

I have no doubt; for instance, the question of statutory increases this year and of the incidence of the superannuation fund having regard to this 10 per cent reduction. But that does not alter the circumstance that the only method whereby money can be voted for salaries is by a supply bill, precisely in the same manner in which we are doing it now, and precisely as my right hon. friend did it, and precisely as any succeeding government will have to do it unless the constitutional practice that has obtained since we have enjoyed British parliamentary institutions is departed from.

Mr. VENIOT: Can the hon. minister give any instance where a government brought down a supply bill of this nature reducing salaries?

Mr. RHODES: There has not been a year since the establishment of our parliamentary institutions when there has not been submitted by the government of the day estimates involving in some cases decreases and in other cases increases. In other words, the arbitrament as to whether there should be an increase or a decrease rests with the government upon the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor General, and then it remains for parliament to deal with the bill. In that respect we are following precisely the same procedure as did my right hon. friend and as has been followed in all British parliaments. As a matter of fact the procedure must be followed under our constitution.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I agree with my hon. friend that the only way to have supply voted is to present estimates to the house and have the house pass on them. That is not what I was complaining of. I did not say it was any insult to the house to bring down estimates and present them. What I did say is this: to present your estimates in a form which assumes that the house is going to carry out a particular policy before that policy has been approved by resolution or in any other way, is equivalent to saying that the members of the house are so many automatons, that they are going to act just as the Prime Minister wishes them to act.

Mr. RHODES: Mr. Chairman, with the permission of my right hon. friend, I should like to ask him a question: will he name one instance during the whole tenure of his government, or during the whole history of the parliament of Canada, where the government of the day has asked for a resolution of the house with respect to the procedure it should follow on a money vote submitted to parliament by way of estimates.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: But this is something broader than the question of a mere money vote for salaries; it is the important question of policy as to whether the public service of Canada shall at this time be required to accept, regardless of the grade in which the individual may be, and all other considerations, a 10 per cent reduction in salary. Now the Prime Minister, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Vancouver Centre, did state at the opening of the house that the question would be settled by a statute. There was a definite pledge made. No notice has been given of any bill for the purpose, nor has there been introduced into this house any motion which would permit discussion of the broad question of policy. When I spoke of a resolution I had in mind something of the character which appeared on the order paper whereby it was declared to be the policy of this house that there should be a reduction. The only resolution to which I have referred spoke of a graded reduction. If the ministry introduced a resolution that there should be a 10 per cent reduction in the salaries of the public service this year, and the house had passed upon the resolution, it would be perfectly proper procedure to bring in estimates based upon the 10 per cent reduction. But no such resolution has been passed, no bill has been passed. We now discover that not only in this instance where it is obvious are salaries being cut 10 per cent regardless of grade, but that concealed throughout these estimates from beginning to close there are cuts in the public service of which we had no knowledge whatever. The Minister of Trade and Commerce said that this afternoon we reduced a large number of salaries in the public service. I venture to say that there is no hon. gentleman outside of himself and possibly other members of the ministry that had the slightest conception that we were doing anything of the kind. I venture to say that outside the ministers there is not an hon. member on the other side of the house or on this side who had any idea that while we were voting supply for public buildings, at the same time we were cutting down the salaries of persons in different parts of the country by 10 per cent. That is not a correct procedure, but that apparently is what we have done, according to the minister. If that is what we are now doing, I say let us stop it and regularize our procedure at once. I am not in any sense trying to embarrass the government, nor am I anxious to be overcritical. And while I am speaking, I wish to withdraw what I said a moment ago of the other members of the

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