

is calling for very rapid change and great flexibility in the work force.

Although family incomes stalled during the recession, they have increased greatly over past decades. In fact, a 47 per cent increase occurred during the 1965 to 1975 period. This, of course, is due in part to women entering the work force, but it is also in part due to the growing economy. Canadians have become accustomed to a growing economy and were naturally very distressed during the past 2.5 years when what had seemed to be a very reasonable and dependable expectation did not materialize.

There are some other interesting figures in a brief prepared by the Bank of Montreal which was recently presented to the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Economic Prospects for Canada. In that brief the writers say:

Canada's potential is great. But realizing that potential will prove elusive unless Canada is prepared to make the adjustments required to become increasingly competitive in an increasingly competitive world economy.

This brief also pointed out the very substantial Canadian progress between the years of 1948 and 1981 when real GNP increased by about 450 per cent, employment went up by more than 200 per cent, and real per capita personal income, after taxes—probably the best measure of Canadian living standards—rose by about 250 per cent.

Canadians have become accustomed to a gradual improvement in being able to rely on higher expectations and on greater equality of opportunity. The question is how to manage this as we come out of the recession. The Economic Council of Canada put tremendous emphasis on two elements, increased trade and increased productivity. These two elements also received attention in the Speech from the Throne with some very specific measures to improve our trading performance, crucial to Canada since, as a trading nation, 30 per cent of our GNP is directly related to trade. Also, the question of productivity received a lot of attention, as it should. I think that with most Canadians we are still struggling for a definition of what we mean by productivity. I was interested to note that even during the OECD debate in Strasbourg when a Canadian Senator asked an OECD official for a definition of productivity, for an explanation of why productivity was lagging in all the industrialized countries of the world, that definition was not forthcoming. To many people productivity seems to mean working harder and attempting to squeeze more work out of the worker without rewarding him. That kind of definition makes no sense in our times. Productivity has to be looked at in a very broad way. If we are to engage labour in improving productivity, it certainly must have a human face and there must be rewards for workers. Improving productivity has to mean increased investment. It certainly has to mean efficient plant, because the best worker in the world cannot produce with obsolete equipment and cannot remain competitive with obsolete equipment. It has to mean good labour relationships. It has to be a situation where a worker can put forward suggestions, because the person doing the job usually has very good ideas about how to do it better. Workers need to feel that if they can find ways of increasing productivity, they are also

*The Address—Miss Nicholson*

opening up for themselves possibilities of more interesting and more worth-while jobs and possibilities of more autonomy.

● (1710)

Finally, we are not paying enough attention in the debate on productivity to occupational health and safety. People still become concerned about the number of days lost to strikes and forget that we lose far more days of work in our country as a result of accidents, industrial injuries and industrial-related illnesses. In my constituency office on any Saturday, I can see a man who is proud, who has worked hard all his life and who wants to work, a man to whom it is extremely important that he provide well for his children, but a serious accident has rendered him unable to work, has taken away his self-respect and left him struggling on the meagre allowances of workmen's compensation or Canada pension disability, as the case may be. The human costs of this are tremendous. The economic costs to Canada are also high.

I was glad to see that the Speech from the Throne made a firm commitment to introducing amendments to the Canada Labour Code concerning health and safety. I also hope that in the course of that debate the speeches of Hon. Members will stir up an increased sensitivity to and awareness of that problem in Canada.

At this time, OECD has projected that the Canadian economic recovery will be strong, that inflation will decline further and, obviously, that as inflation declines interest rates will come down. The firms which are now coming out from under a crushing burden of debt are able to start to consider expanding and so reducing our terribly high unemployment figures. Canadian growth is expected to be about average among OECD countries in 1983 but the highest of the seven largest countries in 1984. Inflation is expected to fall further in 1984. The strength of Canada's economic comeback was noted recently by a British magazine, *Euromoney*, which rated 93 different nations from the standpoints of economic growth, inflation, currency strength, exports and balance of payments in the past year. Canada's combined performance coming out of the recession was ranked first, while that of the United States was ranked fourth on that particular measure. Comparisons with other countries are perhaps reassuring up to a point. They are worth making in order to encourage us to continue, but they certainly can never be used as a reason for not doing more, particularly in the field of job creation.

The Speech from the Throne put more stress on job creation, particularly for young people who have suffered during the recession. Furthermore, the Speech from the Throne placed much emphasis upon peace, because unless we have peace in our times, the most brilliant economic insights and attempts will avail us nothing. Perhaps there are many different views on the best ways to achieve this. Those who prefer to concentrate their efforts on reduction of one particular kind of armament versus another have strongly-held views. Those of us who consider that the best way to achieve peace is through international negotiations and through diplomatic and political measures in international forums have another point of view.