

Oral Questions

[English]

CANADA-UNITED STATES AUTO PACT

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and concerns the same subject.

The new investment decision by General Motors is, of course, a good decision for Canada. At the same time, however, three Ministers of the Crown have described the Canada-U.S. Automotive Agreement as a free trade agreement. The President of General Motors, who knows differently and knows that it guarantees certain investment in Canada, said yesterday that the Automotive Agreement should not be on the negotiating table in talks that are going on with the United States.

Mr. Stevens: That is not right.

Mr. Broadbent: He said it. I was there.

Mr. Stevens: He did not.

Mr. Broadbent: It is not a free trade agreement and the President of General Motors said that it should not be negotiated. Does the Prime Minister agree with both those assertions?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I know that the \$2 billion Oshawa investment heightened my hon. friend's appreciation for the private sector and the attractiveness and beauty of foreign investment in Canada.

The trade talks will only try to ensure that that prosperity that we see in Oshawa is now shared across the country.

Mr. Broadbent: There are many provinces affected by this, and the people whose jobs are dependent on the automotive industry will not be reassured by the answer.

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I want the Prime Minister to deal with the question. The Automotive Agreement is not a free trade agreement. The head of the largest corporation in Canada has said that it should not be on the negotiating table. Furthermore, the agreement protects jobs in Canada and we could lose jobs if it is lost.

Considering these facts, will the Prime Minister say to the House that the Auto Pact is not up for negotiation and that it is important to keep it for jobs in Ontario and the Province of Quebec?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Hon. Member was absent when this question was raised some months ago. At that time I indicated that there was a very satisfactory arrangement in place with regard to the Auto Pact that we saw no reason to change and have no intention of changing.

The point I think should be made to the House is that there are workers in Oshawa and elsewhere in Ontario, members of

the United Auto Workers, who are the direct beneficiaries of an arrangement on trade between Canada and the United States. The advantages of that arrangement should not be confined to members of the United Auto Workers. It should be extended across the country, through other negotiations to which we are looking forward.

Mr. Broadbent: Perhaps one day the Minister will understand that that kind of an arrangement is not free trade, and we support that kind of arrangement because it protects jobs.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Maybe he will learn that one day.

[Translation]

WORKERS AT SAINTE-THÉRÈSE—GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR OBTAINING NEW INVESTMENT

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

The Auto Pact guarantees a certain level of investment in Canada. General Motors now has 35 per cent of the Quebec market.

What is the Government doing now to obtain new investment in Quebec for the benefit of the workers in Sainte-Thérèse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member shouldn't be upset, since I just came back from Oshawa, in his riding, where \$2 billion have been invested to promote—

Mr. Broadbent: Not by the Government—

Mr. Mulroney: He says: "not by the Government". No, not by the Government but by the private sector which we attracted to Canada. That is the difference.

A Liberal always thinks in terms of government funding. We think in terms of permanent jobs created by the private sector.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Mr. Mulroney: I again spoke personally to the President of General Motors about Sainte-Thérèse and investment across this country. There will be further meetings between him and the Government, with a view to persuading all companies to invest in high technology sectors on a more nationwide basis.

● (1425)

SITUATION OF GENERAL MOTORS WORKERS AT SAINTE-THÉRÈSE

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, and again it relates to the situation at Sainte-Thérèse. He has just made a commitment