

Copy of a letter from National Association of Home Builders
1625 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

November 7, 1967

The Honorable Orville L. Freeman
Secretary
Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

It has come to our attention that there is a serious problem affecting the cost of new housing construction which involves the invasion of American log markets by Japanese buyers. The resulting increase in log costs seems already to be upping the price of wood products used in housing, particularly single family construction, and therefore adding to the rising price of new homes.

Since the matter revolves primarily around the sales of timber from Government forests, we think appropriate remedial action should be taken by your Department and the several Departments and agencies with responsibilities which could be exercised to assist the domestic lumber and home building industries. This is particularly so when a large part of the Government is now concerned with crucial problems of urban development and housing. The cost of new housing construction is a vital factor in the ability of private industry to supply housing for moderate to lower income families.

Traditionally, the home building industry has supported trade actions which would keep the price of construction materials at their lowest possible level within this country. For example, NAHB was one of the strong supporters of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. We fought equally strongly in 1964 against the bill for marking of imported goods, which was largely directed against the importation of Canadian lumber and was vetoed by President Johnson.

We urge you to take whatever actions are necessary and to use your influence in other sectors of the Administration to minimize the impact of Japanese log buying now and in the future. There is a direct relationship