

*Supply*

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Oh, so he made a mistake? Up and down these rows, everyone on this side of the House, Conservatives, Créditistes and NDP members said winter works programs were the answer. Unemployment was just as difficult in 1969, 1970 and 1971 as it is today. Were there any winter works programs in operation? Not a bit of it. All members opposite said was: We have our just society. We shall retrain people, recycle them.

What has happened? The sum of \$350 million is to be advanced. This is strictly window-dressing. This winter they hope they can entice the municipalities and the provinces, even at this later date, to come in with programs of \$160 million. Then we have to consider the conditions. They are not the conditions of the Municipal Development and Loan Act which was passed by Walter Gordon, though reference is made to that act. It is a dead act, one which does not appear on the statute books. One has to go back to the old statute books to find out details as to definitions. The program comes before us by way of a supplementary estimate and we are asked to rush it through.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Because the provinces want it quickly.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** What is required is a proper act of parliament, not just a few lines in a supplementary estimate. Such an act should have set out a winter works program adequately so that we might know precisely what are the conditions to be satisfied and be assured that it is a continuing program, not just a bunch of "ad hockery."

We would then have something on the statute books; there would be no need to keep questioning and badgering the government about a winter works program and risk getting the smart answers we have been given over the years by the Prime Minister. They were shocking answers. According to him, these were programs which were obsolete. But, my goodness, when they got into trouble and found their new-fangled programs were not working, what did they do? They went back to tried and true programs, such as winter works. Sure, winter works are only a palliative, but if the municipalities and the provinces were properly approached and allowed adequate time in which to make their plans, excellent results could be expected.

Nobody will be satisfied with the measure we are asked to approve. I would suggest to the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) that he consult the city of Winnipeg to find out whether that city alone can undertake in this coming year to account for at least \$4 million. Is \$4 million going to help the city of Winnipeg? Well, that is all Manitoba will get this year—\$4 million for the whole of the province. Will that be sufficient? I think not.

Will this amount be sufficient to share among the municipalities? Consider the situation in the province of Quebec. Some \$40 million is to be shared this year among all the municipalities of the province. Give them a pittance, as somebody said earlier. Not more than a nickel—pas plus qu'un gros cinq sous. That is the extent of this program. To deal with unemployment on the present scale

[Mr. Whicher.]

through winter works, at least half this amount should be taken for the first year.

Mr. Speaker, I object strongly to the action of the government in bringing forward this proposal in its present form, referring to an act which is no longer on the statute books and embodying the terms of the obligations under the municipal works program beneath a heading in the supplementary estimates. Mind you, I am sure the municipalities will welcome any money they can get, but it certainly will not do the job held out for it. It will prove a bitter disappointment. As far as winter works for 1972-73 are concerned, I do not think their value will reach \$65 million for the entire country before the period one might call winter expires in this country.

• (2120)

**Mr. Ross Whicher (Bruce):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened very attentively to this debate. This afternoon I heard the dual leader of the financial chieftains of the Tory party, the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies). Tonight I have listened to the second-in-command of the financial chiefs of that party. I understand that the real financial chief is their leader.

**An hon. Member:** And who is that?

**Mr. Whicher:** My hon. friend asks who that might be. In any event, it is always very interesting to listen to these criticisms that are made of a government that is trying very hard to do what it can for the unemployed in Canada. The Liberal party takes second place to no one in helping the unemployed of Canada. Back in the Diefenbaker years when the hon. member who has just spoken was part of the government I remember the whole western world was shown who were the champions as far as unemployment was concerned. There was far more then, on a population basis, going right back to the depression years, a period of which none of us is proud.

For that matter, I do not think any Liberals sitting here tonight are particularly proud of the unemployment situation that we have in Canada. On the other hand, we are willing to admit our faults and that we have made mistakes. My hon. friend who has just spoken, as well as all the Conservatives who spoke this afternoon and yesterday, said that they never made any mistakes in the past. Their memories only go back to the Liberal government which took power a few years ago. They forget what happened when they controlled the purse strings around here.

Let me remind the House that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) said to this parliament and to the people of this country that his first priority is to create jobs and get the unemployment figures down.

**Mr. Orlikow:** What were they last year?

**Mr. Whicher:** Surely, Mr. Speaker, that is a justifiable enterprise. Surely it is one my hon. friends opposite desire, even though some of them—not all by any means, but certainly some—had the unmitigated nerve to vote against the unemployment insurance bill the other night. I am glad to say three of them did have enough sense to stand up and vote with the government. We on this side