

Japan isn't dumping minivans — it's just a failure

Among the tiffs that develop over international trade, so-called "dumping" charges — whereby one nation's companies unload surplus production at a loss outside their national boundaries — are among the most confusing to the general public. To begin with, the net result to the U.S. consumer is a good deal, since prices are lower. The last two U.S. presidents likewise thought this was a good deal, since low prices are what happens when you "control inflation."

The Big Three automakers don't think dumping is a particularly good deal, since it means another country can cover the cost of investment in new product with volume generated in the United States, while hitting

customers in the home, protected market with prices that allow generous profit margins.

The result was a petition from the Big Three to the U.S. Commerce Department a couple of weeks ago, charging that the Japanese automakers were dumping minivans in the United States. It's one of the few efforts in recent times to play hardball on an automotive trade issue, and following a series of charges of unfair trade practices leveled at the Japanese in recent months.

IT'S ALSO a little embarrassing, since overall the Japanese have been dismal failures in the minivan market, and to build a proper dumping case, you need to prove some dam-



auto talk
Dan McCosh

age to U.S. industry has resulted. Toyota, in particular, has latched onto this fact of the argument, while not bothering to deny it is selling its minivans at cheaper prices in the United States than in Japan.

Actually, it seems unlikely that the Japanese are dumping minivans at a loss. Rather, they probably are enjoying artificially high prices in Japan because of their protected

market. U.S. companies, particularly Chrysler, in all likelihood are not directly hurt in the minivan market by dumping, judging by their continued strong sales — only indirectly, because the profits from minivans are needed to offset losses generated by their turkeys.

All this makes for a pretty weak dumping case. Philosophically, dumping may not

be such a bad thing. Setting prices relative to local demand is the essence of theoretical international business practice. Were it possible to dump U.S. production in Mexico, for example, U.S. plants would be busy and the Mexicans would be able to afford cars.

Unfortunately, the countries where the United States could dump its relatively low-cost goods all have high tariff barriers, and Japan itself continues to maintain non-tariff, but equally effective, trade barriers.

The United States is one of the few countries in a position to be victimized by dumping today — mainly because of the unique position it provides of being the only relatively

strong, unprotected market in the world — despite the free-trade rhetoric.

It would be nice to think that the outcome of the current debate at least would send a warning shot across Japanese bows. But the strange thing is, the few times dumping charges have stuck, they have landed on countries like Canada or the United Kingdom, which is something like blasting away a prowler with a shotgun, and turning on the lights and finding you shot the parakeet.

Dan McCosh is automotive editor of Popular Science magazine.

business people

Heather L. Boylan joined Hermanoff & Associates in Farmington Hills as an assistant account executive.

Tari Mellicur was promoted to branch manager, main office with Metropolitan National Bank of Farmington. She joined the bank in August 1985.

Steven Hamzey has joined Rock Financial Corp. of Birmingham as a loan officer.

John Barron of Bloomfield Hills was named editor of Detroit Monthly magazine.

NORMAN Gofrank of West-Bloomfield was named vice president of engineering and John Hackett was named vice president of manufacturing at Hueller Hille Corp. in Troy.

John Hackett was named vice president of manufacturing with Hueller Hille Corp. in Troy.

Dr. J. Thawley of Southfield has joined the medical staff of Oakwood Downriver Medical Center, Lincoln Park.

Barry Seymour of Farmington Hills was promoted to senior vice president at Camp Dresser & McKee, one of the nation's largest environmental engineering consulting firms.

Cody Olson Inc., the metropolitan



Boylan



Mellicur



Hamzey



Barron



Gofrank



Hackett



Thawley



Seymour



Moon



Galtland

Detroit retail-commercial real estate brokerage firm, has announced the appointment of two new associates: Douglas Moon and Miles Galtland as leasing agents.

Maria Marcantonio was named partner and vice president, creative services/sales, at Visual Communications Inc. in Farmington.

Don Seabster of Troy, broadcast industry veteran, has joined Music Technologies International in Southfield as a senior account executive. He is also president of "A Spotlight Performance," a mobile disc jockey service for wedding receptions and parties of all kinds.

James D. Tassoni of West-Bloomfield has become a tax partner in the firm of Skillman, Boyle & Pollack, Certified Public Accountants in Troy.

Denise R. DeVries was named vice president of sales and market-

ing at Rockwell International in Troy.

Patrick Iria of Mettal Studio in Birmingham took second place in the Professional Goldsmith Category for his 14K rose and white gold ring with one opposed bar-cut Citrine and four round diamonds.

Bruce Campbell and Jeff Plastowski of Just Jewelers in Farmington received a certificate of distinction in the Designer of Manufacturer Partnership Category.

Michael Mezzy has joined the law firm of Raymond & Dillon in Southfield.

David C. Price was promoted to the position of programmer/analyst supervisor I, at Kmart in Troy.

Denise Illich Lites of Bloomfield Hills, senior executive vice president of Little Caesar Enterprises Inc. was elected to the First of America Bank

Board of Directors.

Jack Result, broker/owner of Century 21 Row, and Mary McLeod, associate broker of Century 21 Row, were honored with the coveted Century Award, the most prestigious award in the Century 21 system.

Several management appointments have been announced by Meyer Jewelers, a 21-store chain with locations throughout Michigan and headquartered in Taylor: Stan Lapa was promoted to manager at Meyer Jewelers' Laurel Park in Livonia. Erich Vogel was appointed

manager at Meyer Jewelers' Wondeland Mall store in Livonia. Joyce Forro was appointed manager at Meyer Jewelers' Oakland Mall store in Troy.

Peter A. Case was appointed writer for the Detroit office of Alexander Marketing Services in Rochester Hills.

Valda Strong of Southfield was promoted from assistant vice president to vice president at Michigan National Corp.

Dr. Pierre F. Giammanco, a facial plastic surgeon and member of the American Academy of Facial Plas-

tic and Reconstructive Surgery, the world's largest association of facial plastic surgeons, from Bloomfield Hills, has been accepted as a certificant of the American Board of Facial-Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Dr. Giammanco maintains his office in Bloomfield Hills.

Tana Lorenger, an Auto Club Life employee, has moved into offices at the AAA Michigan/Bloomfield Hills General Agency, 2685 S. Woodward in Bloomfield Hills.

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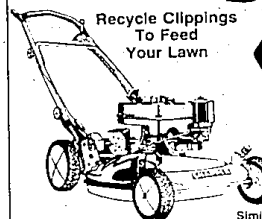


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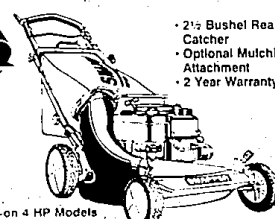


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