

Supply

season in Victoria. We would like him to encourage Canadians and Americans to enjoy it.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member knows that I was raised in Victoria and lived on the route where the Tallyho went by every day. I am well aware of the many features Victoria has to offer. It is a vacation destination for 12 months of the year.

What I said was that we do not have a banana belt in this country—I believe those were my exact words. With the greatest of respect to my friend from Victoria, I do not think there are too many people lying on the beaches of Victoria these days but I do think they are golfing. I am the first to sing and extol the praises of Victoria.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): That is the end of the 10-minute period for questions and comments.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I may not take up my entire 20 minutes but I should like to put two or three views on the record. I spoke in a debate not unlike this one last April and at that time I expressed some of my concerns. I will restate some of those concerns today; I thought they were valid then, and in many cases I think they are valid today.

This is a difficulty that cannot be solely thrust upon the federal Government. I think provincial governments and the federal Government have not paid sufficient heed to the problems encountered by the tourist industry or, for that matter, have not devoted sufficient time to the development of a policy which would make Canada a more attractive place for those who want to take their vacation in their own country and a more attractive place for people who want to come to Canada on vacation.

At times I wonder why Canadians do not spend their vacation money in their own country. There are a lot of obvious reasons for this. If you get your vacation in January and you do not ski, you would not find it too comfortable to set up a deck chair at the corner of Bronson and Laurier in an attempt to catch a few rays. We all understand that there are certain climatic and environmental considerations that make it unattractive for people to take their vacation right here in the middle of the winter. There are people whose vacation is assigned to them during the months of December, January, February and even March.

For Members of the House of Commons to criticize Canadians who do not spend their vacation time at home is hypocritical. We all know that a significant minority, if not the majority, of Members of Parliament travel to areas with warmer weather during the winter in order to enjoy that kind of vacation. For example, I noted with interest that both the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mulroney) spent their Christmas break in Florida. In fact, they attended a party at the home of one of Canada's best known industrialists on New Year's Eve. I do not think it would be proper for us to admonish Canadians for travelling outside the country when we do it ourselves.

Why do people travel, Mr. Speaker? Why do they go away? In many instances it is because they like warm weather. They go away because they believe that to travel and see other parts of the world is beneficial; it broadens their background and improves their education, gives them an insight into lifestyles and the development of other parts of the world. I do not think we want to discourage that. One of the main reasons people travel outside the country is that it is cheaper to do that than it is to travel in Canada. If we look at the weekend newspapers we find the travel sections full of ads for cheap fares to Florida for those who live in eastern Canada, cheap fares to California for those who live in western Canada, or vacation packages of seven, 14 days or longer in the Caribbean. If we calculate the cost of a vacation at home we may find that it costs a lot more to take a holiday in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax or Vancouver than it does for the same length of stay, including transportation costs, hotel costs, extra costs, in the southern parts of the North American Continent or the islands of the Caribbean.

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What is the reason for that? One of the reasons is that while it would cost you \$75 to \$100 a day for a hotel in any one of the places in Canada I mentioned, summer or winter, it would cost \$26 to \$35 a day for similar accommodation in those other parts of the world. Four weeks ago one could fly from Toronto to Tampa or Orlando, Florida for \$199 return. Where can you go in Canada for \$199 return? There is more difficulty in finding the kinds of attractive package deals for vacationing in Canada than it is to find them for vacationing in other parts of the world. Whose fault is that?

If one wants to go out for dinner in many of the cities of our own country, it is a fairly expensive proposition. There has not been the development of the family restaurant which takes into account the average income families with two or three kids. These families cannot afford to lay out the big dollars, and neither do they want the exquisite and extravagant restaurants. They would be content with less expensive restaurants which serve plain but wholesome and nourishing food. But there has been no effort to develop that kind of restaurant across our own country.

Those are some of the reasons, I believe, that people who have the financial capacity to travel tend to make their plans in such a way as to take them away from Canada rather than to stay within the country. I believe we simply have to recognize that as a fact. The solutions, I feel, rest in part with the industry and in part with the various levels of government. There are arguments that the tax levels which the tourist industry must pay are overbearing. I suspect that the argument can be made that the levels of taxation in the tourist industry are indeed onerous. However, let us take a look at the consequences of reducing its taxes. Will we automatically receive a reduction in the price which will be charged to the individual who might want to take a vacation in Canada?

I have noted with interest that any time there has been a reduction in tax, the industry involved rarely, if ever, passes it on in the way of benefit to the consumer. In addition to that, if