

Under the Memorandum of Understanding, the Government of Canada will impose a 15 percent tax on exports of softwood lumber to the United States. This tax may be phased out proportionately as the Canadian provinces increase the charges imposed on softwood lumber production.

This memorandum shall be published in the *Federal Register*.

Ronald Reagan

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:14 p.m., December 31, 1986]

Note: The memorandum is printed in the Federal Register of January 5, 1987.

The memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 31.

Czechoslovak Human Rights Initiative

Statement by the President.
December 31, 1986

January marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak human rights initiative, Charter 77. The declaration of Charter 77 enumerated ways in which the Government denied the people of Czechoslovakia the basic rights provided for in the country's legal code, in the Helsinki accords, and in international covenants. The charter, which also spelled out the responsibility of citizens in ensuring compliance with those principles, first appeared on January 1, 1977, carrying the signatures of 241 persons from a wide cross section of Czechoslovak society. On January 6 representatives of Charter 77 first tried to present the text of that document to the Czechoslovak authorities. Though, then and now, government officials have tried to characterize the signers of the charter as criminals, they could not diminish the moral authority of those who had the courage to hold them accountable to basic laws and principles.

Charter 77, Eastern Europe's longest lasting human rights initiative, served for 10 years as a champion of civil and human

rights, a repository for national values, and a cultural and publishing network at home and abroad that has kept unified and alive a rich national literature. Pluralistic in its membership and interests, the charter has avoided the role of a political opposition. Despite imprisonment and intimidation, chartists have persisted in issuing numerous documents on many aspects of Czechoslovak life and on international affairs, witnessing steadfastly for the humanistic and democratic convictions of its reformist, Christian, and cultural memberships. The charter also gave rise to the Committee for the Defense of Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), which has documented and focused international attention on a vast number of injustices.

The more than 1,000 signatures of the charter to date have had influence far beyond their numbers. They articulate the ideals of an uncountable number of their fellow Czechoslovaks and, indeed, of all who want to see human rights respected. By their activities, Charter 77 signers have in countless small and large ways pushed back the gloom over Czechoslovakia's barren political landscape.

New Year's Message

Remarks to the People of the Soviet Union.
December 31, 1986

Good evening, and *s novym godom* [Happy New Year]. This is Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America. And I come to you this evening with a New Year's message from the people of America to the peoples of the Soviet Union.

I had hoped to address you by way of television, and to have General Secretary Gorbachev address the American people on United States television, as was done last year. Unfortunately, your government officials declined our offer to have such an exchange of greetings. I regret that we were not able to take full advantage of this opportunity to continue to build mutual trust, which is so important to building enduring peace. As I have quoted to the General Sec-