

made available under a TAB program for workers in the auto industry in the Windsor area? Second, does the minister feel that the interest rates which have now reached a fairly substantial level, as of today's announcement, are sufficient to justify that he might fulfil his own promise and resign?

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member to stick around and not run away, as he did from the Ontario legislature after he was rejected by his own party, and listen to our announcements about expenditure to help workers in Windsor and throughout Canada, not of \$44 million but of \$14 billion. This will do a lot more than will the empty blather of the hon. member on interest rates or any other subject.

Hon. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the commercial as much as you did.

The essential guideline which permeates the budget is a direction to avoid an 18-cent per gallon excise tax increase at all costs. The minister has been faithful to his mandate and the costs have been tremendous. The cost of gasoline will go up about the same as it would under the Crosbie budget but the cost of home heating oil, not taxed by the Crosbie budget, will rise more rapidly under this budget.

In the final analysis, the government will extract \$500 million more under this budget than was contemplated under the Crosbie budget. Under this budget the energy price increase will impact more severely on lower and middle-income Canadians because the budget provides no energy tax credits to shelter lower and middle-income people earning under \$21,000, as was provided in the Crosbie budget. That budget provided a tax credit of \$80 for adults and \$30 for children. To illustrate the impact this would have as a tax shelter, consider a car getting 20 miles to a gallon, travelling 12,000 miles a year. It would use approximately 600 gallons of gasoline. At 18-cents per gallon that would cost \$108 in one year. For an average family of four, a mother, father and two children, the tax credit would amount to \$220. That would go a long way toward defraying the \$108. This triple tax on energy constitutes, in my view, a tax regime with a vengeance and without mercy because no shelter for lower-income Canadians who use motor vehicles prudently is provided.

The most serious cost cannot be estimated. There is no way that the fragmentation of this nation may be measured in dollars. It should be said at this time that while western alienation began some time ago the fragmenting process began with the election of the present government and has continued to this day, despite great efforts by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) and his government to heal the wounds of the nation, particularly those of the west.

The energy package, which is the cornerstone of this budget, projects a natural gas pipeline to the maritime provinces. I think this is a good measure. It will improve the energy mix in Atlantic Canada and it will provide greater security of supply. The construction of the pipeline will provide employment and will require support industries, which in turn will also stimulate employment by way of spin-off. But it is an intermediate measure for an intermediate term because natural gas is a

fossil fuel, like oil. It is finite in supply and its end is predictable. Its end is in sight.

The province of New Brunswick has expressed environmental concerns which should be addressed and which, in my opinion, can be resolved. I would like to see the introduction of this new energy form managed so there is no dislocation in the operation of the large oil refinery located in New Brunswick, which directly or indirectly employs more than 1,000 persons. We need those jobs desperately in New Brunswick as well as those to be created. I believe that if we phase in the new energy form we can keep the old and add the new, which would provide a great economic stimulus to our province. Offshore exploration for natural gas and oil should be accelerated along the Atlantic coast. I am hoping that the gas pipeline will be reversible in nature so that in the days to come the people of Atlantic Canada can make their contribution to this nation by seeing that gas from the Atlantic coast flows inland to serve the people who are now serving us.

The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. De Bané) explained tonight the 50 per cent tax investment credit, which I think is a major step forward in the battle against regional disparity. It is not as generous as a similar provision in the Crosbie budget, nor is it the 100 per cent recommended by the prestigious New Brunswick Development Institute. But it is a giant stride in the right direction and I am pleased to see that it is going to be in place.

DREE should also direct its attention to the problems of regional disparity and focus upon a development dimension. The only way this can happen, in my view, is for the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) to personally give that direction or to invest the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion with the authority to bring it about.

Shipbuilding has been neglected in this budget. It has not even been mentioned. In the Crosbie budget there was an impetus provided for the construction of new fishing vessels. This would be reflected by more employment in the shipyards of Saint John, New Brunswick, Halifax, Nova Scotia and St. John's Newfoundland. A program to create more employment in those shipyards would be a tremendous bonanza to the dozens of shipyards along the Atlantic coastline. I regret very much that it has been omitted from this budget.

CAST, which is one of the largest international ship companies in the world, is Canadian-owned and a principal owner is Canadian National Railways. This company recently ordered from Yugoslavia two container bulk carriers worth \$27 million each. They have also placed a similarly large order with Korea. Canadian shipyards, which are underemployed, find it difficult to compete with subsidized foreign yards. This budget contains no enlightened tax policy to assist them in this competition or provide them with the incentive to put more Canadians to work. I find that a regrettable omission also.

The frigate program which would provide badly needed frigates for the Department of National Defence appears to be bogged down, if it has not completely sunk. Earlier this year changes were announced with regard to the evaluation method which has attracted intense scrutiny by the members in my