

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, yesterday the Minister of the Environment made a proposal and said that there would be a public debate on the subject during the next two months. He invited representations from the general public and those concerned. It is obvious that the Minister and the Government will consider all views that will be expressed on the project announced by the Minister of the Environment yesterday. As to whether further measures should be taken, I shall assume the Hon. Member's remarks are suggestions he would like me to take into consideration.

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[English]

TOURISM

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRY

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism whose Department, in my view, should be one of the very high profile ministries in the Government. Further to what the Hon. Member for Hillsborough said regarding the high cost of gasoline, the Minister is aware of the recent news that Canada had a \$1 billion deficit in the tourist industry. I believe the total was \$2.5 billion of U.S. spending Canada and \$3.5 billion of Canadian spending in the United States, for a minus of \$1 billion.

Could the Minister tap the Minister of Finance on the shoulder, and the other Members of Cabinet, to see if something can be done? I know he is a hard-nosed nut, and I can see him shaking his head. I am wondering whether Cabinet would give consideration to doing something to help the tourist industry, which is the second biggest industry in the country, as the Minister knows. In my own Province of Ontario it is a \$7 billion industry—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, what I have just done is pat the Minister of Finance on the back rather than tap him on the shoulder because, in his recent statements in the House, he has clearly given an indication of his support for small business. I remind the Hon. Member that, by far, the majority of businesses involved in tourism are small businesses. I thoroughly agree with him that indeed we should give this industry an increasing profile and priority. I would remind him that, although energy costs are high, the Canadian dollar gives us a particular advantage.

Also I would remind the Hon. Member that, according to press reports today, many of the disincentives are related to taxes within the Provinces. If he had read the press reports I read today, he would know that Tourism Ontario Inc., for example, has approached its Government to get it to lower its taxes on accommodations, meals, alcohol and so on. There is a

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large mix of factors, but I assure him of our support on this side for the tourist industry.

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PUBLIC WORKS

CANADIAN FORCES BASE CHATHAM, N.B.

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. It concerns the closure of CFB Chatham in New Brunswick, which is placing in jeopardy hundreds of jobs in that region. Everyone knows that the Minister is the man who cans the ham in New Brunswick. The other day I put a question to him in which I asked when he would be prepared to meet with the CFB Chatham Steering Committee to resolve the problems. They have asked repeatedly to meet with the Minister. He did not answer or even address himself to that portion of the question. Again I ask him when he will go to New Brunswick and meet with the CFB Chatham Steering Committee to resolve the impending tragedy.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I really have to ask the Chair for some clarification as to whether a Minister is responsible for his Department or his region, not because I do not want to try to answer questions fully but because I really must have guidance. The headlines in my own Province were rather derogatory—

Madam Speaker: Obviously Ministers may not answer questions regarding their so-called regional responsibilities.

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NUCLEAR ENERGY

HEAVY WATER PLANTS IN CAPE BRETON, N.S.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. No doubt the Minister is aware that the official unemployment rate in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, is over 18 per cent, and that thousands of other workers have given up their job search. He must also know that closure of the heavy water plants in Cape Breton will add 3,000 Nova Scotians to the jobless ranks. Does the Government intend to allow closure of the heavy water plants at Glace Bay and Strait of Canso and, if so, what alternative employment can the Minister offer to the 3,000 Nova Scotians who will lose their jobs? I do not mean Alastair Gillespie and his Scotia Coal Synfuels Project.

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, we are well aware of the problem and we have been working on it. At this time AECL is working very hard to find some new markets. There is some potential for the development of a second Lepreau in New Brunswick and so on, so we have decided for the time being that we can keep these two plants in operation. If we are successful in looking for new markets or new sales of Candu