

*Oral Questions*

[English]

## CANADA-U.S. AUTO PACT—DISCUSSIONS WITH AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, the minister may not think that being overcharged for a product is a reason for consumer preference for something else. I am sure the average Canadian is well aware of the price differential and would like to pay the same price as someone in the United States pays for a car produced in Canada.

I wish to direct a supplementary question on the same subject matter to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. A recent study produced by the government of Ontario shows that within four years one third of all auto workers in Canada will be out of work. The significant point in the study is that there will be a disproportionate drop in the number of auto workers in Canada compared to the United States. Considering that the auto pact is supposed to share "on a fair and equitable basis" the benefits on both sides of the border, did the minister in his recent meeting with the United States Secretary of State obtain assurance that this deplorable situation whereby more Canadians proportionately will be out of work than Americans will be turned around by the American government?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I agree with my friend's interpretation of the auto pact, but that has not been the American position over the years. I have to say that was the one subject which I discussed with Secretary of State Haig to which I did not receive a satisfactory response. His view was the typical, traditional American one where the rules of free trade of the market should prevail. I did not regard that as a satisfactory answer. In fact, discussions are under way between our governments with another member of the administration and we will be continuing that discussion with, I believe, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

● (1430)

## PLEDGE TO RENEGOTIATE AUTO PACT

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I have a further supplementary for the Prime Minister concerning the same subject. During the last election the Prime Minister, while speaking in the riding of the Secretary of State, promised the auto workers of Windsor, who make up 45 per cent of the unemployed in that sector of the economy, that a Liberal government would renegotiate the auto pact. I wish to ask the Prime Minister, in light of the rejection by the American Secretary of State of such a proposal by our own external affairs ministers, will the Prime Minister commit himself today in the House to live up to that pledge to Canadian auto workers so that we can get our share of jobs on this side of the border?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, in that speech referred to by the hon. member I made two pledges. The first was to assist in the Chrysler situation, and we have kept that pledge. In so far as the second pledge is

concerned, we have first to ascertain, as the Secretary of State has done, what the American position was going to be under its new administration. That being done now, I have little to add to what the Secretary of State has said. We know their position. We do not know whether it is a negotiating position, but we will have to take it from there. I can assure the hon. member that the party which formed the government which brought in the auto pact in the first place is still dedicated to making sure it works fairly for Canadian workers.

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## THE CONSTITUTION

ACTIONS OF BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANADA—  
OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATION

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Last week, prompted by the Leader of the New Democratic Party, he gave us a very pious lecture on how diplomats should behave. He went on to say he would order an investigation into what he called "the totally unacceptable conduct of the British High Commissioner." Can the minister tell us the outcome of that investigation?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I will be prepared in several days, probably before the end of the week, to make some comments with regard to the matter. I should correct the hon. member because I did not say that any conduct which had taken place was unacceptable. I said the alleged conduct was unacceptable.

**Miss MacDonald:** Madam Speaker, my supplementary to the minister, who seems to be forever backing away from what he says, is that it is now recorded he has shared this information with the British government. Since he has shared the information with the British government, I find it very surprising he could wax indignant publicly a week ago and now he wants to be quiet or reticent with regard to the public record here in the House of Commons. In view of his reticence today about a matter which has already been looked into and on which information has been given, I should like to ask him if this reticence of his is because he now considers the statements he made previously belong to those comments which he considers to be rhetorical, or is it becoming more and more the practice of all members of the cabinet to be less than candid with this House?

**Mr. MacGuigan:** Madam Speaker, if I had to judge from what is said in this House, I would say the rhetoric is from the other side.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacGuigan:** I will be prepared to make some comments in several days on this matter. I said yesterday to the press that I had shared the information which I had at that point with the British government without making any recommendations.