

Oral Questions

Niagara, Marguerita Howe, expressed grave concern on behalf of the residents of that area and asked, and I repeat, whether the Minister would press within Cabinet to have a complete health study undertaken of the residents of those communities to determine just what kind of dangers exist, whether residual or factual?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, it is quite clear that the dioxin issue is an important one which needs to be watched by this Government as well as the U.S. Government. This is why I have pursued this matter on three occasions with my counterpart in Washington. We have come to agreements in determining better working relationships in studying the matter locally, and we want to intensify the studies as to the degree of leaching of toxic substances in the waters of the Niagara River.

As far as the statement made by Mrs. Howe is concerned, it is very legitimate, and this is why the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake had to resort to water from St. Catharines, as a result of these developments.

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[Translation]

LABOUR RELATIONS**UNJUSTIFIED LAY-OFF OF MISS LINDA BUREAU**

Mr. Pierre Deniger (La Prairie): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. In fact, I gave notice of my question this morning at his office. Could the Minister inform the House whether he intends to start an investigation at the Leclerc Institution, a medium-security detention centre, where a teacher, Miss Linda Bureau, was fired for reasons which I find entirely unjustified and clearly discriminatory?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General): Madam Speaker, I am sorry I have not yet had an opportunity to study the information provided by the Hon. Member, and I would like to ask him for more time, to see whether there is a case for starting an investigation. I do wish to thank him for his interest in the well-being of guards and employees in the Correctional Service.

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[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**PROPOSED CANADA-JAPAN AUTO AGREEMENT—JAPANESE INVESTMENT IN CANADA**

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the passing reference in the Throne Speech to a proposed Canada-Japan auto agreement, can he tell the House today, not in exact terms but in general terms, if that agreement would be similar to the Canada-U.S. auto pact

in that Japan would be forced to invest in plant, machinery, and jobs in this country, up to approximately their sales in this country?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Madam Speaker, since there is no agreement in place it is very difficult for me to be able to anticipate what we would be able to negotiate with the Japanese. As the Hon. Member indicated, there major component parts we would like to negotiate are, one, more Japanese investment in assembly operations and parts facilities here in Canada; two, more procurement of parts from domestic manufacturers; and three, hopefully we will have some joint ventures between Canadian and Japanese businessmen. That is in essence what we will be talking about. We would like to see that in an agreement with the Government of Japan, the Japanese automotive industry, or both. However, since we have not started detailed negotiations it is very difficult for me to detail to the Hon. Member the facts he has requested.

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INDUSTRY**RELOCATION OF BRANCH PLANTS IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES**

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my supplementary is related not only to the auto industry but to all manufacturing in Canada. As the Minister knows, industry in this country, whether the foreign-owned branch plants or Canadian owned, is now beginning to move out of Canada and the U.S. to places like Taiwan, South Korea, and Mexico. Has the Minister's Department done a study on how many manufacturing plants are relocating in so-called Third World countries where wages are extremely cheap, and how many are planning to move in the immediate future? Many industrialists have told me in recent days and weeks that this country could become an industrial wasteland unless some protective measures are taken to stop the outflow of investment capital and jobs.

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Madam Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member knows that roughly 30 per cent of the Gross National Product of this country is dependent on what we export. People in other countries have the same goals, aspirations, and desires as Canadians do in trying to create jobs in their own countries. So countries like Canada obviously cannot take overt protectionist measures because we would only hurt ourselves in the long run.

With respect to his question concerning the number of companies leaving, we do not see any more companies switching their branch plants into some of these countries today than we did previously. As a matter of fact we happen to have about 25 per cent more applications now from other countries wanting to invest in this country to create more jobs and more investment, than we had over a year ago. On the contrary, Madam Speaker, I think the signs are on the positive side