

Oral Questions

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Order!

Mr. Trudeau: Perhaps the right hon. member's gesture, which was meant as an act of generosity, shows considerably less optimism than the proposed recipients themselves have about their future.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, an answer like that almost demands an equally frivolous one. Apparently the Prime Minister does not know that in past years a number of members have been made members of the Privy Council by reason of their long service in the House of Commons and the distinction of it. During my period in office, I can think of one hon. member for East York who had served here for a long while. There was widespread approval. I hope the Prime Minister will look back over the record. The Prime Minister turns to his seatmate and says, who was he? It was before the Prime Minister came here. His lack of knowledge on the subject is therefore understandable. I ask him to reconsider this. I pass it on not as a frivolous matter but to show the people of Canada that there can be people of distinction in the opposition. As far as the suggestion of not doing anything in line with this government continuing in office, I say without equivocation that I have been across Canada and I have been told everywhere—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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INDUSTRY

SUGGESTED COMMITMENT FROM AUTOMOBILE
MANUFACTURERS TO INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gray: Has he now obtained a commitment from the automobile manufacturers to increase their capital investment, research and development and purchases of auto parts in Canada to levels in line with the sales of their cars in this country, something I believe must be done. If so, what are these commitments? If they have not been obtained, exactly what is the government doing to ensure that activity in these areas will be suitably increased to deal with the current problems shown to exist by the government's own Arthur report?

Hon. Jack H. Horner (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question, I want to first point out that we in Canada use about 8.9 per cent of the automotive parts manufactured on the North American continent.

Mr. Broadbent: Wrong, 12 per cent.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Mr. Horner: No, 8.9 per cent and we produce about 7 per cent. Naturally we in this country would like to see that equal. We are having discussions with the major automotive manufacturers today to see whether that can be done. I would also to point out that while we have a surplus in trade with regard to total car assembly, we also have an advantage in the employment sector of the automotive industry. This country has 11.2 per cent of the total automotive manufacturing employment on the North American continent. We would like to hold that figure and perhaps increase it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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GRAIN

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF CASH ADVANCES AND SHARING COST
OF DRYING PROGRAM

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. As the minister knows, about half the crop in the northern part of the prairies has not yet been harvested because of the weather, the bad rain conditions. The prairie ministers of agriculture have appealed to the federal government for help for those who have not yet harvested. Will the minister extend the cash advances, which I point out are not a loans, to cover crops still in the field so that those farmers who need the money will have some cash this fall?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, fortunately the weather in the prairies has turned very good these past five days or so. Harvesting is going on very rapidly with combines doubling up at every opportunity. Therefore, the end result is yet to be ascertained. As a result of legislation which I proposed on behalf of this government and passed in this House several years ago, there is a standing provision for cash advances on unharvested grain, should that be necessary. Because of the possibility of harvesting taking place very late in the year, the provision is that we cannot invoke that legislation until November 15. However, we will certainly be watching the situation very closely and use that provision if it is required.

Mr. Nystrom: Will the minister consider a cost-sharing program with the prairie provinces such as Saskatchewan which now has a program to aid farmers in custom drying of tough and damp grain and also combining of grain in the fields? Will he consider a cost-sharing program to aid these farmers?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the government of Saskatchewan has come forward with that kind of program with relation to the moving of machinery. That is the kind of initiative provincial governments ought to take. Whether it is the kind of thing that requires federal sharing will depend upon the total amounts involved. I am sure if those governments feel it does, we will have discussions with them later.