

*Oral Questions*

We would like to know from the Prime Minister also whether the Government has examined the report from the Economic Council which it refers to as the Bible of the Free Trade Agreement. It states that over 24,000 Canadian plants are at risk if the trade agreement goes ahead. We would like to know if the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Prime Minister, or anyone in the Government can tell us which plants are at risk, where they are located, how many workers will be affected, and what the Government is going to do—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Axworthy:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it shows the insensitivity to all those workers in those 24,000 plants that the Government is proceeding on sheer and total ignorance of those facts. We want to know if the Government will set up a special committee of the Commons to examine the critical question of plant closures to make sure the victims of the trade agreement are properly protected.

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague raises some very specific questions and I would like to answer him with very specific numbers.

In terms of announced investments in this country, since the beginning of the year—and I will spare him the details by industry but I would be willing to provide them to him—in Nova Scotia, \$2.2 billion; in New Brunswick, \$1.6 billion; in Newfoundland, \$1.7 billion; in Quebec, \$3.1 billion; in Ontario, \$3.7 billion; in British Columbia, \$511.1 million; in Alberta, \$6.78 billion; in Saskatchewan, \$150 million; in Manitoba, \$10 million, a total of close to \$20 billion of new investment, of faith in the future of this country and its job-creation potential.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Axworthy:** I say only to the Minister that the workers who will be losing their jobs under this trade agreement cannot feed their families on the statistics given by that Minister.

FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS—REQUEST THAT  
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE BE ESTABLISHED

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my supplementary question again to the Prime Minister. During the election campaign the Prime Minister gave guarantees that a number of essential Canadian programs would in

no way be affected or touched by the trade agreement, such as the Wheat Board, the regional development programs, and agricultural subsidies. We now have a report from the United States Trade Office challenging many of these programs.

We have the Minister for International Trade himself saying that the agricultural transportation subsidies are on the negotiating table, and we have a new round of negotiations beginning on the question of subsidies and the harmonization of standards without any report or any examination as to what will be on the negotiating table.

Canadians do not want to be blindsided again. Will the Prime Minister agree to establishing a committee of the Commons to examine the new round of negotiations to ensure that the essential programs for Canadians will not be negotiated away this time?

• (1425)

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, every conceivable kind of assurance has been given to the Canadian people to that effect.

**Mr. Allmand:** Not true.

**Ms. Copps:** Your word is not worth the paper it is written on.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Certain personages opposite do not want to believe any assurance, no matter how many assurances are given.

**Mr. Allmand:** We had a bitter experience.

**Ms. Copps:** The Prime Minister's word on seniors' pensions.

**Mr. Crosbie:** My voice is not loud enough to shout out the Hon. Member for wherever she is from this time. The position is that Canada has been part of GATT since 1947, and there is a GATT code on subsidies that has been in effect since then. There has been no agreement yet between us and any other nation in the GATT or between any two nations in the GATT as to what constitutes a trade distorting subsidy and doubtless it will be a very long time before that is agreed.

If Canada and the United States, in the next seven years, can agree on that it will be a great precedent for the world. In the meantime we do not intend to agree to any definition that would in any way endanger regional development or other Canadian programs of that nature.