

Oral Questions

● (1500)

TRADE

EXPORT OF AUTOMOBILES FROM JAPAN

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. In his meeting with the Prime Minister of Japan a few days ago, did the Prime Minister of Japan assure the Prime Minister that, in future, Japan agrees to cut back on its export of automobiles to Canada in the same manner in which it has agreed to cut back on its exports of automobiles to the United States?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, we did not ask the Prime Minister to give that particular undertaking because there were meetings in the days preceding our meeting at the prime ministerial level. There were meetings between our officials and the Japanese officials in Tokyo. We sensed that they were progressing in the right direction, toward the end wished by the hon. member and by members on this side. So the Prime Minister gave an undertaking that there would be an early resolution of the difficulty.

Mr. Hees: Madam Speaker, at the end of his meeting with the Prime Minister of Japan, did the Prime Minister feel that the assurances of progress he received were of any more substance than the snow job which was put over on this government and this Prime Minister by the President of the United States when he visited here a few weeks ago?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, it is obvious, when listening to the hon. member, that he is not really dealing seriously with this question. I do not think if he were sitting, God forbid, on this side of the House, that he would accuse the United States government and President of putting a snow job over on Canadians when they gave assurances in good faith.

Mr. Hees: That is what he did.

Mr. Trudeau: But the hon. member is never too serious when he makes his accusations. I understand the spirit in which he is joking today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPATION IN MILITIA TRAINING

Mr. Stanley Hudecki (Hamilton West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. It is well known that reserves are of great importance to the defence of the nation, by developing leaders among young Canadians and enhancing Canada's war deterrence capability. It has been brought to my attention that there is an inherent flaw in the militia structure of the Canadian Armed Forces, since some employers will not allow employees time off work

to take part in the training and educational activities which are an integral part of the reserves program. Can the minister, in consultation with the Minister of Labour, study this matter with a view to establishing either policy or regulations which would facilitate continuance of this most worth-while program?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, we have already set up a committee of several businessmen to look after this matter, to encourage other employers and to see that military people who want to serve temporarily in reserves have all the facilities to do so. But I will take that question very seriously under advisement and consult with my colleagues to see if we can improve that committee and the facility for some of our Canadians to serve in reserves.

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I assure the Minister of National Defence there is an interest in that important question on both sides of the House of Commons. Given that expression of interest, would the minister undertake to consult with the government House Leader to see if any further reference to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence is required, so that this matter could be studied in depth by the committee, on the understanding that with respect to this kind of reference there would be some discussions as to a limitation of debate, so that the committee could get to work on this very important matter?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I am glad the hon. member is stressing its importance. I assure him that I will consult with the House leader on the matter, and probably consult as well with the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence to see if we can follow up on the suggestion of the hon. member.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. OBERLE—ACCESS TO DREE DOCUMENTS Tabled BY MINISTER

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Madam Speaker, I gave you notice today of a question of privilege which I intended to raise respecting a matter which affects not only my privilege but the privileges of every member of the House.

I come directly to the point. On March 19, 1981, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) tabled in the House a number of documents relating to the development and the export of coal from northeastern British Columbia. Also he tabled a list of over 100 studies on the project conducted by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion and the British Columbia government. In his