

Supply—Public Works

Mr. Walker: I suggest to my hon. friend, don't get angry; just answer in the way I have asked the question. I say this for the benefit of the hon. member for Skeena.

Mr. Howard: For all his flowery phrases, soft tones and protestations, what the minister is asking the committee to do is to give him a blank cheque so that he can squander millions of dollars without having to account for them.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Howard: We are trying to find out precisely for what purpose this money is required. That is the simple question we ask. When the minister makes these accusations, not in a decent way, I might say, about playing games and about making bets about what the minister might or might not do, he is not enhancing his position in my estimation, and I might add it was never very high anyway. All he is doing is attempting, by way of that, to cast slanders and slurs on individuals, myself particularly, in the hope that he will not have to answer questions concerning why he should want particular sums of money. Surely to heaven this is an attempt, though by means of a gentle approach, to hide from parliament information which it is desired that parliament should have. Any hon. member has a right to ask why a certain expenditure is required, and so on. No one complains about it. When hon. gentlemen who support the minister spend time in this house on miniature throne speech debates on a variety of bills and items no one complains about it. It is the right of the individual to express his opinions and to ask questions.

Mr. Walker: May I ask the hon. member a question? Just say yes or no, and if you say no I shall sit down.

Mr. Howard: Well, just sit down. That is the best approach. All I am attempting to do is to elicit information and I am not getting it. We are getting a request for a blank cheque. The minister, in reply to one question, asked that a certain document be tabled in *Hansard*. I understand that the chairman is not going to allow it to be printed in *Hansard* but that it will be merely left on the table. Is that what is going to happen?

The Chairman: I wanted the committee to express its views as to whether it should be printed at this point. I had understood that the document was more extensive than it is. If it is the wish of the committee that it be printed at this point I will do it. I did not object. I did not rule on the point.

Mr. Walker: In reply to the hon. member—
[Mr. Howard.]

The Chairman: Is the minister asking that the document be printed at this point?

Mr. Walker: No. There is no object in it. It is irrelevant. We are talking about this year's estimates and with regard to this planning vote we are talking about the future. We should not need a planning vote if we had planned, now, what we were going to do in the future. Therefore, the hon. member for Skeena—and one can understand him asking the question—when he asks what our future plans are during the years in which these opportunities occur to purchase sites, I must say to him that we cannot foretell the future. All I was saying with respect to last year was said in an attempt to indicate what we did last year. That was for the benefit of the hon. member for Skeena. I do not think there is anyone else in the committee who would ask such a question or who would be interested in seeing this particular piece of paper. The planning vote is a future vote for the future acquisition of sites as they turn up, because it is too late when the opportunity comes to purchase a site to then get a vote; parliament might have adjourned. Surely that is a sufficient explanation. I am sure it would be for anyone except the hon. member for Skeena.

Mr. Peters: I am involved in this, too, because I asked these questions. I should like to say this, that I would be pleased to know that the minister went over and stood in front of a mirror, looked at the minister and said: "I won't get mad, I won't get mad". General Young used to tell me that if it looked like he was getting mad he would sit down and tell himself "I won't get mad" and he would not get mad.

Mr. Walker: I apologize. I should have included the hon. member for Timiskaming, the two of you.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I am not objecting to this. I think it is a good thing. Let me tell the minister one thing. If we had had bets on whether the minister was going to get mad or not we would have brought the hon. member for Port Arthur here, and he would have made the minister mad at any time and we would have won our bet. But he is not here and we have no bets.

Let me thank the minister for two things. One is that in this particular vote we are discussing two things which were not clear to me and I do not think they were clear to any other member of the committee. One was that in this particular vote when they set "general" as a heading they should have said "general" for public works only. We have, for the last two or three days, been discussing votes which did not necessarily affect the