

INDUSTRY**REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION
OF AUTOMOBILE AGREEMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): I wish to address a question to the Minister of Industry. In the light of uneasiness in the automobile industry as a result of permanent lay-offs and stoppages of work for stated periods, would the minister consider referring the automobile pact to a standing committee of the House of Commons or to a joint committee of this house and the other place, so as to ascertain whether these lay-offs and cessations of work for stated periods are due to this pact or whether they have been brought about by other circumstances?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry): It has been fairly clearly established that in the current year, as compared with previous years, there has been a decline in the public demand for automobiles. A decline in public demand obviously leads to a decline in production, and a decline in production normally calls for lay-offs. This appears to be the chronology of the present situation, and I do not think any useful purpose would be served by trying to re-explore this particular chronology.

As the hon. member is aware, a comprehensive review of the automobile pact is to be undertaken in the current year, and perhaps that could be a more useful way of proceeding.

Mr. Starr: As a supplementary question, when the minister says a comprehensive review will be made may I ask whether it will be done in committee where witnesses could be called?

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, the review of which I speak and of which the results will be made public will be by the governments of the two countries.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**NEW WATERFORD, N.S.—REQUEST FOR PARDON
FOR DISQUALIFIED COUNCILLOR**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Solicitor General and I would ask him to take into consideration the fact that there has been very little background exchanged between us in this matter. It is with respect to a councillor in the town of New Waterford who

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was recently disqualified from taking his seat because of an incident which happened years ago, when he was a juvenile. Would the minister consider a pardon for this gentleman in view of the exemplary life he has led since that time? I am not quite sure whether this could be done, but the people of New Waterford have indicated their decision by electing him.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I doubt whether the question can be asked at this time. There may be an aspect of urgency to it that I do not see, but generally speaking that type of question should be placed on the order paper.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, there is urgency because this young man committed an offence as a prank some ten years ago, and since the particular offence carries with it the possibility of a penitentiary sentence he is now hounded out of public life. I think the minister would want to speak on this, particularly in centennial year when so much is being said about amnesty. Will the government give consideration to providing free pardons to those who, having made mistakes, after a period of years have entirely lived them down, to the end that the detrimental effect of such mistakes on their records will not bar them from those things that good citizens normally can achieve?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I still have some doubt as to the urgency of the particular case raised by the hon. member for Cape Breton South, but as the minister seems anxious to give a reply to both hon. gentlemen I am sure he should be recognized.

Hon. L. T. Pennell (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to give immediate attention to the particular case raised by the hon. member for Cape Breton South, and I would like to assure the right hon. Leader of the Opposition that we are dealing with a considerable number of applications for pardon. There has been a substantial increase in them over the last few months.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to remind the house that there is a certain amount of urgency involved. The citizens of this town feel that they are deprived of representation for which they voted. There is a by-election coming up which would also indicate there is urgency in qualifying this man to hold the office which the people granted him.