

payable during your lifetime or until re-marriage." I contend that this contract has been broken.

The Minister of Finance replied on May 30; he dealt with other points I raised and then gave attention to the paragraph in which I complained about the breaking of the contract. This is what he had to say:

On the question of contract, as stated in my letter of May 4, the effect of order in council of December 24, 1940, was to give pensioners the option of continuing to take their pension without working for the government, or entering the public service with a forfeiture of pension while the higher income was being received.

Of course it is a bit risky to paraphrase what someone else has said; I know when people paraphrase my words I am seldom satisfied that they do it right. Nevertheless I am going to paraphrase what the minister has said. It seems to me that in effect his statement, as far as the contract is concerned, was this: "We said to these people with whom we had made a solemn contract for life, 'We now give you the privilege of having that contract suspended in order that you may continue to receive from the government this other cheque, or if you wish the contract kept you will have to cease work.'" The Minister of Finance in this and other letters made the point that there would be a good many people like her. I shall quote from his letter of May 4, 1944:

I am told that in all probability hundreds, possibly thousands of widows joined the civil service after the passage of the order in council of December 24, 1940, preferring to receive the substantially larger income which came to them in the form of pay for their services, than their pensions would have given them.

The minister went on to point out that because there were so many he did not see how he could deal with the case I had referred to him, without dealing with all these cases. My contention is that if contracts have been broken in a good many cases, the request to have one of them corrected should not be met with an answer like that. It should be met with an attempt on the part of the government to correct the situation wherever a wrong has been done, no matter how many instances there may be.

There may be cases where widows have been able to secure employment in the public service at quite high salaries, which would make the continuance of the pension unnecessary. But in cases like this, of widows doing char work, their total remuneration amounting to only \$50 or \$60 a month, making it difficult for them to get along, it seems to me that the government has gone a little too

far in passing an order in council of that kind, and that it should reconsider this whole position.

I point out that by the order in council of February 11, 1943, P.C. 5/1111, the government admitted that it passed an unfair order in council in P.C. 21/7609, on December 24, 1940. I raise this case, following the tremendous amount of correspondence I have already had over eighteen months with respect to this matter, in the hope that further consideration may be given to it. The amount involved in connection with the widow about whom I have written is only \$239.20. But that amount means a good deal to a woman in her situation, as it must to many others in similar circumstances.

She still has in her mind the memory of the deductions made from her husband's salary when he was employed in the public service years ago. As a matter of fact I have before me the letter dated July 19, 1922, which he was given, telling him that five per cent of his salary was to be deducted for the purpose of providing a retirement allowance for him, or for his widow if he should die first. She has in addition to that the letter she received after his death telling her that this was her allowance for lifetime, unless she remarried. There was a period of four and a half years when she received both cheques. She is receiving both now; and yet she is told that for that period of twenty months between June, 1941, and February, 1943, the contract was broken, that the money has simply gone back into the consolidated revenue fund and that at no time in the future will she be able to get it.

I earnestly hope the government will give reconsideration to the effect produced by the order in council of December 24, 1940, which was partially corrected by the order in council of February 11, 1943, but which job was not completed.

In closing, may I say, as I said when discussing the same subject two days ago, that in these times when the government is saying so much—and rightly so—about the desirability of establishing social security and fashioning a new order, which needs must come following the suffering and sacrifice our people have gone through, surely the place for the government to begin that sort of thing is right on its own doorstep, and without continuing any cases of injustice, such as the one to which I have referred.

Mr. RALPH MAYBANK (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, there are one or two aspects of this bill to which I should like to address myself, and concerning which I would