

The Budget—Mr. Mackasey

long periods of time. But at least the benefits under this new plan which will be related to income will permit the person temporarily out of work to seek work without the problems which plague people who draw the rather low benefits which the unemployment insurance plan now provides. At the present time there are too many Canadians who happen to live off two cheques, one from the Unemployment Insurance office and another from the Canada Assistance Plan or local welfare. The new plan, if adopted and if the standing committee report does not basically change it, will do a good deal to remedy this. There is one feature in it which ought to appeal to members of the House. This is the fact that the government will absorb the cost of the plan once it reaches 4 per cent seasonally adjusted.

I do not believe members quite appreciate precisely what this means. When, for reasons best known to the economists or to the government, the unemployment figure may hit anywhere up to 7 per cent, the cost to the government would be \$433 million. Certainly, this is a sum which may make people wish to review a little more closely what we call the trade-off factor. I think this regulatory feature is one of the better features of the new plan.

● (5:10 p.m.)

In conclusion let me say that I think the time is approaching when the problem of inflation should be tackled on a tripartite basis. I think that some medium of communication between labour, management and government is imperative in the future. There have been such talks of course at private levels. I have participated in some of it, and some of the viewpoints that have been advanced by economists attached to the labour movement have been very enlightening, very fruitful and very progressive. But I do not think that organized labour can stand back and divorce themselves from the problems of this country any more than big business can expect to operate in isolation without any humanitarian approach to the problems. I am not particularly pleased when multinational corporations close up plants in Cornwall or London, Ontario, with a minimum of advance notice and with little or no concern for the plight of the people whom they put out of work.

These are the type of responsibilities that private enterprise must assume in the future because there is more on trial than just the government or the opposition. In effect, the whole system is on trial, and people want more out of the private enterprise system than just a job and 4 per cent or 5 per cent rate of unemployment. They want full employment; they want social measures; they want an end to slums and pollution and all the other social evils. The message that all of us should get is that unless we are capable of taking up this kind of challenge we are going to be hardpressed to maintain this kind of private enterprise system which I happen to think is the best for our economy, despite what the socialists may think. We need and will see more and more government intervention and government participation in the decisions over the next decade. We can no longer afford in-

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flation nor can we any longer afford abnormally high rates of unemployment.

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): I really had not expected to be called upon to speak in the House so soon, but it appears my colleagues in the official opposition have decided that, since I am here, they might as well put me to work.

Mr. Mahoney: Good idea.

Mr. Murta: It would be an understatement to say that I am happy to be sitting in the House of Commons. What would perhaps be closer to the truth would be to say that I am overwhelmed. It is surely one of the greatest honours that can be accorded to any Canadian to be selected to represent a riding in this great country. Having said that, I hope hon. members will indulge me when I say that it is a particular honour to be chosen to represent the Lisgar riding in the province of Manitoba.

Hon. members will know that I came to the House of Commons as a result of a by-election following the untimely death of the previous member for Lisgar, George Muir. In his years in the House, George Muir earned the respect and regard of the people in his riding as well as of those who knew him in his capacity as a sitting member. I hope and trust that, as I mature in this job, those who selected me as his replacement will feel that they have made the right choice.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Murta: This might be a good time to enlighten my colleagues as to the advantages of living in the Lisgar riding, and to invite them to take the first possible opportunity to avail themselves of our hospitality. Easterners are inclined to think of Vancouver, Edmonton or Calgary when mention is made of the west, but the fact is that the great Canadian west begins in Lisgar.

Lisgar riding stretches for about 130 miles from east to west, bounded on the south by the United States border and ending in the picturesque farmlands of a town called Killarney. Its eastern boundary follows the twists and turns of the Red River as it flows north from the United States border, and part of the northern boundary is the historic Assiniboine River. The Pembina River winds through Lisgar from west to east and flows into the Red River.

A large proportion of Lisgar riding comprises fertile land, and this, coupled with the fact that there are no large cities in the riding and very little industry, has resulted in an agriculture based economy in the riding. This can be both good and bad. In good times, when crop and livestock prices are high and there are good markets, life in Lisgar can be filled with all of the good things for which men and women strive. Conversely, when the agricultural economy in the country is in decline, the people of Lisgar would feel the effect a bit more than areas which enjoy an input from industries or resources. It could be said that in Lisgar we live with one anxious finger on the pulse of the agricultural economy.