europe. It only takes about eight days to cross the Atlantic — "it's quicker than the mail" — and 20 per cent is trucked into the United States.

To date, buyers are from Germany, Belgium, Japan and the US. Individual orders are often in excess of 92 900 square metres at a cost of about \$100 000.

Through its association with the Danzer Group of companies, Interforest reaches into the forests of Europe, Africa, South America, the US and Canada. Company computers keep track of every log.

(Article from Ontario Business News.)

Loan to help boost Barbados oil production

A loan agreement between the government of Canada and the government of Barbados was signed recently for Canada by Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister for External Relations and for Barbados by Senator Clyde Griffith, Minister of State for Energy and Natural Resources.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will issue the loan in the form of a \$6-million line of credit allowing the Barbados National Oil Company to buy materials and equipment for its oil and gas production and drilling

activities. Petro Canada International Assistance Corporation, under the terms of a separate agreement with Barbados, will act as the Barbados National Oil Company's procurement agent for the line of credit.

Effects of this project will be the increased energy self-sufficiency for Barbados. The foreign exchange savings realized will help Barbados continue with its public investment program, thus stimulating the country's long-term economic growth.

Cancer radiation improved

A new kind of cancer-fighting radiation treatment involving sub-atomic particles called "pi mesons", also known as pions, is more effective than conventional forms of radiation therapy, according to the man who heads research into the treatment at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Biophysicist Gabriel Lam says the tumor treatment, involving atomic "depth charges", destroys cancer cells better than other forms of radiation and also causes less damage to healthy cells. He adds that with conventional treatments "you have to bore a hole through the body" to get to a tumor, destroying healthy cells along the way.

"With a lot of patients, the cancer is cured, but they die of complications," says Dr. Lam, who has researched pions since 1974. The radioactive rays, acting like beams of light that decrease in intensity, hit the outer areas of the flesh the hardest, exposing them to dangerously high levels of radiation.

But with pions, the tumor is hit more severely and the outer cells much less. Pions, however, "kill only when they get to cancer cells", says Dr. Lam, formerly of the Ontario Cancer Institute.

Pions are the "glue" that holds protons and neutrons together. They are created in Canada's largest atomic particle accelerator, the TRIUMF cyclotron, located on the campus of the University of British Columbia. TRIUMF is operated jointly by the University of British Columbia, the universities of Victoria and Alberta, and Simon Fraser University.

More than 40 patients suffering from cancer of the brain, rectum, cervix or bladder have undergone therapy at the facility since May 1982 when researchers invited cancer victims to volunteer for experiments.

Patients with brain cancer undergo 15 sessions of treatment. Those with pelvic tumors visit the centre ten or 12 times.

Dr. Lam says it is still too early to give a clear picture of the success of the program, funded by the National Cancer Institute and the Cancer Control Agency of British Columbia.

Dr. Lam stresses that the work at TRIUMF has been strictly a research effort. Pions are also created at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and at a research centre in Zurich, Switzerland.