

MR. BEATTY—DELAY IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS NOS. 1,233,
1,236 AND 1,237

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite the parliamentary secretary to join with me in celebrating the six months' anniversary today of three questions which I placed on the order paper on January 26. I refer to questions Nos. 1,233, 1,236 and 1,237. I suggest to the parliamentary secretary that a good way of making the celebration much happier would be for him to answer the questions.

MR. MCKENZIE—DELAY IN ANSWERING QUESTION NO. 895

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I too have a complaint for the parliamentary secretary about a question I placed on the order paper on December 7, 1977. This is the fourth time I have requested an answer for this question, which refers to the number of government members allowed to use the MOT telex to send political messages. It does not take seven months to compile that information, and it is becoming quite obvious that this is some kind of cover-up on the part of the government, and particularly on the part of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang), who seems reluctant to reveal this information. Nevertheless the question has been accepted, and it is ridiculous to wait for so long to have a question of this type answered.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, concerning the three remarks which have just been made, I would like to tell the House that I shall consider them very seriously and check the progress in our research work to give as usual the most accurate, detailed and acceptable answers possible. I want to take the opportunity to underline that we have an excellent average of answers with regard to the question rate, and that this week, we are going to make a particular effort to improve this average.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[English]

INDUSTRY

CANADA-U.S. AUTOMOTIVE AGREEMENT

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a

Auto Pact

specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the crisis in the implementation of the Canada-U.S. Automotive Agreement as reflected in the cumulative trade deficit for Canada of \$7.5 billion since 1965, which has resulted in the net loss to Canada of 25,000 jobs, and to which the Government of Canada has responded by making an offer of \$37.5 million to induce Ford of Canada to expand in this country, such action being revealed in the legislature of the province of Ontario on Friday, June 23, 1978.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member, pursuant to the terms of Standing Order 26, gave the Chair appropriate notice of his intention to make this application at this time. Without going into elaborate reasons, I want to indicate to the hon. member that I will not be granting the application for consideration pursuant to Standing Order 26.

The hon. member has spoken in his motion of the crisis in the implementation of the Canada-U.S. Automotive Agreement and goes on to indicate that they are developments which have occurred in a gradual way over the 13 years since 1965, the beginning of the effect of that agreement. There is also the allegation of the loss of jobs, and that is one area I certainly think is a chronic and continuing problem and not the proper subject matter for the provisions of Standing Order 26. In the latter part of his motion the hon. member refers to an offer of \$37.5 million to induce Ford to come to Canada, that offer having become known in the Ontario legislature last Friday. At the moment the circumstances surrounding the last part of the hon. member's motion seem to be a matter of dispute, and somewhat uncertain.

I do not think that the rule is meant to apply to areas in which the centre of the matter is one which in itself is a matter of dispute, but I do not want to eliminate for all time that possibility. It seems to me that the rule is intended to apply to circumstances which are in themselves not subject to interpretation. Whether or not parliament is responsible for them or can do anything about them, I do not think we ought to use this rule to apply to circumstances where the crisis in itself is subject to argument or disagreement. Certainly, in answers given in the question period today, there seemed to be disagreement on the very circumstances which would form the core of this motion.

It may be that further facts and later exploration through the week and days to come will indicate that, indeed, the hon. member has a legitimate case, and I would not rule out the possibility of a new application under those circumstances. But I certainly think that it would be very premature for the Chair to come down on one side or another on an item which remains in some considerable dispute. Therefore at this moment I set aside this application under Standing Order 26.