

*Supply—Canals*

union will be receiving different rates of pay, the one rate ten per cent below the other. I draw this aspect of the matter to the attention of the minister, as I do not think the government took it seriously into consideration when it adopted the general cut.

Mr. MITCHELL: The government took advantage of the depression in order to reduce its own rates by twenty-five per cent, and now it proposes to make a further cut. This will be setting an example to outside employers to reduce again their rates of pay by ten per cent.

Mr. NEILL: When Bill No. 19, which provides for the ten per cent cut, was introduced by the Prime Minister for the Minister of Finance, such a case as this was referred to. The Prime Minister was asked if some men who had recently had their wages cut would receive a further cut of ten per cent, and he answered to the effect that there was a special provision in the bill to take care of such cases. The Prime Minister referred to section 6 of the bill, which reads:

The treasury board may make regulations,—  
(b) determining in any case of doubt the amount to be treated as the amount of compensation of any member of the public service of Canada for the purposes of this act.

That subsection was to take care of just such cases as we have been discussing this evening. I suggest to the minister that all he has to do is to take advantage of the procedure provided by that subsection and thus fulfil the assurances given by the Prime Minister.

Mr. MANION: The matter is not absolutely decided, and I shall agree to give it further consideration, although I shall not go any further than that at the moment. I should like to point out that governmental wages compare very favourably with those paid by private companies. While I should not care to give the names of the various companies, I shall give the rates paid for different occupations.

Mr. HEAPS: Are these companies in the same district?

Mr. MANION: Yes. I should not like to give the names of the companies, but if my hon. friend desires I shall let him see the list. The rates for blacksmiths paid by different companies are 38 cents, 48 cents, 45 cents, 75 cents, 75 cents, 50 cents, 60 cents and 60 cents. Our rate is 60 cents, which is as high as or higher than six out of the eight.

Mr. MITCHELL: What is the prevailing rate?

[Mr. Heaps.]

Mr. MANION: I am simply pointing out what might be the prevailing rate. First class carpenters; 45, 54, 70, 75, 60, 55, 60, 60, 65 cents; ours is 60.

Mr. EULER: That is 60 before the ten per cent is taken off, which would make it 54.

Mr. MANION: Yes. Electricians; 48, 53, 51, 60, 70, 90 cents; ours, \$145 a month, which is a pretty fair wage. Labourers; 30, 34, 42, 35, 30, 35, 25, 25, 30 cents; ours is 40. With the exception of one there is no other in that whole group in Ontario that pays as high labour wages as we do.

Mr. HEAPS: Don't you think the government ought to be a model employer of labour?

Mr. MANION: Yes, and I think we are.

Mr. HEAPS: Two cuts of twenty-five per cent?

Mr. MANION: That is not fair.

Mr. HEAPS: One of twenty-five and one of ten per cent.

Mr. MANION: Twenty-five was the highest cut, and some took no cut at all. It was simply put at the prevailing rates. Those are the prevailing rates. Generally ours are beyond the highest rates paid by private companies. The ten per cent cut is simply because of the fact that all government employees—including my hon. friend and myself, if we can be termed such—have taken a ten per cent cut. My hon. friend thought that plenty of people would be willing to become members of parliament at \$3,600 a year. Well, all they have to do is to get elected—and my hon. friend from Hamilton has had the most recent experience in that line.

Mr. HEAPS: How do the government rates in Ontario compare with the fair wage standard?

Mr. MANION: Our rates have been settled after consultation with the Labour department. That department is noted for giving breaks to the workers, and I have no doubt that it has taken into account any legislation dealing with wages. But I repeat, this matter is still more or less sub judice, and I shall give it further consideration before deciding absolutely.

Mr. HEENAN: The minister's citation of rates was correct. If he will look at the labour situation all over Canada he will see that that condition prevails in every province