

extensive economic hardship. When does the Prime Minister intend to call in the executive of General Motors of Canada and obtain some kind of assurance that this country will no longer accept an unfair share of North American production, investment, research and development, so that such lay-offs can be avoided?

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that the problems in the automotive industry exist on both sides of the border. That is of no comfort to Canadians whose jobs are threatened, but it indicates the broad nature of the problem we are facing. I have noted his representation, that it might be useful for me or the ministers of this government to meet with representatives of the automotive industry. We would be prepared to consider that. If we think it would be useful to do that, we would be prepared to. Also, naturally, we would extend that to see whether it would be useful for us to meet with representatives of the unions and the industries involved.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, I have a final supplementary question. Since the government's high interest rate policy is a major reason for extensive lay-offs taking place throughout Canada, particularly in the industries I have mentioned and in small businesses as well, will the Prime Minister make a statement on motions indicating what specific actions his government intends to take to develop an effective industrial strategy for Canada, so that we can increase, rather than decrease, employment for Canadians?

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will understand that I and most people do not accept the premise of his question. Regarding the development of a national industrial strategy, the hon. member will know that after real decades of neglect the government has indicated its intention, through a conference to be called by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of State for Economic Development, to bring together representatives of all aspects of the Canadian economy.

An hon. Member: Another study. Study, study, study!

Mr. Clark: We hope, probably in early January, to start a process of planning and establishing a national industrial strategy which will serve the longer-term interests of the country. We do not intend to pretend that that can be done by government alone, nor do we intend to talk about industrial strategy, as members opposite have, and do nothing about it.

We are taking a concrete step for which preliminary plans are already under discussion with the provinces, the private sector and organized labour, that we hope will move the country toward an industrial strategy which will find support among all elements and all partners in the Canadian economy.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

REASON CANADA IMPORTS POULTRY FROM UNITED STATES

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, given that my question is related to the agricultural sector, and that several ministers are responsible for that sector, I will therefore ask my question of the Prime Minister.

This morning over 100 poultry producers came here to Parliament Hill for the visit of the American President which has been postponed. These people are here anyway, to protest the fact that the Canadian government has signed an agreement to import a large quantity of poultry from now to December 31, namely 8,750,000 pounds, plus 48 million pounds in 1980 and 52 million pounds in 1981. Would the right hon. Prime Minister tell the House whether such importation of poultry is due to a shortage, or to the inability of Canadian producers to meet the needs of the Canadian market?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as I said recently and as the Minister of Agriculture said, we have managed a reduction in the importation of poultry. Today the Minister of State for International Trade met with the producers to whom the hon. member referred and the minister told me that it was a very useful consultation as far as the government is concerned and, I think, for the producers as well. It is in such spirit of co-operation that we intend to approach such an important question for Canada's future.

RELATIONS AMONG MAPLE LODGE COMPANY, GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Fabien Roy (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that an Ontario company called Maple Lodge is said to be largely responsible for the difficulties and fears expressed by poultry producers and also, to a certain extent, for the current sharp drop in prices, could the right hon. Prime Minister indicate, first, whether he is aware of the fact that this company has a close relationship with the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and, second, what is the exact nature of the relationship which may link the company and the federal Progressive Conservative Party?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any relationship between the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, the Social Credit Party of Canada or any other party with this company. If the hon. member has concrete information to give me, I will gladly look into it.