

Canada—U.S. Automotive Agreement

• (1:40 p.m.)

This, however, will take time. It will take years to accomplish, but we will accomplish economic sovereignty with political maturity. At this stage I believe it is politically immature to complain about foreign investment in this country when so many Canadians are dependant for their very livelihood on foreign investment in Canada.

It has been suggested that the Studebaker plant in Hamilton should be purchased. It would seem to me that here is an excellent opportunity to create a pilot corporation. I always ask myself this question: If Sweden can manufacture an automobile completely, why cannot Canada manufacture its own car? It might be a very good suggestion if the government would consider, along with the labour unions of this country and the banks, the purchase of the plant in Hamilton so that it might be operated as a joint venture of the government, the labour unions and the banks. It seems to me that the labour unions in this country could play a much larger role than they are playing now in an effort to remedy the situation about which the hon. member for Danforth is complaining.

The labour unions of Canada possess huge treasuries. If it requires legislation to release pension funds, if it requires legislation to allow trust companies to invest in Canadian enterprises of this kind, I think this is the way to tackle the problem presented yesterday by the hon. member for Danforth. It could be so arranged that the government, if it did participate in this joint venture, could participate in a manner by which it could dispossess itself of its shares in the enterprise by releasing them to the public when the corporation was in a healthy state of existence. So I would say to the hon. member for Danforth that there are many avenues through which he might be persuaded to help our economy and one is by getting the New Democratic Party and the labour unions of this country to favour wide-scale immigration into Canada.

Mr. Scott (Danforth): We do.

Mr. Klein: You do not. The New Democratic Party is opposed to immigration. You will accept immigration of skilled labour only. You will not accept wide-scale immigration into this country and I say it is this practice which is keeping this country down.

Mr. Scott (Danforth): I know the hon. member wishes to be accurate. That is not the position of the New Democratic Party. If the

[Mr. Klein.]

hon. member wishes, we would be glad to send him the convention manifesto which would make it clear that this party for years has favoured much wider immigration than this government has been prepared to permit.

I am intrigued by this venture into socialism in respect of the buying of the Hamilton factory. I wonder whether the hon. member could indicate to us how this would work, who would buy the cars, how would you merchandise them, where would you sell them?

Mr. Klein: I do not know how we would do it. I am merely trying to indicate some of the things we could attempt to do to bring about the very things about which you were complaining in your speech. There was a period in recent history when Canada was the fourth largest manufacturing company in the world. That was because we were exporting the products of Canadian companies to those areas in Europe which at that time were devastated by the war and were not manufacturing the same articles themselves. So we had ready-made markets for the products of Canadian industry. Today those countries to which we were shipping products yesterday are producing them themselves. Therefore I think it would be a very splendid idea for Canada, if we are no longer able to export the product, to import the customer.

I would reiterate that the basic problem in Canada is the fact that when we speak of Canada we must know what we are speaking about. We are speaking about five, six, or maybe ten industrial centres. It is not that the rest of Canada is not important but from the point of view of population Canada consists only of Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Vancouver and a few other centres. Aside from these eight or ten centres Canada is a barren, empty country. In order to remedy the situation my plea today is that we should have a broader and wider immigration policy.

Mr. John H. Addison (York North): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate and my remarks will be brief and rather to the point. I often have wondered whether the "grass" or backbenchers had any influence over a cabinet minister. Two weeks ago in the wind-up of the budget debate I urged upon the minister as strongly as I could that after about 15 months he should bring the United States-Canada auto agreement to parliament so that we might examine it. Two weeks later, by good luck or good management, here it is.