

the additional \$60, that would involve a matter of only \$282,000 per annum. The minister proposes an appropriation of \$2,700,000. If he would increase that by \$282,000, he would cover that very large class of employees who feel that they are not being fairly dealt with at present.

Mr. RINFRET: Why single them out? There you have discrimination, the very thing we want to avoid. The hon. member says: there are 3,000 letter carriers; give it to them. Why not give it to the railway mail clerks who are in the same division?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I have added them.

Mr. RINFRET: That will mean 11,000.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I was informed that there were 3,000 letter carriers and 1,700 mail clerks.

Mr. RINFRET: There are postal clerks, customs clerks and many other classes in that group who have been given consideration already and who are getting \$60 of a difference. I want to accept any suggestion in good grace, but we have tried hard to have an adjustment made that will prevent discrimination, and it is by giving special consideration to this or that class that discrimination will arise.

Mr. EDWARDS (Waterloo): Did the minister not promise the men in 1924 to make good the \$198 bonus? As a matter of fact they are getting a net increase of \$60.

Mr. RINFRET: This year?

Mr. EDWARDS (Waterloo): I mean a net increase over the 1924 income.

Mr. RINFRET: That is right.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I should like to support the plea of the leader of the opposition (Mr. Guthrie), not that I consider his proposal as being at all adequate to meet the situation, but because I regard it as being the least possible that can be done at the present time. I think it would receive the support of hon. members and also of the public generally throughout the country. The requests of the letter carriers receive greater endorsement from the general public than those of any other class. This is perhaps because the ordinary public comes into closer touch with them and understands the nature of their work, much of which in this country is arduous, but it is also because we believe that this particular class of civil servants has not received proportionately anything like the salary which they should receive, and that in making an increase as proposed we are in

reality only attempting in a very small degree to catch up in the arrears that are due to them.

I venture to suggest that the apparent increases of which we have heard so much are often nullified by changes in the classification of the civil service. That has not been clearly brought out. The schedule of salaries in the civil service is so complicated that it is extremely difficult for us at this time to go into details, but it should be clearly recognized that very often any increases have been entirely nullified by changes in classification. Moreover, with regard to this special class for whom a plea has been made, a few years ago an adjustment was made giving them \$60 a year more. As I understand the situation, that was in order to bring them up more nearly on a parity with the other classes of the civil service. In this case if they are to be given simply the other \$60, this means really that that adjustment goes for nothing. I take it that others are not being discriminated against if this class receives the full \$120 increase.

Another matter in which we who come from the west are particularly interested is the bonus. There has been a special bonus for years on account of the higher cost of living in the west; that complicates the situation still further as regards the western men. But in the case of the war bonus I claim that it was given because of the increased cost of living and that increased cost of living is still a factor in the situation. Members of this House had their sessional indemnities increased at about the same time because of the increased cost of living, and we are not prepared to say that that sessional indemnity ought to be lowered. We recognize that the cost of living has been permanently increased or, if you like to put it the other way, that the purchasing power of the dollar has been lessened. This is an important consideration, especially in the case of the lower paid civil servants. I do not think the Secretary of State has answered the statements made by the letter carriers. I want to place on record this memorandum which has been handed to many of us:

Salary Revision, 1924, As Applied To  
Letter Carriers

1923, salary, \$1,260; bonus, \$297; total, \$1,557.

1924, April 1, salary, \$1,260; bonus, \$198; total, \$1,458; reduction, \$99.

1924, July salary revision, salary, \$1,440; bonus, \$18; total, \$1,458.

1924, Post Office Department's recommendation for letter carriers, salary, \$1,560.

1927, salary proposed, salary, \$1,500; reduction bonus, \$18; increase "net", \$42 or 81 cents per week.