

Supply—Labour

this item is not related to the winter work program which has been responsible for placing in employment only some 23,000 people out of almost half a million men and women out of work during the course of the present winter. But as this is a scheme which is intended, and quite properly so, to combat seasonal unemployment it would be very interesting and useful for the house to have some report from the Minister of Finance as to the results of this program.

The amount of this item is \$100,000 and if the program were capable of producing employment for a lot of people during the autumn and winter then, of course, there would be the fullest support for it. But as a means of understanding its effectiveness, in view of the fact that unemployment is still a major problem in Canada surely we have the right and indeed the duty to ask the Minister of Finance, who is substituting tonight not only for the Minister of Agriculture but for the Minister of Labour and for the Minister of Justice, to tell us how many men have been put to work under this scheme.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I do not think any hon. member of this house is likely to be misled by the remarks that have just been made by the hon. member for Essex East. But for the record let it be stated that it is the time honoured and invariable practice of this house—and honoured at all times during the time he was a minister—that the supplementary estimates, especially the final supplementary estimates, are piloted through the house in their entirety by the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Pearson: No, no.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Yes; that has been the invariable practice.

Mr. Chevrier: That is so far from the fact.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Therefore I am not substituting for other ministers. I am simply discharging the same function my predecessors have discharged with respect to supplementary estimates, particularly final supplementary estimates, for many a year.

As I pointed out, Mr. Chairman, this is not an item related to an expenditure by the federal government for providing government work. This is an item that relates to appeals that have been made to persons throughout the length and breadth of Canada to undertake their own work programs with a view to providing work during the winter time in order to meet seasonal unemployment. Last summer a national winter employment conference was held in Ottawa. Out of that conference certain recommendations arose.

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

One of them was that the federal government should extend and intensify the advertising program which it had successfully conducted in the previous winter. This intensified advertising program has been carried on and, I am told, with gratifying results.

Mr. Pearson: I must refresh the minister's memory on one statement he made, namely that the invariable practice, when we were on that side of the house, was to let the minister of finance take care of all the supplementary estimates. He will recall that on many occasions he used to ask me questions on external affairs on the supplementary estimates.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No.

Mr. Pearson: If he will go back and read some of the old *Hansards* he will find that.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I invite my hon. friend to go back and read *Hansard* for the month of March year by year, and there he will find the correction of his own statement.

Mr. Pearson: I shall be glad to do that. But perhaps the minister will agree with me that I ought to be able to remember whether I was in the chamber on the supplementary estimates when external affairs estimates came up for consideration, whether or not he was. What I am asking is quite in order, I think, on this item. Can he give us a breakdown of this figure of \$100,000?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Certainly. Of this total, \$5,000 is for publication of informational material. It is to provide for the printing of additional bulletins and other information material arising out of the expansion of the winter employment publicity program. The other \$95,000 is for newspaper, radio, film and other publicity.

Mr. Pickersgill: Will the minister say whether that is the total amount being spent on the program? Before he answers that question I should like to supplement what the Leader of the Opposition has said. If the minister would care to look up the discussion on the supplementary estimates on one occasion when I was minister of citizenship and immigration, he will find that during the course of a whole afternoon I was subjected to questions, almost all of which were irrelevant to the item, by his colleague the Minister of Justice, and that no exception was taken by the government of that day to that procedure because we believed in giving parliament the information to which it was entitled.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.