

the throne, but I am grateful to the right hon. gentleman for having said that he does not think he has anything to add to it, that it meets with his approval. But I hold the view very strongly that so long as a nation permits conscription legislation to be placed upon the statute books you will never make progress in disarmament. That is my profound conviction. I have had that view for a long time, I have told our delegates that the basis of armaments is the compulsion to arms, and that the basis of disarmament must be the removal of conscription laws in the countries that are to be disarmed. I regret the right hon. gentleman saw fit to suggest that the delegation representing us at Geneva might have been improved upon. All I can say is, it is not an easy task to secure Canadians who are prepared to devote themselves for months to the work that will fall upon the shoulders of our delegation. I know it was a difficult task, and I regret very much having, for instance, to ask the Right Hon. Sir George Perley to leave us at this time, but I felt that the delegation should be headed by a representative of the government. There is no man in our ranks who has a wider knowledge of international relations and who has served this country with more fidelity and greater satisfaction to the country with which he came in contact than the right hon. gentleman who has consented to head our delegation to Geneva.

There is one paragraph in the speech from the throne which the right hon. gentleman has not dealt with; it is a matter of tremendous importance to this country—the maintenance of economy in our public administration. I think you will find that in every department of the public service we have spent less this year than parliament authorized us to spend. That has been brought about largely by the diminution of revenues, because the sales tax that in days gone by had produced \$20,000,000 for every one per cent now produces less. But looking about us, realizing our obligations, and desiring that the people of this country should understand fully that the government is anxious to lead the way with respect to matters of economy, we have concluded that we will ask this parliament to pass a statute to reduce by ten per cent the indemnities alike of the Senate and of the Commons, and of the compensation paid to ministers and to every branch of the public service. That must be effected. That we believe is essential for the purpose of enabling this country to have a balanced budget. We will then have done the two things

which are necessary in the interests of the Canadian people: first and foremost, we must maintain the national credit, because this new, young country can only go forward into the future if it has credit in the money markets of the world. There is but one money market of the world that is left, practically, and that market is indeed conscious of the high regard we have for our credit obligations, for we have met every contractual obligation of the provinces, the dominion and the municipalities in the money market of New York in the terms of our contract; and that we will continue to do. We have brought that about not only by drastic economies, not only by what I mentioned a moment ago, the maintenance of our position by securing a favourable trade balance; these things we have done, but now we desire to meet the tremendous obligations that rest upon us next year with regard to our railway system. We have determined that we will have this economy begin with ourselves—although we realize that it may be particularly difficult with some, much more difficult than perhaps the average man realizes—alike in the Senate, the Commons and the civil service of this country, except, of course, the judges, who stand in a somewhat different position. That is what we have determined to do. A saving of between \$7,500,000 and \$8,000,000 will be effected.

But there is one more matter to which passing reference might be made. The right hon. gentleman has referred to the transportation commission. I think he is entirely in error in the quotation he made of what was said by me in Toronto. What I said—and if you will take the trouble to look at the report you will find this to be so—was that the sub-committee reported in these words:

Your committee desire to call the attention of the house to the proposal made by Sir Henry Thornton at one of the sessions of the committee. He referred to the serious position of the transportation business generally and recommended that a commission be appointed for the purpose of considering the whole question of Canadian transportation. Your committee regard such a recommendation coming from such a source at this time as worthy of the serious consideration of the government.

No provision for that purpose was made in the supplementary estimates. That report was unanimously adopted by this house in July, as you will recall, and after carefully considering it in its every aspect we decided to appoint such a commission. But I have no hesitation, sir, in saying to you and to the members of this house that it was exceedingly difficult to secure the men we desired to get.