

*Supply—Labour*

program last year surely it was up to the government this year to announce earlier the program they propose to implement in this regard. As all members of the house know, the municipalities arrange and plan their budgets early in the year. Surely that was another reason for announcing earlier in this calendar year the program that would be followed by this government.

There is, of course, another problem associated with any works that will be planned by the municipalities, namely that occasioned by the increased interest rates and the increased costs of borrowing which municipalities are now experiencing.

One other point I should like to make is this. I should like to ask the minister whether it is the intention of the government to announce before the end of this month what their policy will be in connection with winter works programs. My reason for asking that question is this. From May 31 until June 3 the Canadian federation of mayors and municipalities will be meeting in North Bay in convention. It would seem to me that here would be a splendid opportunity for the Prime Minister, who will be addressing that conference, to announce to the delegates assembled there the program which his government intends to implement as an effective means of dealing with this problem of winter unemployment. I wonder if the minister would be prepared to say if the government will be in a position to make an announcement at that time, or earlier.

**Mr. Starr:** No, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Winch:** I rise at this time to express an opinion on the winter works program. I do not intend to say anything on the last winter works program, but merely to convey, as I think it was intended that we from Vancouver should, the views of the Vancouver city council and of the engineering staff of that city on any other program of a similar nature which may be envisaged. I feel quite sure that the minister has something of a similar nature in mind for next year.

About two days before most of us had to leave Vancouver to attend the opening of the present session of parliament the Vancouver city council requested Vancouver members to meet them and discuss the winter works program. Unfortunately, the majority of hon. members could not be there but there was, nevertheless, a fairly good representation. It was pointed out to the Vancouver members

of the House of Commons who were present that the city of Vancouver could have done much more with regard to this program if greater notice had been given, and if the city had been given the opportunity to arrange finance and carry out preliminary engineering work. It was emphasized at this meeting that if longer notice had been given to the cities and to the municipalities they would have been able to take much greater advantage of the federal government's proposal. We were asked to convey these views to the government.

I hope the minister will take this opportunity to say that consideration will be given to a further plan of this kind in the coming fall and winter, and in the following spring, and that he will be able to give the committee an assurance that longer notice will be given in order to enable the cities, towns and municipalities to take fuller advantage of his plans to the benefit of themselves and of the unemployed.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Bourget:** Mr. Chairman, I must say to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Starr) that his reply of a flat no to the very sensible question put by my colleague, the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Garland), came as an unpleasant surprise to me.

The Minister of Labour must surely remember that the recent winter work program has not been an unqualified success in all cases, especially in the province of Quebec.

That is why I should like to say a few words on this matter. In the province of Quebec, all of the heavy burden fell on the municipalities alone, because the Union Nationale government failed to help them by paying 25 to 30 per cent of the cost of labour, as was done in other provinces.

As mentioned by my colleague, announcement of that program will presumably be made at a later date—at least that is what the Minister of Labour has indicated—probably in August or September. It will then be too late; in fact, it is too late now, because—as stated by previous speakers—municipal budgets are usually drawn up in February, March and April. So when the scheme is announced in August or September, municipalities will not have the money for public works that would provide jobs.

Of course, I cannot say whether the cabinet or the Prime Minister has asked the Minister of Labour to keep mum, but surely the minis-