

Government. He happens to be of the same persuasion as the Hon. Member. How would the Hon. Member respond to the Premier of Newfoundland who says that Newfoundlanders are going to have less disposable income than before? He also says that there will be more taken out than will be put back. That is not the doom and gloom of the Opposition, it is a comment made by the Premier of Newfoundland.

● (1610)

I would like the Hon. Member to respond to these points since I think they are important. When he talks about job creation in the private sector what does he have to say in reply to an article in *The Globe and Mail* with respect to Statistics Canada which indicates that for all four Atlantic provinces, British Columbia and the Territories the forecasts for capital spending are that it will drop by 9.2 per cent? That is not the doom and gloom of the Opposition, it is an account from a reputable Canadian news agency. When the Hon. Member talks about jobs being created across the country, that may be true. However, would he admit that only 8 per cent of the new jobs which have been created have been created in the Atlantic area?

Finally, if the Hon. Member feels that the private sector is to be put front and centre—and I agree with that—and if he thinks that that is the appropriate policy, would it not be better to wait until the private sector has had a chance to do its work before we cut government programs which have historically supported the economy in the Atlantic area? In other words, are we not putting the cart before the horse? Does the Hon. Member not think a more sensible course of action to follow would be to continue the support that we have historically given to the Atlantic economy until such time as the private sector has had a chance to become healthier?

**Mr. O'Neil:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first point raised by the Hon. Member, I invite him to read the comments made by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) as they will appear in the *Hansard* for today. The Minister is from Newfoundland. He very eloquently and effectively put forward the case of the Government vis-à-vis its support of Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders. We have very capable Members in the House who have responded to these same points. It would serve no purpose for me to repeat what the Minister of Justice said today. In any case I could not compete with his oratory and eloquence.

With respect to the business of the private sector and waiting for it to do its job, I point out to the Hon. Member that we suffer from a deficient private sector because of the policies about which he speaks. He wishes to continue these policies. I can tell the Hon. Member that in my riding there are no more churches left to paint and there are no more graveyards which need picket fences erected around them. The grant program has really been exhaustive. It would serve no construction purpose to continue it. Therefore, that type of Government program, which the Hon. Member advocates should be continued—

**Mr. Rompkey:** That is not what I said at all.

#### *Borrowing Authority Act*

**Mr. O'Neil:** —is of minimal importance. In my riding we have achieved success in terms of developing the private sector. However, we also have a balance. We have public involvement in a different way. In Cape Breton, as in all of Atlantic Canada, we now have some of the richest incentive programs possible, all this is an effort to bridge our economy to the point where we do not need to get the private sector involved. However, we do have the bridging. These programs cost the Government of Canada a great deal of money. In my riding we are developing a diversified economy with a private sector base.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to felicitate the Hon. Member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso (Mr. O'Neil) for his speech with respect to the borrowing authority Bill. He has been described by *Atlantic Insight*, and by my hon. friend, as being cocky and shrewd. He is much more than that. His constituents should know that he is also an extremely hard-working and diligent Member of Parliament.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Questions and comments on the speech, please.

**Mr. Edwards:** I am coming to that, Mr. Speaker.

I know that the Hon. Member's speech must have been prepared in the late hours of the night since it is the Hon. Member's custom to work late and hard.

We Albertans are facing an uncertain future, perhaps, with the prospect of declining world oil prices. However, in discussions regarding the Budget in Alberta we find that Albertans do not begrudge in the least the very special treatment being given by the Government to Atlantic Canada. I know the Hon. Member has lived and studied in Alberta. I would like him to tell the House what long-term prospects he sees for Alberta and, indeed, Atlantic Canada under the enlightened policies of this Government.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Mr. Speaker, first, I would say that we are preparing for the influx of Albertans to Cape Breton. We expect to have a great many jobs there for them.

In response to the Hon. Member's specific question, the deficit is a major economic impediment to growth in the country. If we fail to address the deficit, we fail to address the priority of lowering interest rates and getting the economy moving again. The deficit is important in Atlantic Canada for that reason as well, just as it is important in western Canada. In an effort to diversify the economy of Alberta we are providing considerable support to the agricultural sector. We have also provided a new energy program for the Province of Alberta.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Edmonton South (Mr. Edwards) for his very aggressive pursuit of the interests of his constituents, and of all Albertans, which have resulted in very understanding policies both for the Atlantic region and the western regions of the country.