

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 8, 1984

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

TOURISM

CO-ORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING URGED

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to speak out about tourism and the importance of doing everything possible to bolster up this sagging industry. Over the last several years Canada has become less popular as a travel destination for both Canadians and foreigners. In contrast, Mr. Speaker, the percentage of Canadians travelling outside Canada has been growing by 5 per cent yearly.

There are a number of problems affecting our declining tourist industry, the most serious being that of cost. Canada has become over-priced as a tourist destination largely because of excessive taxation by all levels of government on accommodation, gasoline, and spirits.

In addition, government decisions are often made without regard to their detrimental implications on the tourist industry. There is a lack of co-ordination between the various government Departments regarding regulations which end up being detrimental to the tourist industry. More co-operation is needed between all levels of government to co-ordinate and carry out positive plans for the betterment of tourism.

Therefore, I call on the federal Government to take the initiative and the necessary action to raise the tourist industry in Canada to its full potential, which would drastically help to produce much needed additional employment in this time of economic stagnation.

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POLITICAL PARTIES

COMPILATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE LIST ATTRIBUTED TO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Mr. John Evans (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, as the Lord High Executioner sang in the *Mikado*, "As some day it may happen that a victim must be found, I have a little list; I have a little list." The Official Opposition has revealed that it, too, has a little list. Like the Queen of Hearts in "Alice in Wonderland", the

Hon. Member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) and his cohorts scream, "Off with their heads", to more than 3,000 persons now serving the people of Canada in appointed positions within the government structure. Some of these people are even Tories, Mr. Speaker. They will all go, irrespective of the quality of their work or their dedication to the people of Canada.

One has to wonder what other "little lists" the Tories are compiling for the day they want victims to appease the blood lust of their membership. Are there lists of diplomats who must be eliminated? How about specific public servants? Instead of dynamic government from the Tories, the people of Canada may well be awaiting, as Gilbert and Sullivan put it, "... the sensation of a short, sharp shock, from a cheap and chippy chopper on a big black block."

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

IMPACT OF SALES TAX

Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines): Mr. Speaker, the motor vehicle manufactured in Canada has a favourable major impact on the Canadian economy. Steel, rubber and plastic manufacturers, and a host of related workers, all rely heavily on the continued existence of a Canadian automobile industry. Even after a series of disastrous years for North American car sales, and when imports account for one-third of the Canadian market, the Government's sales tax system continues to discriminate in favour of offshore vehicles. This federal sales tax makes it up to \$400 cheaper for a Canadian to buy a Japanese-made car, for instance, rather than one produced at home, supplying jobs to Canadians.

It is a simple matter—if the Government only had the will—to change. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) can accept this as a challenge to make this change in his forthcoming budget speech. As it is, the tax on domestic automobiles is levied on the retail value, while the tax on imports is on the smaller duty-paid value. Why discriminate against the North American built car? The Minister of Finance's own federal sales tax review committee reported as long ago as May, 1983, that this was an inequity. The task force set up by the former Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce refers to it as a blatant inequity.

In view of the size and importance of the Canadian automobile industry, and the lip service given to it by so many Cabinet Ministers, it is difficult to understand the Government's apparent reluctance to correct that which is recognized by all as an obvious inequity.