

Supply—Labour

government to say that they will pay a percentage of the cost of rental of equipment, of the cost of the permanent men, the engineers, architects, or supervisors who are gainfully employed in the first place, then, and then only, will it be possible for thousands of people to work the great part of the winter months. We have as tough winters in the east as they have in the west, and as far as I am able to predict we will always be plagued with some seasonal unemployment in Canada. All we can hope to do, and it is our duty as members of parliament to urge it at all times, is to extend the schemes and trust that the day will come when seasonal unemployment will be not a major problem but a minor thing, always being improved upon.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question before he resumes his seat. I was interested in what he said about the formula, and I would like to ask him if he does not think it would be much better to have a flexible formula which bore some relation both to the level of unemployment in the area and the ability of the local authority to pay?

Mr. Creaghan: Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity to attempt to answer this question. I have heard the greater part of the debate on this particular vote, and that suggestion has been mentioned before by several hon. members. It is the only type of suggestion which will ever be acceptable to the more depressed areas of the country. It is impossible for small towns in the maritimes and the Atlantic provinces to say to the Minister of Labour and his experts, "We welcome this legislation", because it is impossible for them, without prejudicing some other scheme, to take advantage of it. But I welcome the suggestion. It is not a new one; it has been mentioned before. All I can say in answer is that the legislation is good. It goes a certain distance. The suggestion contained in the question would certainly improve the legislation.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, in the last few minutes of the discussion on this item the temper of the house, I believe, has subsided considerably. I will do my utmost to keep it at the present level, because I think it is far more conducive to an intelligent discussion of this item, as well as to the discussion of the unemployment problem as a whole, than the discussion which took place somewhat earlier during the day. I refer, of course, to the interventions by the hon. members for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot and Vancouver-Kingsway. I shall not follow them in their attempts.

I would like to say at the outset that some complaint has been made against the manner

[Mr. Creaghan.]

in which we proceeded yesterday. Yesterday, by virtue of the rules of the house, as we have a perfect right, we moved the adjournment of the debate to discuss a matter of urgent public importance. It has been indicated that this was on Wednesday, and I stand corrected to that extent. That is a right which the opposition or any of its members have at their disposal under the rules, and it is not open, I suggest, for any hon. member to criticize the exercise of that right, particularly if it is one of the rights given to us by parliament.

Mr. Ricard: We never discussed that. We never challenged that.

Mr. Chevrier: The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway did.

Mr. Ricard: You said the hon. member for Bagot.

Mr. Chevrier: I did not. I will come to the hon. member in a moment. The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway is the one who raised the objection, and I say there is no reason whatsoever to raise such an objection, because we have a perfect right to do what we did. Furthermore, the fact that the Prime Minister rose and suggested that the debate should take place on this estimate was clear evidence that we were acting completely within our rights.

Mr. Macdonnell: Is this an example of your pacifism?

Mr. Chevrier: I can tell the hon. member for Greenwood that if I am left alone I shall be as calm as I can in the circumstances, and I am sure he will help me in that respect.

I must say at once that I was far more impressed by the last two speakers, namely the hon. member for Westmorland and the hon. member for Timmins, than by the two hon. members who preceded them. I must say that the hon. member for Timmins impressed me with some of the things he said, though I cannot agree with many of the statements which he made. None the less, I thought he approached this problem in a sincere manner and I think, too, that the committee owes a debt of gratitude to the hon. member for Essex East who brought this question to the fore today. He has been interested in this subject not only since we are sitting in opposition but when we were sitting on the other side of the house. I remember when I was a minister of the crown what interest my hon. friend took in the question now before us. It is not new for him to speak on unemployment in the terms in which he did today. My hon. friend spoke with a full knowledge