

The Budget—Mr. Allard

Speaking Friday, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) underlined the most dangerous consequence of this budget, that the country will continue to mark time, because we are governed by a party more intent upon its own survival than upon the growth or progress of the nation. That is harmful to many parts and people of Canada; but no group suffers more from this government or this budget than the hundreds of thousands of young Canadians who are looking for work in this rich country and finding only frustration. If we continue to deny them the chance to contribute their best to Canada, they will quickly become accustomed to contributing their least. That is a tragedy we have in our power to avoid if this government would only put the nation's priorities ahead of its own.

[Translation]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, one of the admitted concerns of the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) when he read his budget speech last Monday evening was to reduce the unemployment rate and stimulate economic development.

A well known fact is that Canada has almost 700,000 registered and catalogued unemployed people. It is also true that thousands of workers who have now no job because they cannot find any are not included in the official statistics on the number of unemployed. It can therefore be said that the unemployment rate is higher than it actually looks and that measures far more drastic and important than those proposed by the Minister of Finance should be put in application if unemployment is to disappear.

The Minister of Finance also expects that 300,000 new jobs should be created thanks to the measures proposed in the budget. These new jobs would be available for the new comers to the labour market in 1973.

But if the measures announced by the Minister of Finance have no other result than to provide jobs to the newcomers to the labour market, nothing effective will be left to give a strong stimulus to the economy so that it will provide work for the 700,000 or so unemployed at present.

The Minister of Finance recognizes also that the way to create employment is to increase demand. Products are plentiful to such a point that we despair of exporting them.

Here is what was said at the 32nd annual conference on agricultural outlook held in Ottawa November 20 and 21 last. I quote:

On the whole, the outlook seems more favourable for western farmers than for farmers in eastern Canada.

Actually, Canada is already assured of record wheat sales as a result of agreements signed this year with Russia and China.

Conversely, sales of cheese will be down again this year in eastern Canada, again we shall have to import small quantities of butter to maintain reasonable prices, and the price of hogs will be approximately the same as in 1972.

In this field, prices will often be identical with those in the United States.

According to a participant in the conference, the only way to control these price variations would be to set up a national hog products marketing board, just like the one it is intended to establish for eggs.

[Mr. Clark.]

However, three provinces do not even have a hog Marketing Board, namely Quebec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

As far as exports are concerned, it was clearly determined during the conference that Canada should continue prospecting international markets so that its agriculture may progress.

According to Mr. Neufeld, of the Department of Economics of the University of Toronto, the matter is so important that unless new markets are discovered Canadian agriculture is bound to decline.

Mr. Speaker, if new markets cannot be found for eggs, pork, beef, wheat and all our other agricultural products, agriculture is going to decline, because farmers are going to be stuck with their crops. This will bring about a decrease or a stagnation in farm incomes. This is also being forecast by the Canadian Agricultural Outlook Conference. It is also noted that the yearly income of Eastern farmers averages a poor \$2,500.

This was stated at the Conference by officials of the Department of Agriculture. A Canadian Press release published in the newspaper *Le Droit*, on November 22, 1972, was not very encouraging for Canadian farmers. This is how it reads:

Farm incomes in 1973 should reach just about the same level as in 1972, according to Mr. W. L. Porteous, of the Canadian Department of Agriculture.

Speaking before the 33rd Canadian Agricultural Outlook Conference which ended yesterday in Ottawa, Mr. Porteous said he expected the total farm income to net \$1.9 billion.

The record year for agriculture was 1966, when farm incomes totalled \$2 billion.

As compared with 1972, however, farm expenses will increase in all areas except building repairs, the end result being a decrease of approximately 4.4 per cent in the income.

Prairie farmers and those of Prince Edward Island can expect a decrease in income, however.

Even if the income of western farmers on the whole should increase as a result of record sales of wheat to Russia, more especially, the speaker stressed the fact that a decline should be expected for 1974. He does not believe, however, that Canada will experience conditions like those of the 1960's.

A participant stated that, in his opinion, every farmer must incur annual expenses of \$10,000 or so.

In order to have a net income of approximately \$5,000 per year, according to him, every farmer must have a gross income of almost \$15,000.

Following that intervention, a discussion was held on the definition of an economic farm.

• (1730)

As one can see, we are heading for disaster. Instead of suggesting that Canadian consumers do with a little, tighten their belts and get used to the poor's menu, at \$28 a week, the government should see to it that Canadians have the necessary purchasing power to do justice to Canadian production, which would have the effect of stimulating demand, encourage agricultural production and secure at the same time supplementary income to Canadian farmers.

Government members voted several times against the proposals aiming at the implementation of a guaranteed minimum income which would make it possible for each Canadian to live decently, according to the possibilities of Canadian production.

A Creditist government would not hesitate to implement such measures; one of the first measures would be to abolish all income tax on an income of less than \$3,000 for