

Oral Questions

growing number of unemployed in this important sector of our economy?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I can only repeat the point excellently made by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. We have just had one Conservative member for British Columbia, I believe, indicating that he wants Japanese automobiles to come into Canada in greater numbers and with accelerated frequency. Now we have another member who is asking us to protect the Canadian automobile industry. The hon. minister is absolutely right. If the Tories had a policy, they would not be asking these absolutely contradictory questions.

EFFECT OF CAPITAL COST ALLOWANCE PROVISION IN BUDGET

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. If he is so concerned and knowledgeable about the industry, would he tell the House whether he supports that budgetary provision dealing with capital cost allowance which has cost the likely sale of between 50,000 and 100,000 new vehicles since last November? Does the minister support that policy? If he is so anxious to know what the Tory policy is, I will tell him. We are against any budgetary provisions such as the one in last November's budget—

Mr. MacEachen: Which one?

Mr. Jarvis:—which cost those thousands of jobs in his riding and in mine.

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, assuming I am going to refer to the same aspect of the budget which the hon. member is talking about, I have already suggested in answer to a question in this House that the analysis he has put forward is greatly exaggerated and the impact is not at all what he has said it is.

Mr. Jarvis: How much? How many cars?

Mr. Gray: In any event, the question asked by my hon. friend further shows the contradiction. The hon. member for Halton asks us what our policy is and what the cause is of the problems in the industry. He ascribes them not to the pressure from imports of Japanese cars but to a provision in the budget, which we say is greatly exaggerated.

Mr. Jarvis: Do you or do you not support that budgetary provision?

QUERY RESPECTING POSSIBLE SURCHARGE AND IMPORT QUOTA

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and it is along the same line as the one asked by my colleague, the hon. member for Perth. Does the minister

feel that it is a proper policy for the Canadian government to use harassment techniques rather than amendments to the law, with respect to imports of Japanese cars? Does the minister not think that we should be above that kind of harassment and that we should take some positive action in terms of a surcharge and in terms of an imposed quota, rather than using harassment techniques which are clearly the kind of thing that only a bully boy would do?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, I totally reject the premise of my hon. friend's question. We are taking steps that are fully provided for, by law. It is interesting that the hon. member himself is calling for an approach which certainly would have a much more severe impact on the people about whom the hon. member from British Columbia was talking than anything we have done so far.

ENFORCEMENT OF INSPECTION PROCEDURES

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): My friend knows, Madam Speaker, that the business of enforcing laws is to enforce them in a reasonable and sensible way. Is the minister's way of handling this import problem that he is taking, and will continue to take, a detailed enforcement of inspection on every single vehicle coming off ships in Vancouver? Will that procedure continue for a long period of time, or is the minister going to do the proper thing under GATT by putting a temporary surcharge on these automobiles coming in, until our industry can recover and re-organize and be competitive on a world basis?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend has not told us what impact his idea will have on the jobs of the people in his British Columbia colleague's riding.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gray: He has not responded to my point about the impact on jobs. He wants a more severe effect on those jobs in British Columbia than anything that we are doing in terms of a reasonable enforcement of our existing law. As far as we are concerned the best way to deal with my hon. friend's concern is for the Japanese to respond to our very reasonable approach in a way that will assist our industry to continue its restructuring—

Miss MacDonald: Tell us about the unemployed in Windsor.

Mr. Gray:—and move toward substantial content in Japanese vehicles in a way that recognizes the basic strength and potential of our industry and the workers in it.