

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—TARIFF
REDUCTIONS—EFFECT ON AUTO PACT

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, on Monday in the House the Minister for International Trade, referring to tariffs, said:

—in the trade talks we are seeking to reduce them to zero on Canada-U.S. trade over a period of 10 or 15 years, whatever is negotiated.

In her absence I want to direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. Why does the Government ignore the fact that there have been a number of occasions in recent years where automobile companies did not meet their content requirements under the Auto Pact and a threat to impose tariffs was necessary in order to get those companies up to the levels they had to meet on jobs and content? Why is the Government ready to tear the heart out of the Auto Pact by eliminating tariffs and thereby put at risk hundreds of thousands of Canadian jobs?

● (1510)

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the Hon. Member's question is entirely wrong. As he should know, because he was a Minister in the former Government, those tariffs on automobiles have been coming down over the years. I believe they stood at 17.5 per cent originally. They are down now to about 9.2 per cent. Those tariffs have been coming down all along. That obviously has not damaged the auto trade between our two countries. It is booming, doing very well. Why is the Hon. Member so afraid of it?

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REFUGEES

SITUATION OF CHILEANS NOW IN BUENOS AIRES

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Immigration. I have here the transcript of his remarks last Thursday night and the reply to them on Friday by Miss Herrera of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees from Argentina. The Minister made the statement that none of the Chileans in the plane load at Buenos Aires are real refugees and claimed to base that on Miss Herrera's advice. But Miss Herrera says in fact that some of them, by United Nations standards, are refugees. Since the Minister now understands that what he said on Thursday night was not true, will he, to correct the problem, bring those refugees to Canada and have them examined in Canada according to our refugee determination procedure?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, both the member and the journalists have misunderstood what we actually said. I clearly said that our officials examine, case by case, every individual person's claim that

Privilege—Mr. Crosbie

they have a legitimate fear. We determined that not one of those people fled from persecution. They were all economic migrants. I continue to maintain that I had received no advice at that time—and I still have no advice—from Miss Herrera, the UNHCR person responsible. We indicated that in the future if anything else would be said, we would have to look at it again. However, as of now, no advice has been given to our officials in Buenos Aires.

Mr. Speaker: I must advise Hon. Members that the time for Question Period has ended, and that I have a ruling arising from an intervention on March 9 in respect of the Hon. Minister of Transport and the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party.

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[Translation]

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED MISUSE OF HOUSE OF COMMONS STATIONERY,
PRINTING AND FRANKING PRIVILEGES—MR. SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: On March 9, I recognized the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) on what he considered to be misuse of the House of Commons printing and distribution services by the New Democratic Party. Following the intervention of the Minister, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) in turn complained about the mailing of certain documents and the Government production of a documentary at public expense.

A few members intervened in the debate on these complaints, and I allowed wide-ranging latitude because it seems to me Hon. Members might want the guidelines on household-mailings and franking privileges revised.

[English]

The Hon. Minister of Transport quoted from the *Members' Manual on Allowances and Services*, which includes under the heading "Unacceptable Requests", material unrelated to activities of the House of Commons and material of a partisan political nature. Nevertheless, the Chair would hesitate to make too rigid a pronouncement without being entirely satisfied that the House as a whole agrees that the guidelines should be interpreted in this way. In any case, a breach of guidelines does not necessarily constitute a breach of privilege.

The complaint of the Hon. Member for Oshawa was challenged by the Hon. Minister of Transport who insisted that the material distributed by the Government and the documentary film were not of a partisan nature. There is thus a difference of opinion among Hon. Members as to whether or not this material was legitimately charged to the public purse. It is obviously not for the Chair to resolve disputes of this kind.

To return to the complaint of the Hon. Minister against the New Democratic Party, the Hon. Member for Oshawa categorically stated that the New Democratic Party paid for