

The Budget—Mr. Saltzman

Bad as these figures are, they are even worse when examined on a regional basis. Again, a government which has said it is concerned about national unity should realize that a major threat to national unity is the feeling that Canadians in certain parts of this country are not getting a fair share. When unemployment increases to a nationally high figure, certain parts of the country are far more adversely affected than others. In the Atlantic provinces the figure is 7 per cent; in Quebec it is 6.2 per cent, and in British Columbia, 6.1 per cent. This is despite the fact that the growth of the labour force in the maritimes is only about 1.9 per cent as against an average of 4 per cent. The maritimes are being denuded of their people. The exodus from that region is becoming massive. Even when migration takes place, tragic as it is for an area, there is really very little that these people can go to elsewhere. The economic council follows up its previous statement by saying:

The level of unemployment in Canada has recently been significantly above that of the United States for the first time since the middle of 1963.

We are going very quickly backwards. It is a dismal record compared with that of our closest neighbour. Rising prices have not been contained and unemployment is one and a half times as high. Although the gross national product is expected, according to the budget, to increase by about 8 per cent in 1968, the minister did not bother to tell us the significance of that figure. In terms of real output per employed person it is only one per cent, one of the lowest growth rates among western nations. It is an abysmal record and one in which the government can take no pride in view of its years in office since 1963.

The past performance of the government leaves much to be desired and the present budget will not improve the prospects for increases in productivity. The first annual review of the economic council had this to say—and it is a point which the council has made over and over again:

Over the past decade, the Canadian economy appears to have experienced one of the slowest rates of growth of any industrialized advanced country in the world both in terms of average productivity and average living standards.

This is despite the fact that we employ more capital per worker than any other country in the world. Usually there is a close relationship between employment of capital and productivity. The assumption has always been that if a worker is given more equipment he will be able to produce more and,

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generally speaking, this holds true. It holds true except in one country—Canada.

• (5:50 p.m.)

THE ROYAL ASSENT

A message was delivered by Major C. R. Lamoureux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable the Deputy Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the house went up to the Senate Chamber.

• (6:00 p.m.)

And being returned:

Mr. Speaker informed the house that the Deputy Governor General had been pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

An act to amend the Judges Act.

An act to amend the Post Office Act.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment tonight are as follows: The hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow)—Royal Canadian Mounted Police—reported criticism by Manitoba supreme court judge; the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault)—Immigration—inquiry as to assistance to refugees from Czechoslovakia.

Pursuant to special order made this day, this sitting stands suspended until eight o'clock this evening.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

THE BUDGET

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed consideration of the motion (page 1677) of Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now