

this matter which has just begun can be brought to a head and this strike concluded?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, we are still negotiating with the union. The parties met over the weekend of this morning, and they are talking. The mediator, Mr. O'Connor, is working with the parties and I hope he will find a solution that will be acceptable to both of the parties.

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INDUSTRY

AUTOMOBILES—GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO STIMULATE INDUSTRY

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Having said when unemployment in the automotive industry had reached only 15,000 that the government had no specific plans because the minister did not then regard the industry as being in a serious situation, I should like to ask the minister, now that unemployment has reached the 25,000 figure, and particularly since he has had time to consider a long and serious brief presented to him and to other ministers by the United Automobile Workers of Canada, whether he is in a position today to announce specific proposals which his government plans to take in order to deal with this very serious situation.

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, we had a very good meeting this morning with representatives of the automobile workers. There was a lengthy, comprehensive submission dealing positively with many of the issues before us. My colleagues and I will be giving very careful consideration to it.

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the minister has had the brief for some ten days and that he and his officials as well as other ministers in the cabinet have had access to and studied the brief for some ten days, is either the minister's department or any other department of government prepared to announce today proposals or courses of action which they plan to take, or can the minister at least tell the House when we can expect a specific, detailed program from the government?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had been present this morning, he would have known that my colleagues and I took note of a number of these submissions made by the automobile workers. We will be advising him in due course of the government's decision.

AUTOMOBILES—REDUCTION OF PRICE AS MEANS TO STIMULATE INDUSTRY

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I can only hope that there are still some workers employed by the time the government gets around to announcing its decision. I should like to ask him about one area of price differential in which the minister has shown remarkable insight by saying we sell 80 per cent of our cars to the United States,

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overwhelmingly due to the fact that the price is about \$600 lower in the United States. Has the minister or the government reconsidered the price position with a view to bringing down the price to Canadian consumers as one means of increasing employment in the industry?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would focus upon the main problem of the automobile industry in Canada, which is the failure of the United States market, he would realize that the particular solution he is proposing would not have the effect of bringing about a resurgence in the automobile industry of Canada.

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● (1440)

[Translation]

AIRPORTS

VAL-D'OR AND ROUYN—INQUIRY AS TO CONTINUATION OF COMMERCIAL SERVICE

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Transport.

There is now some discontent in northwest Quebec regarding Val-d'Or and Rouyn airports. Val-d'Or was previously a military airport, which is now within the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport, and Rouyn has a civilian airport. The minister is undoubtedly aware that officials of his department visited these two places many times.

Can the minister say today whether Val-d'Or will keep all its present equipment and continue to provide the same services, and whether Rouyn will be adequately equipped, so that airlines can serve both airports for people who want to go to that region?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, when the Department of National Defence decided not to keep that airport, we sent investigators to see how we could use it for civilian purposes, since it was already used for such purposes.

We are trying to determine the best way to proceed. I cannot promise the hon. member there will be two airports, one in Rouyn and one in Noranda. I think the hon. member can easily use his car to go from one to the other but, in any case, it would be a good thing if one of them provided adequate service.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Whether I want to take the plane or use my car does not concern the Department of Transport.

For about twelve years, officers of that department have come to visit the region. They promise us the equipment for an airport in Rouyn, to make possible the landing at 70 miles from Val-d'Or. That is done between Ottawa and Montreal, and I think that Rouyn and Val-d'Or are as important as Ottawa. Is the minister prepared to give better service to Rouyn airport without taking any away from Val-d'Or?