

before this committee. I am not putting myself in that position with regard to civil government, but I take that stand with respect to the votes now under discussion and votes by which civil servants are paid out of a general expenditure such as that being asked for in item 288. I hope I have made myself clear. If I am correct, the government can avoid some embarrassment. By providing for the full salaries as they do under the items of civil government, they would obviate the difficulty, and we would be subjected to the legislation which is to be considered later in the form of a bill.

Mr. STEVENS: I may be able to satisfy my hon. friend on that point. As a matter of fact in this particular resolution there is no specific mention of a cut of 10 per cent in civil servants' salaries.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Oh, I understood there was.

Mr. STEVENS: No, there is not. But when I was asked whether it was the intention of the government that a cut of 10 per cent should apply to such employees as are paid out of this vote, I replied that it was. If this vote of \$211,000 is passed to-night, assuming that no legislation is passed and nothing in addition to this is done, it provides for the payment of the salaries current to-day.

Mr. VENIOT: That is not what I understood. I asked the minister to give details, and he said the cut included the \$211,000.

Mr. STEVENS: The item as a whole is reduced by \$37,600, which includes all that is in the item. To be fair and frank about the matter I stated that it was the intention to cut salaries 10 per cent, and I would not have been fair to the house had I intimated anything else.

Mr. BEAUBIEN: That makes it so.

Mr. STEVENS: No, speaking technically it does not make it so. Unless there is some other statute passed the salaries would remain the same.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think the minister has overlooked the fact that we are discussing item 29.

Mr. STEVENS: Oh no, we are not talking about that; we are discussing item 288.

Mr. VENIOT: In order to settle the matter will the minister give us the details of the reductions in this item.

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

Mr. STEVENS: The item is made up of several factors. Estimates for salaries are \$202,050.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): What were the salaries last year?

Mr. STEVENS: \$194,535. Travelling expenses of the director, assistant director, inspectors and other officers amount to \$35,000; purchase of equipment, \$6,000; general contingencies \$5,550, making a total of \$248,600.

Mr. BEAUBIEN: What is the amount for salaries?

Mr. STEVENS: \$202,050. From that has been deducted the flat sum of \$37,600, in anticipation of the reduction to which we have referred.

Mr. VENIOT: That is right.

Mr. STEVENS: There is nothing inherent in the resolution which cuts the salaries. I was perfectly frank with the committee, I told them what the intention was as to making this reduction. Undoubtedly we intend that the reduction shall apply.

Mr. EULER: Mr. Chairman, I do not propose to delay the work of the committee, or speak about the so-called constitutional aspects of the question. My purpose in rising is merely to make a suggestion that seems to be the most reasonable and logical course of procedure in the matter. The question of this 10 per cent reduction is a very important one, and I think members of the house, as well as members of the civil service, would like some opportunity of considering it, and, perhaps on the part of the latter, of making some representations to the ministry thereon. That is one reason why possibly there might be a little delay before we finally settle the question. While I might be inclined to favour in the interests of economy—which I think is needed—some sort of reduction, I think the percentage should be graded in relation to salary—that a man receiving, say, \$1,200 cannot be expected to stand a cut of 10 per cent, or perhaps even 5 per cent, as well as can a man getting a salary of \$4,000 or \$5,000. I mention that to emphasize the importance of giving the question further consideration. Although I am quite sure that my hon. friend the minister, who is usually very reasonable, did not anticipate to-night that the question of the principle involved in the 10 per cent cut would be discussed on his estimates, yet I submit, despite what he said, that if we accept some of these items as well as the totals, we are in effect recognizing the principle of the 10 per cent horizontal cut.

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