

ing from the two founding races as well as other ethnic groups making up the large Canadian family.

Canada is proud, and duly so, of the prominence and authority of the Supreme Court of Canada. On the occasion of the early retirement of the Rt. Hon. Chief Justice Gérard Fauteux, I wish to commend him, with gratitude and admiration, for his truly great contribution to the Supreme Court of Canada.

● (2110)

[English]

He has been succeeded by Mr. Justice Bora Laskin whose work in the fields of civil rights and constitutional law has given a special quality to his reputation. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, as Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, will command our respect.

[Translation]

May I point out to you that there are now in the Senate four former provincial premiers, two from Nova Scotia, one from New Brunswick and another from Alberta. These senators, with their vast experience, will make a significant contribution to our provincially oriented debates.

Surely this is one of the reasons that brought about the establishment of this House. One of these honourable senators, the Honourable Louis Robichaud served his province for ten years; last Thursday, he moved the adoption of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. His speech was a masterpiece as the Leader of the Opposition called it, and I am sure that he made as good an impression on you as he did on me. Therefore, I extend to him my warmest congratulations and I am convinced that we can depend on his active and constructive contribution.

The honourable senator, a native of New Brunswick, belongs to that admirable group of Canadians, the Acadians, of whom he is one of the most distinguished.

[English]

Professor Kunz, whom I regard as the great champion outside the Senate of this House of Parliament, when he wrote his book on the Senate, said that some 37 per cent of the Senate of that day had legislative experience in the House of Commons or in provincial legislatures before coming to the Senate. I should think that the percentage continues to be approximately the same.

I have mentioned that Senator Robichaud was a provincial premier. The seconder of the motion before us, Senator Perrault, has had experience in the House of Commons, and as leader of his party he served with great ability in the Legislature of British Columbia. In seconding Senator Robichaud's motion, Senator Perrault gave us a vigorous account of government policy. He dealt—I thought, frankly and completely—with what is called the problem of Western alienation. This was not Senator Perrault's first speech in the Senate, but it was one of his best and strongest.

The Leader of the Opposition clearly established this evening that he does not agree with the Government of Canada. Let there be no doubt that he stands foremost in this house in his opposition to the government of our country. He made that very clear in what he had to say about unemployment, inflation, loss of income—indeed, about almost every kind of action that a government these

[Hon. Mr. Martin.]

days is obliged to consider. I want him to know that he convinced me, without any reservation, that he does not share my conviction that this government is not a bad administration.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: I am very happy.

Hon. Mr. Martin: He spoke of the economy and the loss of income and I want to deal with these matters, not in a political way but as factually as I can.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: You couldn't.

Hon. Mr. Martin: What is the real situation with regard to the economy, with regard to the matter of disposable income? The growth of the economy this year has been stronger than at any time since 1956, despite its interruption in the third quarter by work stoppages. Real national output increased at an annual rate of 7.1 per cent, well over the long-term potential growth rate of around 5¼ per cent.

Real personal income at the disposal of Canadians—that is, income not before but after payment of direct taxes, and after taking full account of the decline in purchasing power of the dollar caused by inflation—increased by an average of 6.8 per cent on a per capita basis, following already substantial increases of 6.7 per cent in 1972 and 5.9 per cent in 1971. This, despite the sharp increase in the cost of living that has taken place.

This significant rise in personal income is the result of several factors. The substantial cut, equivalent to 12-13 per cent, in personal income taxes, provided for in the budget of a year ago, is one factor, although Senator Flynn made no reference at all to that.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: I did.

Hon. Mr. Martin: There is the extraordinary increase in the number of Canadians at work, the sharply increased farm income, the increased social assistance, and the rising productivity of the economy as a whole.

It is significant that the increase in the per capita disposable income for Canadians in 1973 was exactly 50 per cent more than that enjoyed by individuals in the United States, and that since 1971 disposable income available to Canadians has increased at twice the rate for the United States.

Senator Flynn spoke of employment. Let us examine what the situation is. During this last year a greater number of new jobs was created in Canada than ever before in our history. Employment was up by 430,000, a record 5.2 per cent increase over last year, which is almost 25 per cent higher than the previous peak of growth in job creation of 4.2 per cent achieved in 1966.

In some regions of the country, notably the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec and British Columbia, the growth of employment has exceeded all previous records. It was nearly 6.5 per cent in the Atlantic Provinces, which was more than twice the employment growth in 1972 and more than four times that in 1971. Quebec registered an employment increase of 5.8 per cent, more than four times the rate of growth in 1972. The rate of increase in employment in British Columbia was 6.6 per cent.

For a number of years Canada has had the fastest growing labour force in the industrial world. During the past year Canadians have been pouring into the labour