

Canada-U.S. Automotive Agreement

was Ford—followed a different approach using the soft sell. They indicated that a number of formerly optional so-called safety features were being added and that the price was therefore being advanced slightly.

As it turned out, the increase in price substantially exceeded the increase in the cost of those particular features. On all those cars the company was picking up an extra amount between \$25 and \$50. The next step was a parallel announcement in Canada—that there was a reduction in price. But the movement in both countries was in the same direction. There was no narrowing of the gap. It was a movement in the same lockstep on both sides of the border. The minister may shake his head, but there are many people who will disagree with him. I believe I have in my office material which demonstrates my contention with reference to particular vehicles, models and so forth.

An hon. Member: Bring it down.

Mr. Lambert: I will, because I intend to suggest that we should look more closely into such questions as this. I am not disposed to believe a highly paid publicity agent who tells me: We have reduced our prices. I want to see evidence of these reductions. I therefore suggest to the minister that in view of the importance of this subject we should send this whole matter for further consideration to the standing Committee on Industry Research and Energy Development or, if deemed preferable, to the Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

I do not wish to be obstreperous. If this is a good agreement for the benefit of Canada, if it is to be the first of similar steps we have to consider with regard to other industries, let us have a hard look at it and see whether mistakes have been made. Let us hear from all sides—the auto manufacturers, the auto parts people and the labour unions involved. After all, the hon. member for Danforth made some strong criticisms about the inaction of the automobile companies with regard to TAB. Why has there not been more action? This is what we would like to know.

I make this plea straight to the minister. If, within a month, we have this agreement before the house, back from the committee, we will be in a far better position to reach conclusions as to its value. I should like to be convinced that this was a good action. So far, we do not have enough information to reach such a conclusion. It is not just by sitting

[Mr. Lambert.]

over there mummy-like or like wise old owls or Buddhas that the government will convince us or the country.

Mr. Knowles: Which is which?

Mr. Lambert: I am not referring to any particular minister. This is just the attitude of the government. It is not only members representing half a dozen or more constituencies in Ontario who have to be satisfied as to the value of this agreement. The whole of Canada is concerned. After all, this agreement, by reason of customs forgiveness, is costing us about \$50 million a year. This is what has been indicated to us. The Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Benson) can shake his head. He should read some of the speeches his colleague and others have made in this regard.

● (9:10 p.m.)

This was given to us as the annual cost. It was to be an annual cost of \$50 million in customs duties, and the benefits accruing to the major automobile manufacturers would total \$50 million. If that is not the case then the ministers must clear this up in the eyes of the press. We have seen it mentioned editorially time and time again. We have seen it reported in news columns. If that is the wrong conclusion, then it should be corrected.

There is one way to get it cleared up, and this is before a committee where we can hear the appropriate testimony and where the ministers and officials can be examined. I now move, seconded by the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac (Mr. Webb):

That all the words after the word "that" in line 4 of the resolution be deleted and that there be substituted therefor the following:

the said agreement be referred to the standing Committee on Industry, Research and Energy Development for consideration, examination of oral and written testimony with respect thereto and report to this house prior to further consideration of the said agreement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. I have examined this amendment to the resolution with great interest and I would like to refer hon. members to citation 202(6) of Beauchesne which says:

It is not an amendment to a motion to move that the question go to a committee.

I declare that this amendment is not receivable. Shall the resolution carry?

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Lambert: No, wait a minute please.