

when a civil servant has been in the employ of this country up to a stage where he is entitled to an allowance if no misdemeanour has occurred, if a misdemeanour occurs on his part, I think he should be allowed, having paid into the pension fund during the time of his entire employment, to retire with an allowance equal to that which he would have received at the time he was entitled to retire before the misdemeanour occurred.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: As one who moved in this House last year a resolution along this line, I feel that I ought to say a word. I moved that resolution after consultation with the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Kennedy) who on that committee represented more or less the independent members. It was because of his report of the revelations in the committee that some of us felt that this matter could not be passed over, and so I moved the resolution. The resolution was rejected, but this clause in it was afterwards included in another motion, and passed by the House. It read:

And also in clause 13 to add the name of R. R. Farrow, Deputy Minister of Customs and Excise, to the list of those who are recommended that their services be dispensed with.

That resolution was passed by this House. This vote is being proposed a year later over the head of a resolution passed by the last parliament. That in itself is a serious situation. Further than that, some of us who felt that we had to take some position to discipline, shall I say, those who are responsible for conditions in the Customs department, made it clear that we did not want to be hard on any of those men. The under officials were summarily dismissed. The deputy minister, according to the recommendations of the committee, remained eligible for full pension. I urged at that time that a certain amount of clemency should be exercised, and that recommendations should be brought in to provide that the men who were dismissed should receive some consideration; that they should not be turned, as it were, on the street. Again I suggest that it is a serious matter, if, after a man has been shown to have been to no small extent responsible for a number of years for the condition in the department, he should then receive no punishment whatever, but rather should be permitted to enjoy his full pension just as if he had been an honourable and efficient servant to the end. I cannot but remember that there are to-day men who are spending years in our gaols and penitentiaries on account of small thefts, slight irregularities in their conduct, and yet to-day we propose not merely to refuse to punish this man in

any way, but to retire him on full pension. I feel that unless we are going to rise to that point where we are willing to remit all penalties and treat the poorest in our land in this generous fashion, some of us can not let this vote pass without a decided protest. It was not pleasant for me to take this position. Although I have not known Mr. Farrow personally I understand he was for many years a respected official, and he has already suffered much. But I feel the impression must not be permitted to go throughout the country that a man who is highly placed is to be given one type of treatment while the poorer or subordinate offender is discriminated against.

Mr. BELL (Hamilton): As one who served on that committee I quite concur, as a matter of generality, in the stand that was taken by the hon. member for Peace River. It is only fair to say that he was consistent in that stand, but it should also be stated that, before the report of the committee was brought in, the case of this particular official was given earnest consideration for a matter of two or three days, and the majority report of the committee was reached only after the most careful consideration of his case. Having regard to all that then came before the committee and all that we have heard that has occurred in connection with the matter, I can only say as a member of that committee that I endorse every word which the Minister of Customs has just stated to the House.

Mr. KENNEDY: I want to reply to the statement made by the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Young) who referred to the company which I was keeping last year. Let me tell him that I am as proud of the company I kept last year on the customs committee as the company I kept this year on the railway committee, and that is not saying anything against either of them. I wish simply to protest and to put myself on record as holding the view that, by this appropriation, we are not dealing fairly with officials in the civil service who maintain their record clean and efficient to the end. I know, because of the feeling of the House, it is of no use moving a motion to reduce this item or to strike it out; but notwithstanding that, a principle is involved, and I want to go on record as saying that the action that is being taken is wrong.

Mr. SPENCER: I want to support the hon. member for Peace River in his contention.

Item agreed to.

Resolutions reported.