

being made for the purposes of readjustment, as the minister says, we would be asked to vote \$615,900. I would suggest to the minister—this is done by way of trying to meet the difficulty—that he amend his estimates by moving to strike out for the present the words "less 10 per cent" and the figure that appears thereafter, and let us vote the estimates as they stand up to the amount of \$615,900. That will be voting for each individual or group of individuals the sum set out opposite the classification in the detailed statement. I must say that when I looked at the estimates last night I took it that the 10 per cent reduction was inserted as a guide to the house of what the total ultimate expenditure would be. Until the house has decided that it is going to cut down the estimates for salaries by 10 per cent, I think the minister had better adopt the course I have suggested or take up some other part of the estimates.

Mr. STEVENS: Certainly, if the house desires to prolong the discussion on this particular resolution I would ask that it stand. But the facts are very clear. We are voting now the supply necessary to pay the salaries for this year at the regular rates, less 10 per cent; that is precisely what we are doing. Of course, if the right hon. gentleman and others object to the adoption of this resolution, we can let it stand and proceed with other items.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My point is that the minister at the moment assumes that every hon. member on his side of the house is going to agree with the government, and that no matter what discussion there may be on the floor of the house the 10 per cent cut will go through. I hope the house has enough independence for a sufficient number of its members to assert their own mind in a matter of this kind, regardless of what the government may say in advance.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Like they did when you were here.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I always sought to get the view of the house, and I took good care not to move in advance into a position which I was not perfectly sure the house was going to take. I certainly think until this house has decided that the salary of every person, irrespective of the particular grade he may be in or what he may be receiving, is to be cut 10 per cent, we had better not vote any estimates on the basis of a horizontal ten per cent reduction.

9-1932-3

Mr. FACTOR: So far as this cut of 10 per cent is concerned, Mr. Chairman, I do not think the members on this side of the house are prepared to vote such a reduction in a salary, say, of \$1,380. The general principle of the 10 per cent reduction should be considered first before we are asked to vote a 10 per cent reduction in all salaries ranging from \$8,000 down to \$1,380. I think the item should stand until the general principle has been discussed.

Mr. DUFF: It seems to me before deciding the matter the government should take into consideration that there is a contract between the officials of this department and the government—a feature, of course, that applies to the officials of all other departments of the service. The officials accepted those positions on the distinct understanding that they were to get a certain rate of salary, and it seems to me that before we vote to make a reduction of 10 per cent in salaries the people interested should be consulted and their views placed before the government.

Mr. VALLANCE: I would conclude from the statement of the minister that the matter has been discussed by the government and its supporters, and that the latter are in favour of this procedure, that is, the 10 per cent cut is to go through in spite of anything the opposition may say.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I must repeat that I have not had the benefit of this discussion; in this corner of the chamber I cannot hear anything that is going on. So far as I am concerned I would rather that the whole matter be left over so that those who are primarily concerned should be given the opportunity of themselves making to the proper authorities in their own way the representations which they may deem expedient. I believe that under our democratic system of government those who are to be mulcted to this extent should have an opportunity of presenting their case to the proper authorities. If it is the consensus of opinion that we should proceed with this matter I am quite prepared to do so, but I would rather have the discussion stand over until those who have representations to make can bring them before those to whom they should be made.

Mr. STEVENS: I have no desire to interfere with the most extensive discussion of the subject, and if any hon. gentleman feels that to pass this estimate to-night would be