

subject for obvious reasons. It is quite difficult for me to make any suggestion that the company should start building sub-compacts and compacts in Canada because it may very well be that the situation next year will have changed completely. This is the sort of advice that ministers refrain from volunteering.

This is one of the difficulties we have had with the automobile agreement, and I have said so in public. We do not have anything to say about the decisions of the companies on the types of automobiles that they build in Canada. I am sure however that hon. members of this House would view with anxiety the government telling the companies they should build in Canada, at St. Thérèse or at Oshawa, this particular type of automobile, because in such instances we may win once but lose ten times.

LAY-OFFS BY GENERAL MOTORS—REQUEST FOR
GOVERNMENT ACTION TO MAKE EARLY
ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUCH PLANS MANDATORY

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, since the minister has told us that he was not informed of the lay-offs that have recently been announced outside the province of Quebec, and has at last expressed some annoyance with the automotive industry, could he inform the House whether the government intends to take steps making it mandatory for any such future lay-offs to be announced well in advance, in fact, many months in advance, to the government?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the legislation in Quebec and the legislation in Ontario are different on the timing of such notice. Companies in Quebec have to give four months notice when a number of employees, I think it is 300, are to be laid off. In Ontario one month's notice is required and this is what has taken place in the particular case with which we are now dealing. What I was saying, really, was that I would have expected the company to have brought these intentions, I mean with respect to these particular lay-offs that were announced yesterday, to our attention because it had done so with respect to the ones at St. Thérèse.

ST. THÉRÈSE, QUEBEC—POSSIBLE FURTHER GENERAL
MOTORS LAY-OFFS—ASSURANCE OF MAINTENANCE OF
PRODUCTION IN CANADA

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, it is not that I am pleased with that answer, but I do want to ask a related question to which I expect a negative answer. Is the government aware that a production change in the General Motors' plant at St. Thérèse next spring will result in the cancellation of the production of a large number of Pontiac automobiles, involving approximately 2,000 jobs at that plant and, if the government is aware of this, what does it intend to do to ensure that when the production of these automobiles is transferred from that plant in Quebec it will at least be transferred to another plant in Canada and not to a plant in the United States?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, obviously this question demon-

strates the complexity of the subject. I will read it again and will tomorrow try to extract as much information as I can from the officers of the company.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister advise the House when the government intends to inform the country of its policy on this whole, broad matter of foreign investment in Canada and how it will operate here?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): We hope to be doing that pretty soon, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hees: As a supplementary question, has the Gray report turned into a grey area of indecision, ineptitude and frustration—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Hees: —as widely reported, meaning that we may never know the government's views on this very important matter?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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INDUSTRY

AUTOMOBILES—REQUEST FOR AID TO
SUBCONTRACTORS—POSSIBLE PRICE REDUCTION TO
INCREASE SALES AND EMPLOYMENT

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. What does the government intend to do to help the subcontractors and those who are producing car parts? Also, when he is speaking with the manufacturers tomorrow will he suggest to them that if they would reduce the price of cars made in Canada to the same level as that in the United States they would sell more cars in Canada and employ more people?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered the second part of the question on a number of occasions, but with regard to the first part, the off-market parts are not exempted under the United States surcharge. However, my opinion is that they would be included under Bill C-262, which has just been reported by a committee to the House.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

LAY-OFFS BY GENERAL MOTORS—POSSIBLE
PRODUCTION OF SMALL CARS IN CANADA TO MAINTAIN
EMPLOYMENT

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, in view of the large number