

*Trade*

he had read the report which I am going to refer to in a few minutes. It is a report prepared by the Science Council of Canada on the uncertain prospects of the Canadian manufacturing industry, showing that our industry is in an extremely grave state, with poor prospects at the moment.

At the finance committee meeting on Monday night, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce said he was familiar with the report, and did not accept it. He told me why he did not accept it. He felt the Canadian manufacturer has tough competition, but that he is not that pessimistic about his opportunities. The minister is not pessimistic. It is great not to be a pessimist, Mr. Speaker, but we have to face reality. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is not facing reality when he looks at the state of Canadian industry today and is sanguine about our prospects in negotiations at Geneva. If this debate does anything to prevent his continuing being content, satisfied and steer-like, sanguine and soporific, it will have done some good. A rolling stone gathers no moss. A rolling minister develops no new policy.

**Mr. Hees:** Right on.

**Mr. Crosbie:** He appears, Mr. Speaker, not to understand the problems. Not only that, he is doing nothing about them. I have two quotations giving examples of the minister's attitude toward Canadian industry. According to a report in the *Globe and Mail* of November 25 from Brussels, the reporter, Mr. Ian Rodger—covering Mr. Horner—said:

Mr. Horner said businessmen seem most concerned about the prospect of Canadian tariff barriers being lowered in the Tokyo Round, leading to more import competition. But he showed little sympathy for that concern.

Imagine, our Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce shows little sympathy for the concern of the Canadian businessman! He went on to say, quoting Mr. Horner:

The Canadian businessman perhaps isn't as aware of the changing world market patterns as, say, the Europeans.

A gratuitous insult to the Canadian businessman—that he is not supposed to be as aware of world market patterns as the European. He does not hold much regard for the Canadian businessman's astuteness. In fact, he infers they are stupid. Further in the same interview, the reporter says:

Nor is he much worried about dislocations in Canadian industry that might be caused by freer trade.

This is the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Crosbie:** He is not worried about dislocations that might be caused by freer trade.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Crosbie:** The 1.9 million people who work in the Canadian secondary manufacturing are concerned.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Crosbie:** The people who work there and who have businesses are concerned.

[Mr. Crosbie.]

**Mr. Hees:** Right.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Then he quotes the minister as follows:

It's a funny thing. It may create some dislocation of specific jobs within the manufacturing industry, but I see tremendous growth because the Third World countries require our technology and our manufactured products. I don't see the manufacturing sector failing as much as many of the Canadian businessmen do.

The minister is indeed very sanguine. The Third World countries and every other country of the world—Germany and Japan, etc.—will be competing for business. What makes us think that Canadian industry is in such a state today that it can compete better than the Japanese, Germans and the European Common Market? Manufacturing employment now is 6.3 per cent below its peak level of September, 1974. That is something the minister should be concerned about. He should be trying to increase manufacturing employment in view of our situation. I do not have time to dwell on this, but the minister is travelling so much that he does not have time to attend to the concerns of Canadian business.

The Retail Council of Canada and various sectors of that industry have been asking for a decision for some months from the minister's department, and from the minister, respecting import quotas for the second half of 1978 with respect to clothing, textiles and that kind of thing. The council has pointed out to the department that they have to order eight to ten months in advance. They have to order now; they cannot wait until the end of December for a decision. If it is going to be that late, they are going to be risking loss of trade and loss of merchandise. They will lose money. There has been a series of letters to the minister from the Retail Council to the minister asking him for a decision in this area. As yet, the minister has not yet replied. They were apparently promised a decision in August, according to a letter of November 3 sent by the Retail Council to the minister. As yet, however, the minister has not replied.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of behaviour is this? The whole retail industry of Canada, some wholesale and even the manufacturing part of the industry of Canada, is involved in selling clothing and textiles. They want a decision concerning quotas for the last half of 1978. They cannot get it. The minister is not worried whether they get it, but they themselves are worried. One would think a minister of this department would be very concerned about that kind of thing and quick to give an answer. If he is unable to give an answer, he should explain why. If it is because some kind of negotiations are going on bilaterally with certain other countries—unsuccessful to date—or there is a good or convincing reason, he should say so. Even so, I doubt whether it is justified that our whole retail industry should be in a state of uncertainty as to what they can order, what they cannot order or import for the last half of 1978.

The first part of the motion deals with our industrial situation. I can quote any number of sources. For example in the November 17 edition of the *Globe and Mail*, Ronald Anderson, a business columnist, wrote: