

Oral Questions

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, with respect to the first part of the Hon. Member's question, because it should be negotiated obviously it would be predicated on what the two countries could negotiate. Second, I hope the Hon. Member was here on April 19 when my colleague, the Minister of Finance, announced a substantial number of investment incentives for Canadian companies to expand and to modernize. There is also the \$25 million ILAP program for the auto parts industry. The Hon. Member knows that an expansion has been requested. The new Industrial Regional Development Program which was announced during the budget will provide further financial incentives for industry right across Canada in the manufacturing and processing sectors in order to expand and modernize, or even to establish new industries, Madam Speaker.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MINISTER OF STATE ENTERPRISES
AND OF MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND CONSUMER
AFFAIRS, OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Madam Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery today of Mr. Ronald Jay Williams, Minister of State Enterprises for Trinidad and Tobago, and of Mr. Desmond Hugh Cartey, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Affairs, of Trinidad and Tobago.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

IMPORTATION OF JAPANESE MANUFACTURED TRUCKS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for international trade. It is clear the Government's vacillation on the principle of the task force report on the automotive industry has given the upper hand to the Japanese in these negotiations. No one can have any doubt about that.

Will the Minister confirm that the level of imports for trucks from Japan is up over 50 per cent this year compared to last year? And while the Minister is answering that, will he acknowledge that a clear commitment by the Government to accepting the principle of the report would strengthen his hand immeasurably in negotiations with the Japanese?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member, again I have difficulty in dealing with the premises to his questions. It seems to me again and again that Hon. Members, of all Members in the House, fails to show any concern about the jobs of people who work in plants that depend upon export orders. He never takes the trouble to think through the consequences as to whether every other country would lamely lie

back and buy our goods regardless of how we treat its goods. I ask the Hon. Member to take just a little time to learn a bit about the multilateral trading system which means so much to the workers of our country.

● (1425)

The next thing I say to the Hon. Member is, no. I think our negotiations with the Japanese, with reference to the levels of car imports, are going well. I am confident that we will be able to reach a settlement. In relation to the number of trucks coming into the country, which was his third question, the Hon. Member will recall that we can only make judgment on how many automobiles come in, at the end of the year, because in the first portion of the year there is often a surge in products coming in at that time.

Mr. Broadbent: When it comes to lying back, one can just observe that the Government has performed that way for the past ten years, and that is why we are short some 35,000 automotive jobs today. That is a result of the Government's actions.

COMPARISON WITH SITUATIONS IN AUSTRALIA AND UNITED STATES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, considering that we in this Party are interested in maintaining exports in resources, as well as having a manufacturing nation, would the Minister tell the House how it has been possible for the Australians to continue to sell resources to Japan and also obtain automotive plants from Japan? Could he tell us how the Americans have been able to obtain the commitment of the three largest automotive companies to put plants in the United States, and continue to sell resources? Why is it that every other industrial country with an automotive sector and resources is able to achieve success in both, while this Government fails in both?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, it is obvious the Hon. Member has never had the experience or the responsibility of carrying out office and has only been in the comfort of opposition, and I am afraid he never will. I think if he did have that experience it would be very sobering to him very quickly.

Let me just tell him about the differences between the United States and Canada. The difference is that we sell a great deal more to the Japanese than we buy from them, while the Americans have the reverse situation. Therefore the Americans are in a different negotiating position. The same thing applies in relation to trade relations between Europe and Japan.

Having said that, we are selling a great deal more to the Japanese than we are buying from them, and we are in the position that we have now received a task force report, which was called for by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. That report has been in our hands for a very short period of time. The Japanese are cognizant of its existence.