

Supply

because I remember not once but many times when my friend the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees) called for a convention. As a matter of fact, I would not be surprised if he is calling for one right now.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Whicher: If I ever saw a party that needed one, that hon. member belongs to it. If he needs any help, I am sure there are many over on his side who would be glad to arrange such a convention.

Mr. Hees: How soon do you think a convention should be held? What was the date you had in mind for a convention to replace your leader?

Mr. Whicher: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say—

An hon. Member: You were much better when you were sitting in the rump.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): You have one of the biggest to sit on that I have ever seen.

Mr. Whicher: My hon. friend is very good when he is sitting down.

Mr. Hees: He is better sitting down than you are making a speech.

Mr. Whicher: It doesn't matter which side he is sitting on because nobody would notice the difference.

Mr. Paproski: I want to thank my hon. friend.

Mr. Whicher: Mr. Speaker, perhaps my friends will let me continue for a few minutes. I do not mind these interjections.

Mr. Paproski: I hope you are going to send this back to your riding.

Mr. Hees: Tell us about the leader you are challenging.

Mr. Whicher: When my hon. friend has been sent back to his riding as many times as I have, he will be able to boast about it.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to be serious for a moment and I would appreciate not being interrupted for just a few minutes. When we vote on this large amount of \$350 million I think we must get right down to basic foundations and ask ourselves where this money is to go.

An hon. Member: Don't you remember?

Mr. Whicher: The answer to that question is that the money is going to ten provinces and two territories in Canada. It is not going to any country in Africa—God bless them, and we try to help them—it is not going to an Asiatic country, to the United States or to South America; it is going to Canadian provinces and we should be proud of that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whicher: In addition, Mr. Speaker, one might very well ask why this money is going to the provinces of

[Mr. Whicher.]

Canada. Let me say that a certain situation has developed. There is too much unemployment in Canada and this government is going to do its best to rectify that situation.

I am somewhat amazed that members of the Conservative party are opposed to this program because it has been brought in by way of supplementary estimate. One hon. member on the other side—I regret I cannot remember his riding—made a very reasoned speech this afternoon. I excuse his lack of knowledge because he came here only after the last election and perhaps his memory does not serve him well. Supplementary estimates were not put into use just when the Trudeau government took over. The winter works program really started during the Diefenbaker years. I do not want my hon. friends to be cross with me when I tell them that the winter works program came into effect then because there was more winter unemployment than ever in the history of Canada and that government had to do something.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whicher: May I remind my hon. friends through you, Mr. Speaker, that the right hon. member for Prince Albert when he was prime minister of Canada did not bring in the winter works program as a budgetary measure; he brought it in through supplementary estimates. We are now copying what he did. Even the Tories do some things that are good.

Mr. Hees: Better than anything you have ever done.

Mr. Whicher: This afternoon the hon. member for Don Valley said that this government did not do enough planning. Even some of us on this side might agree. But the provinces of Canada have complained not just about this government but about various governments over the years. They have said they do not know what is being done down here, and they have asked for planning. This government has planned and has agreed to the expenditure of \$350 million over the next three years, not just for this winter but for next winter and the winter following. The provinces will know exactly what they are going to get and they can plan their itineraries for winter works not just for this year but for the next two years.

This is a program which must be put into effect. My hon. friends on the other side continue to talk about the unemployment problem in Canada. We admit there is a problem and we want to do something about it. We are asking our Conservative friends to help us do something about it; that is why we are asking for this \$350 million.

An hon. Member: Cut taxes or resign.

Mr. Hees: God knows, somebody has to help you.

Mr. Whicher: What is the purpose of the \$350 million?

An hon. Member: Don't you know?

Mr. Whicher: Mr. Speaker, I generally do not use notes, but I should like to quote one paragraph of a statement that was provided to each member of this House. It has reference to the winter capital projects fund and in the introduction it is stated that the purpose is as follows: