

To encourage a concentration of additional activity during the next two years there is an incentive providing for forgiveness of a loan to an amount equal to 50 per cent of total direct on-site labour costs incurred up to May 31, 1975; and to encourage construction during the winter, a further incentive allows for forgiveness of an additional 50 per cent of direct on-site labour costs between the December 6 to May 31 winter period for the 1972-73 winter, and the December 1 to May 31 winter period for the 1973-74 and 1974-75 winters.

I suggest that is something every member of this House should stand up and support. It is something that my friends on the other side have been complaining about ever since we came here on January 4. They have said the unemployment situation is intolerable. It is intolerable, and we want to do something about it. All of us in this government ask you to do exactly the same. Let me conclude by asking every member to think about the province from which he or she comes when voting on this motion. The provinces have asked for this program and for more planning.

**Mr. Hees:** They started asking eight months ago and they have asked and asked and asked.

**Mr. Whicher:** They asked us to plan this program, not just for this winter but for the next two winters. I suggest that by voting for this motion we will give the provinces exactly that for which they have asked.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Athabasca wishes to ask a question. He may do so with the consent of the hon. member for Bruce. Is it agreed?

**Mr. Yewchuk:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Bruce said that this party voted against unemployment insurance when it voted against Bill C-124. It seems to me that he does not know what the bill was all about and I should like to ask him whether he has read it.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Order.

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to hon. members from both sides of the House speak on this item since yesterday but I have yet to make up my mind whether members of the official opposition are for or against it. They have complained that this program should be in the form of legislation. I have not been here very long, but I have the impression that when a supply bill is passed it becomes a statute or an act of parliament. Some of the remarks of the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) and the previous speaker from the official opposition would not seem to indicate that fact. If I am wrong I am sure you, Mr. Speaker, or someone else will correct me.

• (2140)

Since this is in fact an act of parliament, when we are through with this debate and these estimates we will have a piece of legislation. I do not know what the members of the official opposition are complaining about. I agree with a number of things they have said. Of course, this is 8, 10 or 12 months too late. When the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) some time ago wiped out winter works, members of the opposition and of our party complained bitterly. There is nothing new about that.

### Supply

I agree with members of the official opposition that in this area the government has been incompetent. What else is new? When I listen to them I am reminded of the farmer that had two skunks in the chicken coop: it was twice as bad as having only one skunk. When one thinks of the winters of 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1962 one realizes, as my friend the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) said, the government headed by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) did the same thing. We were months behind. Even though the old parties have been around here for 105 years, they do not seem to realize that Canada happens to be a country which has a northern climate and long winters. This is a country in which we should plan what we will do in the winter, but both the Liberals and Conservatives could not find their backsides in the dark even if they used both hands.

**Mr. Paproski:** I do not think that is very nice.

**Mr. Benjamin:** I was able to find my backside in the dark a long time ago with either hand. The members of the official opposition have been getting up and bellowing like a moose at fly time in respect of this supplementary estimate. It is the same kind of estimate they brought in in the late fifties, early sixties or in the 1890s. They have not changed. They keep on damming the waters under the bridge. I just do not understand why they find it so necessary to berate the government for doing exactly what they did. This is the kind of thing the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) complained about 25 years ago, whether it was the Liberals or Tories in power.

**An hon. Member:** Fifty years ago.

**Mr. Benjamin:** He could have been here then too. This is really a charade. When one listens to the members of both these old parties with their nineteenth century concepts and methods, we find that when one mentions economic planning or a planned economy they say it is socialism and is not democracy. However, when they are in opposition they say it should have been planned and brought forward months before.

When my friend, the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman), said this very thing, particularly in respect of winter works every year for the last four years, members of the government and the official opposition said that you cannot have planning ahead because that is socialism. Now I hear some of my right-wing friends saying the same thing. Why? I say it is not because they believe in this but because there is some noise to be made in their frantic efforts to shove the Liberals away from the trough and get the Tories up to it. They should be patient and wait a little while.

There is no argument about the necessity for planning winter works. The government, private enterprise, the trade union movement and the farm organizations should sit down and plan for one, two or five years ahead; there is so much to be done in this country. There will be municipalities which by the end of May or June will not have been able to complete projects. I will make a prediction that by the deadline for the completion of these projects there will be scores of municipalities in this country which will not have been able to complete their projects whether we have a Liberal or a Tory government.