

● (1510)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret that the Hon. Member's time has expired. However, there is time for questions and comments.

[Translation]

Mr. Grisé: Mr. Speaker, since the Hon. Member for Westmorland-Kent (Mr. Robichaud) suggests that our Government's Budget will affect the tourist industry, an industry that he as well as our Government thinks highly of, and since a good many, if not all, Canadians contribute to the Canadian tourist industry, would he not agree that the creation of 600,000 new jobs in Canada has an important and direct impact on the tourist industry?

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Speaker, I find it surprising that although we always hear about that creation of jobs—you mentioned 600,000 jobs—whenever I travel to New Brunswick, people ask me: "Well, what's happening with those jobs? We have not seen them yet".

Now, what impact could that have on the tourist industry? It could have a large impact if only those jobs were to materialize. What you decided to do, however—

Mr. Grisé: 600,000.

Mr. Robichaud:—and you started in November and went on in May, and you have come up this week with yet another tax increase so that the price of gasoline go up all the time.

Mr. Grisé: It went down.

Mr. Robichaud: Last fall, people from the tourist industry were invited to come and meet the Minister of State (Tourism) (Mr. Murta) here in Ottawa. The Minister said that it was part of his consultation process, and that he was expecting suggestions from the industry. Now . . . how could that industry be helped?

The first recommendation of that meeting dealt with taxes. And indeed the industry was calling for and is of course more than ever calling for a restructuring of the taxes incurred by that industry. But at no time did anyone listen to them.

They just increased taxes on gasoline and spirits, two items contributing to the perception that Canada is an expensive country to travel to, especially for our southern neighbours. But the industry never got any help, and it is still going to have to survive in spite of the Government.

Mr. Clinch: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate today. The Hon. Member for Westmorland-Kent (Mr. Robichaud) told us about the mismanagement of this Government. The largest item of expenditure is the interest on the public debt which has been fast increasing. The Hon. Member knows about it, and very well too. Interest on the public debt

Borrowing Authority Act

has increased from \$3.2 billion in 1974-75 to \$22.5 billion in 1984-85. From 1980-81 to 1984-85, interest on the public debt has increased threefold—

An Hon. Member: How awful!

An Hon. Member: How terrible!

Mr. Clinch:—from \$6 to \$18 billion.

An Hon. Member: How shocking!

Mr. Clinch: How can this Member talk about mismanagement when we look at the figures of the former Government, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Speaker, I can talk about mismanagement, because nowhere in the estimates can I find any programs for helping the people in the Atlantic Provinces. When we refer to regional development, that tool used to create jobs and assist industries, we only note that funds earmarked for those programs have been reduced and no other mechanism has been provided.

In the case of fisheries, my colleague from Gloucester (Mr. Clinch) knows quite well that our fisheries need Government assistance, that they are not self-sufficient because they have to cope with rather difficult conditions . . . Now what do we see? We merely see a reduction of all programs meant to give assistance in that sector and he will agree with me that it is one of the most important sectors in our area.

[English]

Mr. Jardine: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague because we are both from the same province and his riding abutts mine. One of the things we share in New Brunswick is the beautiful Kouchibouguac Park. So I was rather, I will not say disturbed so many as deeply surprised that during his presentation he mentioned at least five times the tax on alcohol. It was as though the big attraction in the picture Province of New Brunswick was cheap booze rather than the natural beauty we share through that particular Kouchibouguac Park. He also said there was nothing in the Budget to help tourism. Therefore, I would ask him to comment on the Atlantic Enterprise Program which has set aside \$1 billion to provide funding to the private sector in our province and others in Atlantic Canada. He did not say one word about that.

[Translation]

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague from the neighbouring constituency of Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Jardine). In the first part of his question, he spoke about the price of alcoholic beverages. Naturally, as I have pointed out, the price of alcohol is one of the factors contributing to the perception of Canada as a costly place to visit. When the Americans come here and want to buy something to drink, they find our liquor extremely expensive.