

September 30, 2015
BLACKLOCK'S REPORTER

Clock Runs On VIA Pensions

VIA Rail is expected to review pension costs in new contract talks with union employees. Transport Canada earlier vowed the Crown railway must ensure it is not a "burden" to taxpayers.

"We're back into bargaining this fall," said Brian Stevens, Unifor national rail director. "The current agreement expires December 31, so I would anticipate each party will be tendering some proposals around the pension issue." Managers did not comment.

VIA suffered a \$317.1 million deficit last year, just short of its forecast of \$321 million in losses cited in a *Summary Of The 2013-2017 Corporate Plan*. MP Jeff Watson, parliamentary secretary for Watson, told the Commons May 25 that "VIA is responsible for providing services in as cost-effective a manner as possible"; "It must work to ensure it is not a burden to taxpayers," said Watson, MP for Essex, Ont.

"In the last round of bargaining we had set aside the pension issue to be sorted out, and if that failed, arbitration," said Unifor's Stevens. VIA last year hired pension consultants after forecasting a 16 percent increase in contributions to \$107 million. "The major risk associated with the pension plans is the funding risk, which is the risk that the investment asset growth and the contributions to the pension plans will not be sufficient to cover the pension obligations, resulting in unfunded liabilities," the railway wrote in its *Annual Report* to Parliament.

Under terms for new employees set by arbitration, staff hired since 2014 qualify for defined benefits guaranteeing fixed payments from the railway, and a defined contribution portion funded by employees with a formula for matching funds. Unifor represents VIA service, sales and maintenance workers.

"We weren't entirely pleased with where we ended up with arbitration and, to be honest, I don't think VIA Rail is very pleased with it either," Stevens said. "The arbitrator came somewhat down the middle."

VIA estimates more than a third of its workforce, 35 percent, is due to retire within five years. Pension contributions for the existing defined benefit plan began increasing in 2013 towards a 50-50 target mandated by cabinet for all Government of Canada employees.

Subsidies on the national rail system averaged 39¢ per passenger mile last year, ranging from a high of \$4.77 on the Sudbury-White River, Ont. run to a low of 21¢ per passenger mile on the Montréal-Ottawa-Toronto service. The big cities' service draws the greatest traffic on the VIA network carrying 2.1 million passengers a year.

By Dale Smith

Job incites jobs fears \ FEDERAL ELECTION 2015

NORMAN DE BONO
30 September 2015
The London Free Press

A London industrial giant has been thrust into a federal election scrap between party leaders, and its workers -- fearing their jobs could be jeopardized -- aren't happy about it.

In a federal leaders' debate, when the NDP's Tom Mulcair questioned Conservative Leader Stephen Harper on General Dynamics Land Systems Canada's (GDLS) \$15-billion deal to supply armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia, it drew fire from Unifor, the union that represents workers at the Oxford Street plant.

"We have contacted the NDP about this issue," said Fergo Berto, Unifor area director for London, adding Unifor national president Jerry Dias spoke recently to Mulcair.

If GDLS lost the contract, it would not only mean "significant" job losses in London, he said, but he's worried it also would hurt the plant's ability to land future work.

"We asked the NDP to not make this an issue, that it be kept under wraps. There are a lot of issues out there to be talking about," said Berto, adding Dias spoke to Mulcair during the weekend, after the debate last week.

There are more than 2,000 workers at GDLS Canada and more than 500 are Unifor workers.

During the debate, Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe and Mulcair challenged Harper on military sales to Saudi Arabia.

Mulcair said after the debate government must question the human rights record of Saudi Arabia and that his government would look at the human rights record of any country in which it intended to sign an agreement on arms.

Harper defended the deal, saying many of Canada's allies also were after that contract. He also said Saudi Arabia is an ally in the fight against ISIS, and the deal is crucial to workers here and to the area's economy.

Irene Mathyssen, NDP candidate and MP in the last Parliament in London-Fanshawe, said she has since spoken to Mulcair and GDLS officials. She said the contract wouldn't be cancelled under an NDP win, but the party wanted "more transparency" from the federal government.

"It's a signed deal. We recognize the impact this will have for General Dynamics," Mathyssen said. "The issue is the Conservatives are so secretive, they don't tell anyone what they are up to. We have to do due diligence and investigate."

The GDLS deal wasn't raised during the most recent debate Monday. Mulcair and GDLS Canada couldn't be reached for comment Tuesday.

The Saudi contract, spread over 14 years, is to supply armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia, which has a record of suppressing its citizens, including imprisoning those who speak out.

When Harper was challenged about the deal, he said it would "not be right to punish workers in a factory in London for this. It doesn't make sense."

David Perry, senior analyst with the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute in Ottawa, defended the secrecy around arms deals, saying it's often demanded by the customer, and not the fault of government or the industry.

If Canada wants to compete globally in the military supply sector, it shouldn't make a habit of questioning this deal, he added.

"To have this discussed after will be a concern to (the Saudis). It is not secrecy, but the terms of the contract," Perry said.

It's also a question of whether Canada wants to be a global player in trade, he added.

"If we're going to have a domestic industry that is economically viable, we need a foreign policy pragmatic enough to support it. We just can't sell to our closest allies. We need to broaden the market."

What the auto industry means to this region

30 September 2015

Ingersoll Times

The automotive industry plays a very important role in this region. This region hosts a major share of the nation's auto industry with two assembly plants, a military vehicle plant and dozens of independent auto parts facilities.

Over 540,000 passenger vehicles were built in the region in 2014. The industry produced vehicles and parts worth an incredible \$13 billion in the region in 2014.

The auto industry directly employs 13,900 people in this region. Thousands more jobs are created to supply the industry. More jobs are created by the spending power of auto workers' paycheques. Auto workers' paycheques contribute \$897 million into the regional economy in 2014. In 2014, auto workers in this region paid \$237 million in income, payroll and sales tax.

Auto worker's fundraising efforts also directly support community organizations. Auto workers in the region supported \$57 million in municipal taxes in 2014.

We believe that the auto industry plays a significant role in this region and Canada. All of this is in jeopardy with the current Trans Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement talks and the lack of a National Auto Strategy.

Currently, the federal government is negotiating the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement that would see the elimination of tariffs and trade restrictions. This agreement would worsen our existing large auto trade deficit with Asia (\$5 billion last year with Japan alone). The proposed weakening of regional content requirements for tariff-free trade in automotive products within this agreement would have much worse impacts on Canadian productions and employment-especially in auto parts.

The process by which this agreement has been negotiated is dangerous and anti-democratic. This lack of transparency is all the more ironic given the betrayal of Canada's national interests through a secret Japan-USA deal on automotive content provisions.

We need an agreement that is genuinely balanced and mutually beneficial to international trade and development, respecting the rights to employment security among working people of Canada, and protecting the right of national governments to govern in the public interests.

We need trade agreements that protect the interests of Canada's automotive industry.

We can sustain a viable, profitable, dynamic auto manufacturing industry that generates good jobs for the future. Canada can learn from the experience of other industrialized jurisdictions, where the auto industry still contributes to growth and prosperity (rather than job loss and decline). The key difference between Canada and jurisdictions like Germany, Korea, Japan, and even the U.S. is not labour costs. The key difference is a willingness by government to play an active, guiding role in building an industry, and constructing an international advantage.

We need a National Auto Strategy to re-establish the foundation for long-term growth and prosperity in our auto industry, so it can provide the goods jobs our communities need in decades to come.

History has shown that no industry, including automotive, can be protected or guaranteed by the market. We challenge all candidates in this election, no matter what party they are running for, to stand up for Canada's auto industry and good jobs. Candidates should commit to at least maintaining (and better yet, strengthening) existing automotive content thresholds in future trade agreements, including the TPP, and ensuring that future automotive trade is mutual and two-way. If they don't, they are putting tens of thousands of good Canadian auto jobs at risk.

Mike Van Boekel, Unifor 88, Chairperson GM CAMI Ingersoll
Dan Borthwick, Unifor 88, President

Winners and losers: How TPP would affect different parts of Canadian auto sector

BY ALEXANDER PANETTA

CP

30 September 2015

The Canadian Press

ATLANTA _ Rob Wildeboer is proud of his car-parts company's growing international presence, which includes one new plant in China and another on the way.

He's excited about the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the big trade deal that could be reached this week in Atlanta.

The chairman of Ontario-based Martinrea International has even helped promote the project on behalf of the Canadian government.

"We happen to think that access to other markets, and the ability to operate there, and maybe the ability at some point to put a parts plant there to service our customers, are good things," he said in an interview.

Jerry Dias holds a different view.

He heads a union representing Canadian auto workers. And the president of Unifor has declared war on the 12-country pact, which he fears will cost jobs in a sector that already faces major long-term challenges.

"We are rapidly becoming a branch-plant economy for the entire world. We don't make anything anymore. We don't sell a finished product," he said in an interview.

He fears the deal will flood the North American market with cheaper Asian products and deepen Canada's auto trade deficit with the rest of the world.

Who's right?

Possibly both of them.

It's inevitable that there will be winners and losers in a wide-ranging deal like the one being worked out in Atlanta, says one auto-industry economist.

"It's kind of a redistribution," said Alan Deardorff, associate dean at the University of Michigan's Gerald Ford School of Public Policy.

"Like anything with freeing up trade _ high-cost producers will be hurt, but those who buy the inputs and could get them cheaper will benefit."

Car companies that get cheaper inputs are going to produce more, sell more, and employ more people, he said. And the winners could include companies like Ontario-based Martinrea, a fuel- and brake-line maker that employs 14,000 people worldwide, and has 2,500 employees and pays corporate taxes in Canada.

Some jobs will go, Deardorff said, and others will come.

But one analyst wonders whether there might be more losers than winners here.

John Holmes estimates that less than a third of the jobs in Canada's car-parts industry are at companies with a global presence like Martinrea.

He recently wrote a paper about the long-term troubles of Canadian auto manufacturing for the Automotive Policy Research Centre, a federally funded initiative that works with numerous industry actors and Canadian universities.

That paper examined how Canada's \$14.6 billion trade surplus in the auto sector in 1999 morphed into a \$10.3 billion deficit by last year. Almost one-quarter of Canada's jobs for vehicle and parts manufacturing were wiped out during the great recession, and only a small fraction have been added back since.

Will cheaper Asian parts under TPP continue that net loss of jobs?

"I strongly think yes," said Holmes, a Queen's University professor and auto-industry analyst.

"I can't see the export of parts made in Canada to TPP partners other than the U.S. and Mexico growing ... At the same time parts from other TPP partners or third countries are likely to displace some Canadian-made parts used in vehicle assembly in North America."

He agreed the effects will be varied, because the auto ecosystem in Canada is complex with a diversity of interests that will fare differently under a shift in trade rules.

The Canadian government has been eager to draw attention to the winners.

It's circulated quotes from companies like Martinrea. Like Martinrea, it stresses that to remain on the sidelines of TPP would be disastrous. Big car-makers would gravitate toward the new TPP supply chains, it says, and auto-parts suppliers would follow.

It's also promoted the idea of harder-to-quantify gains. One Canadian official predicted a deal would knock down some non-tariff barriers used by Japan to block imports, like arcane safety rules.

But the government clearly has concerns too.

Talks broke down in the last TPP round when the Japanese insisted on waiving tariffs for up to 70 per cent of car parts produced in non-TPP countries like China. In the current NAFTA agreement, the tariff waiver applies for a maximum of only 40 per cent of car parts from non-North American producers.

The Canadian and Mexican governments called that a non-starter. They've been pushing for a number closer to the NAFTA standard, which would limit some of the negatives.

But Deardorff questions how much, really, is at stake this week. He noted that current tariffs on Japanese imports are 2.5 per cent _ meaning that to do away with them would only shave \$400 off the price of a \$20,000 car.

"Really these things are, intrinsically, not that big a deal."

TPP worries farmers, autoworkers \ TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP: Farmers calling on the government to protect a supply managed dairy industry

MEGAN STACEY

30 September 2015

Woodstock Sentinel-Review

Local farmers and autoworkers are getting antsy as rumblings about the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations increase.

The free trade agreement has been a huge point of contention for workers in the agriculture and automotive sectors - both mainstays of the economy in Oxford County and a significant source of jobs.

Workers fear the deal could devastate their industries.

Last week, Unifor Local 88, which represents workers at GM CAMI Assembly in Ingersoll, staged a protest, and on Tuesday, local farmers gathered in downtown Woodstock to make their voices heard.

Of particular concern in the Dairy Capital is the potential of the agreement to open up the country's tightly controlled dairy market.

"We are hoping for status quo. We have a system in place that works, not just for those of us that produce a product but for consumers as well," said Amy Matheson, an Embro-area dairy farmer and spokesperson for the Oxford County Federation of Agriculture.

She was talking about the supply management system, which ensures stable prices for consumers and predictable incomes for dairy and poultry farmers.

"As a young farmer, with young kids, I can plan for the future and for our family farm, to say 'OK, based on our production, here's what type of income we can expect,'" said Andrew Campbell, a Strathroy-area dairy farmer who attended the rally.

"That uncertainty (without that system) is worrisome to us. We want to be protected by the government... we think that consumers want the choice of buying Canadian products."

Dave MacKenzie, incumbent Conservative MP for Oxford, spoke to the crowd that assembled between a large milk truck and two model cows across from his campaign office.

"The negotiations are ongoing, there have been no agreements from Canada," MacKenzie said emphatically.

"We will continue to support supply management."

MacKenzie said he didn't know the status of the current TPP proposals or negotiations, but that Oxford residents would know the details of the deal as soon as he did.

"All of these agreements end up being debated in the House, so no matter what happens at the table (this week), there will be another debate -in Canada -on this issue," MacKenzie reminded the crowd.

But that's not enough for some local leaders.

"It's sad that a deal of this magnitude is being negotiated behind closed doors," said Dan Borthwick, president of Unifor Local 88.

The TPP has the potential to hurt the Canadian auto industry, too, and that could spell doom for Oxford.

"Our major concerns are the reductions of the current tariffs that are found under the NAFTA agreement, which are 62.5% for assembly, and 60% for parts," Borthwick said.

"They'll be reduced to 45% for assembly and 30% for parts, which we believe will cause significant job loss in both auto assembly and auto parts in Ontario."

Lost jobs might also include local farmers.

"It was estimated that a 10% allowance of imports would result in over \$200 billion worth of farm gate losses," Matheson said.

Dan Veldman, an Oxford County egg producer, said the TPP could impact the survival of family farms.

"If we give up market access, it's something that you give up forever ... If we give up part of our market, I'm giving that up in my farm, when my daughter or son take over, it's giving it up from them, too, and our grandchildren," Veldman said.

"The nice thing about supply management is the processing has stayed in the province, compared to a lot of other sectors that have lost processing," he added.

But Veldman understands both sides of the argument around the international free trade deal.

"The government is between a rock and a hard spot. They have farmers and business that want to export, they have industries like ours that work just on domestic consumption. So they have to have a balancing act," he said.

In an interview at the rally, MacKenzie said that there are pros and cons to the deal.

"Other commodity groups ... benefit from free trade agreements, but I don't want to see it hurt anybody here, either."

TPP Trade Deal

29 September 2015
CTV National News

Host(s): LISA LAFLAMME

LISA LAFLAMME: Good evening. We begin tonight with new details of a massive top secret free trade deal that could transform the Canadian economy and break the stalemate of this tight election race. Negotiations start again tomorrow for the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Tonight, CTV News has learned the Harper government is offering to remove tariffs from thousands of Canadian products, effectively opening them up to the largest duty free market in the world. Dozens of ridings depend on the industries that are directly affected by TPP. CTV's Katie Simpson has the exclusive details on day 59 of this 78-day campaign.

KATIE SIMPSON (Reporter): Anxious and angry, dairy farmers brought their message to Parliament Hill.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN: It will definitely influence our vote.

SIMPSON: Worried the regulations that protect their industry and their livelihoods could be revoked if Canada signs on to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal. While the dairy industry is concerned, CTV News has learned the manufacturing sector could see a significant boost from TPP. A source close to the negotiations says if Canada signs on all tariffs will be removed from the majority of industrial products that Canada exports, metals and minerals such as petroleum products, potash, gold, and steel, chemicals and plastics, and industrial machinery. Every year Canada exports about \$158 billion worth of these goods to the 11 other TPP countries involved in the talks. Removing the tariffs would allow Canadian manufacturers to sell their goods to a new market of 800 million people at a lower price.

JAYSON MYERS (Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters): That creates jobs here in Canada. It means income security here for Canadians. And it means that Canada will be a preferred location for investment. SIMPSON: And that's exactly what Stephen Harper will campaign on if a deal is reached as expected before election day.

STEPHEN HARPER (Conservative Leader): Jobs of the future are going to depend in a world global economy in our access, privileged access to international markets.

SIMPSON: But TPP may not be good news for Canadian auto workers, who say it will allow cheap imported car parts to flood the market, killing Canadian jobs.

JERRY DIAS (UNIFOR): We can't be so naive as to believe that somehow people in Vietnam are going to start buying Chevy Equinoxes, or people in Malaysia, it's just not going to happen.

SIMPSON: The NDP is objecting to secrecy around the deal.

TOM MULCAIR (NDP Leader): You can't comment on a deal that no one has seen. Mr. Harper doesn't consult Canadians on his trade deals, and that's a big part of the problem. SIMPSON: And the Liberals are also sharing concerns. JUSTIN TRUDEAU (Liberal Leader): We need to protect our existing systems which work to ensure that our agricultural communities and farms continue to be able to feed the rest of us in this country.

SIMPSON: Harper vowed today his government will protect both the dairy and auto industries, saying Canada would only join TPP if they believe it's in the best interests of all the Canadian economy. But, Lisa, that was met with skepticism from both of those industries. LAFLAMME: All right, Katie. Katie Simpson covering the Conservative campaign.



Port trucking companies warned to pay drivers what is owed

Rob Shaw
29 September 2015
Postmedia Breaking News

VICTORIA - Container trucking companies at Port Metro Vancouver have been warned by the province that no excuses will be acceptable for failing to pay drivers proper wages and retroactive pay.

Provincial Transportation Minister Todd Stone said Tuesday that six audits conducted by the trucking commissioner's office all concluded companies were not paying their drivers the retroactive rates they had agreed to in March 2014 as part of a settlement with the federal and provincial governments that ended a strike at the port.

"So we've served notice to every single company out there - there's no excuse for not having paid your truckers what the rate regulation requires," Stone said.

"That is the law. And if it is determined through one of these audits that a company is in non-compliance, there will be sanctions."

The range of sanctions could include fines or a suspension from operating at the port, said Stone. Thirteen audits are currently underway.

"Our number-one priority here is to make sure that truckers get paid the wages they have rightfully earned," said Stone.

His ministry would not reveal the names of the trucking companies, how much money is owed to truckers, or how many truckers are involved.

"There's a significant amount of money owed to truckers under this situation. I'm told it could be up to as much as \$15,000 per trucker," said NDP critic Shane Simpson.

Container truckers staged a four-week strike in March 2014 over wages and long wait times at the port.

Premier Christy Clark personally helped broker a deal involving the port and federal government, which included new rates, a legislated licensing scheme, and retroactive pay rates overseen by a new container trucking commissioner.

But truckers repeatedly complained that companies failed to pay the agreed-upon rates, culminating in legal action in August launched by Unifor, the union representing 400 port truckers.

"We're happy to see they are finally getting on with it," said Unifor area director Gavin McGarrigle, who called Stone's comments a vindication of trucker concerns.

"But the drivers at this stage won't believe anything until they get the cheques in their hands."

McGarrigle called for fines against "rogue companies" and a widespread audit of the entire sector, amid reports some container companies are charging higher rates to shipping companies but not passing the fees on to the drivers.

Union and non-union truckers will be part of an industry-wide meeting Sunday in Surrey to discuss problems at the port, he said.

The simmering dispute at the port was further complicated by the abrupt resignation of trucking commissioner Andy Smith on Sept. 15.

Smith was supposed to be resolving issues at the port, but the union said he was instead unwilling or unable to force the companies to pay the agreed-upon rates.

The government is "aggressively" pursuing a new commissioner, but companies at the port are still expected to follow the law on wages even with the job vacant, said Stone.



Canadian voters deeply divided on who they trust to protect the CBC: survey; Only 12.6 per cent of survey respondents most trust the Conservative Party to protect the public broadcaster

SIMON HOUP

29 September 2015

The Globe and Mail (Breaking News)

The beleaguered Canadian Broadcasting Corporation may be getting short shrift on the campaign trail, but a new survey suggests sharp divisions exist between Tory supporters and other voters on the issue of a healthy public broadcaster.

The survey also found that, more than three years into an effort by the Harper government to reorient the federal broadcast regulator into a pro-consumer institution that is less focused on cultivating culture, most Canadians still believe the CRTC has a vital role to play in supporting the creation of home-grown TV programming.

And the survey touched on a hot-button election campaign issue, suggesting that Canadians would have a better impression of so-called over-the-top foreign TV services such as Netflix if those companies contributed to the creation of Canadian TV programs in the same way as traditional broadcasters and cable companies are required to.

During the first week of the election campaign, Conservative Leader Stephen Harper boasted in an online ad that he was “100 per cent against a Netflix tax.” Though no other major political party has said they favour such a tax, some Canadian TV distributors have suggested ruefully that current regulations put domestic companies at a disadvantage, making it difficult to compete with foreign services.

The survey, conducted by Nanos Research and paid for by the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting advocacy group with assistance from the creative workers’ trade unions ACTRA and Unifor, found 31 per cent of voters most trust the NDP to protect the CBC, while 26.9 per cent most trust the Liberal Party.

That may be an out-of-date figure: The landline and cellphone survey of 1,000 Canadians of voting age was taken between Aug. 28 and Sept. 3, before the Liberals’ recent announcement that they would not only restore the \$115-million in funding cut by the Harper government over the past few years, but would increase funding for the public broadcaster by an additional \$35-million. The NDP has pledged to restore funding.

Only 12.6 per cent of the survey respondents most trust the Conservative Party to protect the CBC.

The Harper government has come under fire during its four-year mandate for repeatedly cutting the broadcaster’s annual appropriation, despite campaign promises made in 2011 to “maintain or increase support for the CBC.”

The survey was released Tuesday morning to coincide with the CBC’s annual general meeting in Winnipeg.

Nanos asked a series of 33 questions, sounding out respondents on such issues as the value of local TV news, the institutions they most trust to protect Canadian culture and identity, and whether they believe it’s important for the majority of TV channels available in Canada to be Canadian.

Respondents were passionate about local programming, a segment of the TV industry which has been flailing financially in recent years: 92 per cent said they agreed or somewhat agreed that local TV news was “valuable to me” – a lofty level of support that was consistent from NDP supporters (92 per cent), to Liberal (95.5 per cent), Conservative (85 per cent) and Green (92 per cent). More than 91 per cent of respondents said their Member of Parliament should “work to keep local broadcasting strong in my community.”

Asked about the impending move by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to deregulate cable and satellite lineups, 79 per cent of respondents said it was “important” or “somewhat important” that at least 50 per cent of channels available on TV should “remain Canadian.”

And while 94 per cent of respondents did find it “important” or “somewhat important” for the CRTC to help create an environment in which consumers get the most value and best prices for broadcasting and telephone services, 95 per cent also wanted the agency to help ensure “there is enough competition in order to protect freedom of speech and democracy,” and 89 per cent found “the goal of enabling Canadians from different regions and languages to know and understand each other” to be important or “somewhat important.”

The survey also raised the issue of media consolidation in Canada, which has become a more pressing concern after this year’s purchase of Sun Media by Postmedia, as well as Bell Media’s 2013 acquisition of Astral Media.

Almost 94 per cent of poll respondents who identified as Liberal supporters said they agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement, “Now that virtually all private news media in Canada are owned by only a few large corporations, it is more important than ever to have a strong and vibrant CBC.” Almost 96 per cent of NDP supporters either agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement. Tory supporters were more sanguine, with only 70 per cent either agreeing or somewhat agreeing.

Respondents were twice as likely - by a margin of 72 per cent to 36 per cent - to say they have “high trust and confidence in CBC protecting Canadian culture and identity on television,” rather than private broadcasters. Only 37 per cent of respondents said they had high trust and confidence in the Canadian government protecting Canadian culture and identity on TV.

Nanos noted that the margin of error for a random survey of 1,000 Canadians is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.



Canada, Mexico share concerns about TPP impact to auto industry

- **CBC.CA News**
- **Wed Sep 30 2015, 7:21am ET**
- **Section:** Windsor
- **Byline:** CBC News

A key point of tension in a still-uncompleted Pacific Rim trade deal has ended up putting Canada and Mexico on the same side of an argument about what is fair when it comes to the terms relating to automotive production.

Canada and Mexico are among a dozen nations involved in talks for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a proposed trade deal involving 40 per cent of the world's economy.

Bill Anderson of the University of Windsor's Cross-Border Institute, said the TPP brings opportunities to Canadian business that cannot be passed up ? in particular the ability to reach into markets that are growing.

But the flip side of that opportunity is that these same businesses will face fiercer competition than they do right now, should Canada join the TPP.

This includes the part of the manufacturing industry that is involved in automotive and automotive part production.

"The automotive industry in Canada is a very critical industry and is not growing as quickly as people would like to see it grow and I think everybody is concerned about whether that foreign competition will be damaging," Anderson said in an interview on Tuesday.

The TPP could end up reducing the content requirements for auto parts, meaning that less of these parts would have to be manufactured in North America to avoid paying tariffs.

It's a concern that manufacturers in Mexico and Canada share, when it comes to the TPP ? though some Canadian auto companies have spoken out in favour of the deal.

"Now Mexico, who a lot of people in the auto industry see as a threat to Ontario, are now sort of the ally in terms of the [TPP] negotiations," said Anderson.

Oscar Albin, the executive president of Mexico's National Autoparts Industry said Tuesday that if the content rules were amended to allow just 30 per cent of parts to come from North America, as Japan has reportedly requested, that would reduce its exports to the United States by one-third.

The TPP, which the stakeholders are trying to quickly wrap up, has become an increasingly important issue in Canada's ongoing federal election campaign.

On the campaign trail on Tuesday, Conservative Leader Stephen Harper, whose party has formed government the past three elections, said that Ottawa would "only sign a deal if we believe it's in the best interests of all of our Canadian economy, including our auto industry."

Unifor, the largest private-sector union in Canada, recently organized a series of rallies in Ontario ridings with a connection to the auto sector, in which autoworkers and their supporters demanded that Conservative candidates reveal their views on the TPP.

The union wants to see the Conservatives defeated at the polls and for the other parties to back away from any deal the union feels isn't good for the auto sector.

With reports from The Canadian Press, Reuters and the CBC's Laurence Martin



La Terre de chez nous
30 septembre 2015

PTP : les négociations battent leur plein

Julie Mercier

Les ministres du Commerce des 12 pays membres du Partenariat transpacifique (PTP) sont réunis à compter d'aujourd'hui, le 30 septembre, afin d'en arriver à conclure cet ambitieux accord de commerce.

Au moment de mettre sous presse, le 25 septembre, le département américain du Commerce avait effectivement confirmé la rencontre ministérielle. Cette ronde de pourparlers a été précédée d'une réunion des 12 négociateurs en chef, du 26 au 29 septembre, à Atlanta en Géorgie. La dernière session de négociation du PTP s'était déroulée à la fin juillet à Hawaï. Depuis, des progrès avaient été réalisés. Le 16 septembre, le président des États-Unis avait estimé pouvoir en arriver à une entente au cours des prochaines semaines. Le premier ministre Shinzo Abe partageait cet optimisme. Il avait déclaré au Japan Times qu'une seule rencontre ministérielle permettrait de conclure le PTP.

Néanmoins, quelques dossiers demeurent litigieux, notamment l'accès au marché canadien sous gestion de l'offre de même que le commerce automobile. Le 22 septembre dernier, les négociateurs canadiens, japonais, mexicains et américains ont tenu deux jours de discussions sur l'épineux dossier du commerce automobile. Des progrès notables auraient été réalisés en matière d'ouverture des marchés, au grand dam des travailleurs canadiens du secteur.

L'abolition des tarifs douaniers sur une proportion beaucoup plus importante de pièces et de véhicules produits dans la zone du PTP inquiète le syndicat Unifor. Jusqu'à 26 400 emplois s'en trouveraient menacés. Quant au secteur laitier, l'état des discussions n'a pas permis d'entente la semaine dernière, a confié le ministre du Commerce néo-zélandais, Tim Groser, au New Zealand Herald.

Selon plusieurs analystes, les 12 ministres du Commerce souhaitent signer le Partenariat avant l'élection canadienne du 19 octobre, car la poursuite des négociations pourrait s'avérer difficile selon l'issue du vote.

Les producteurs canadiens d'oeufs, de volailles et de lait craignent qu'en signant le PTP, le Canada ne crée d'autres brèches dans l'accès à son marché intérieur, tout comme il l'a fait dans l'accord avec l'Union européenne. Pour l'Union des producteurs agricoles, le gouvernement canadien doit aborder le PTP en visant des résultats positifs pour tous les agriculteurs canadiens. «Cela veut notamment dire de veiller à ce que l'intégrité des systèmes de gestion de l'offre soit protégée en s'assurant d'un contrôle efficace des importations, sans augmentation de volume pour ses produits sensibles et sans réduction de tarif hors contingent», précise l'organisation.



ICI Radio-Canada - Colombie-Britannique-Yukon (site web)
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Victoria sanctionnera six entreprises de camionnage

Des audits du gouvernement de la Colombie-Britannique ont révélé que six entreprises de camionnage n'ont pas payé tous les salaires de leurs chauffeurs travaillant dans le port de Metro Vancouver.

Le ministre des Transports Todd Stone affirme que des « sanctions appropriées » seront appliquées à chacune de ces compagnies.

Le dossier épineux des salaires remonte à une grève des camionneurs en mars 2014 qui cherchait un règlement à l'écart salarial existant avec leurs confrères du transport routier dans le reste de la Colombie-Britannique.

Une entente avait été conclue qui comprenait la création d'un commissaire au port de Vancouver, un poste auquel a été nommé par Andy Smith.

À lire aussi :

Deuxième journée de grève des camionneurs de Port Metro Vancouver
Retour au travail des camionneurs de Port Metro Vancouver
Cependant, d'après le syndicat Unifor, M. Smith refusait d'imposer les nouvelles grilles salariales aux entreprises de camionnage et il a fallu que le syndicat traîne le commissaire devant la justice.

M. Smith a démissionné de son poste et n'a pas été remplacé depuis.

D'après le directeur régional de Unifor en Colombie-Britannique, Gavin McGarrigle, environ 1500 camionneurs sont concernés par cette affaire, mais seule une centaine ont reçu les salaires qui leur sont dus.

Les autres ont été payés 16 \$ l'heure, alors que l'entente de 2014 prévoyait au moins 25 \$ l'heure. Dans certains cas, ils étaient payés chaque voyage 60 \$ ou 80 \$, au lieu de 120 \$.

D'après M. McGarrigle, les compagnies de camionnage risquent de devoir payer des millions de dollars à titre de salaires rétroactifs.

Le critique du Nouveau Parti démocratique (NPD), Shane Simpson, estime que Victoria ne poursuit pas assez les entreprises fautives et qu'un système plus strict du maintien des règles doit être instauré.