

The Budget—Mr. F.-E. Leblanc

1, 1973 only, we would have made them applicable effective the day following the budget speech for 1972.

But such was not the position taken by the Minister of Finance. He has preferred to introduce a sound, realistic and rational budget. Four major objectives were to be reached as follows: strengthening the economy, withstanding competition, providing jobs and alleviating the marginal citizens' burden.

It is obvious that there were various methods of reaching these four objectives, but the Minister of Finance has elected to stimulate that sector of the economy which, for many years, has been the slackest in terms of employment opportunities, that is the manufacturing industry. It is this industrial sector which, if properly organised, can generate the greatest number of jobs for Canadians.

The minister leaves it to private enterprise to set up the new industries that are needed, to modernize existing ones, to manufacture new products and thus to create new jobs. And I think it is normal that the private sector should be concerned with creating jobs in democratic countries that trust private enterprise.

For a good many years now we have been mostly sellers of unfinished products, our natural resources being extracted and shipped to other countries for processing. The Minister of Finance wishes to redirect this policy with which, on the other hand, has been a cause for concern for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (M. Pepin) who is also busy trying to stimulate the secondary industries of this country through incentives and legislations.

The Minister of Finance also said, as can be seen at page 7 of his budget speech—I quote:

It is, therefore, essential for us to take whatever steps are necessary to promote the development in Canada of manufacturing industries that are dynamic, vigorous and resourceful, that are unceasing in their efforts to innovate, that develop new and better products and that are aggressive in their efforts to expand their markets in Canada and abroad. In short, we must do everything we can to promote the development of Canadian manufacturing industries that are fully capable of meeting and surpassing competition from other countries.

I have been reading in newspapers, since May 8, 1972, the reported reaction of the business and labour sectors. Generally, it is very good, although some individuals may criticize certain measures. But there, again, it is difficult to reach a consensus on measures designed to stimulate the economy when economists themselves can hardly agree on methods likely to achieve the goals proposed in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier the amendment of the Progressive Conservatives. I would like to make a few more remarks on this matter, if I have enough time. The amendment reads first, and I quote:

—the failure of the government to bring forth effective measures to relieve unemployment—

Well, at the present time, the thrust of the budget is strictly unemployment. The opposition does not suggest any effective measures to fight unemployment, whereas we Liberals have put forward a formula which will really succeed provided businessmen are prepared to co-operate.

Of course, the opposition failed to mention the fact that unemployment is not uniquely Canadian but is a world-wide phenomenon. They did not explain either the reasons for such unemployment, which is that the influx of people on the labour market is too fast compared with the number of jobs which can be created. Obviously, they do not insist on the fact that in the past years, as stated by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in the House, we have created 1,200,000 new jobs—

An hon. Member: Tell us where!

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): —and we have succeeded in this better than seven other countries put together.

Obviously, the Créditistes find this amusing. They find everything amusing because they are not serious. I read the speech made by their leader on the budget; I found it amusing too, but on the other hand it is their privilege to laugh at whomever they want. It will be my privilege to make fun of them when they take part in this debate. That is a sure thing.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): Futhermore, Mr. Speaker, the amendment stated, and I quote:

—the failure of the government to bring forth effective measures—to provide incentive for Canadian investment in Canadian development—

• (1750)

In my opinion, the whole budget is aimed at stimulating investors so that they may reorganize their undertakings and co-operate in the economic development of Canada. I am convinced, Mr. Speaker, that with such a budget we will succeed in reaching in the long run the objectives set forth and that the population will find that the best party to preside over Canada's destiny is still the Liberal party.

Mr. Rondeau: So you say.

Mr. Forget: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order. The hon. member for Saint-Michel on a point of order.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

HEALTH, WELFARE AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Victor Forget (Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would ask that we revert to routine proceedings in order to table a committee report.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Does the House agree?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Forget: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table the first report of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.