

lem very fully, unless special consideration is given to the class of work that these men perform, I am going to take the stand to-day, that it would not be fair to the rest of the service to grant an additional increase to this group and not grant it at the same time to civil servants at large, because under this revision these particular men are already getting more relatively than any other civil servant in the employ of the government.

Mr. BENNETT: Will the minister say what the maximum is?

Mr. RINFRET: Yes, \$1,500.

Mr. VENIOT: That is under the classification they are getting more in proportion than any other class.

Mr. RINFRET: I believe that if the committee would only agree to this revision as it stands, and leave it to the Postmaster General—who I am sure is a generous hearted and well intentioned minister—he could be depended upon to look after the welfare of these men.

Mr. RYCKMAN: He would dismiss them all.

Mr. RINFRET: Their positions can be improved by reclassification, by promotion; it can be improved in many other ways than by disrupting, if I may use the word, the general equilibrium of the revision which has been adopted.

Mr. MCGIBBON: Is it intended to improve the status of the letter carriers later on?

Mr. RINFRET: We are to have a new class of senior letter carriers. My hon. friend has suggested that it would not need a very large amount to grant the official increase. Let me tell him it would mean for these classes only pretty nearly \$700,000.

Mr. BENNETT: For the three classes?

Mr. RINFRET: For all these employees.

Mr. GUTHRIE: How many letter carriers have we in Canada?

Mr. RINFRET: About three thousand. I believe there are 11,000 affected by this revision.

Mr. GUTHRIE: But the letter carriers number about 3,000?

Mr. RINFRET: Yes.

Mr. LADNER: Is it not a fact that in some cases there is an actual decrease in salary? I have received complaints in which it is stated the revision constitutes a decrease?

Mr. RINFRET: Before I am through I may point out, perhaps, as the Minister of Finance did the other day, that there is another side to this question, and that is the taxpayers' side. We have had also representations, through members of parliament or otherwise, that we were going a long distance in increasing the salaries of the civil servants. I may tell the House that I have been a civil servant myself, and I doubt if there has ever been in the ministry one more fully in sympathy with the service than I am. I know the conditions of the service. I know its shortcomings and also some of the advantages—in the matter of security and otherwise. I will not insist on this point, but I can assure my hon. friend that we have given the fullest consideration to this matter, and everything that we propose to do is in the fullest sympathy with the service at large. I am only too grieved to find out that quite a large body of civil servants have not found satisfaction in this revision. I believe that is due to the fact that they have pondered too much over the flat increase that goes to the rest of the service, and have lost sight of the fact that an equivalent amount and more has been given to them already. I would suggest that we might all be animated by the same sentiment regarding this revision. I have said that some people have made representations to us that the amount of increase was very large. To those I would say that the amount is smaller, by one-half or more, than that requested by the civil servants themselves. In the revision decided upon we have about met them half way.

Mr. BENNETT: How many will be affected?

Mr. RINFRET: Altogether I believe 33,000, of whom 22,000 are in the civil service at large.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): Will the fourth class, the "notwithstanding" class be included? That is the class who are being appointed because they are favourites of this or that minister or department "notwithstanding anything in the Civil Service Act?"

Mr. RINFRET: I am glad to relieve my hon. friend's anxiety about that. The provision will include all civil servants in the service now, whether they have been appointed by the preceding government or have been appointed "notwithstanding anything in the Civil Service Act." There are quite a number in both classes.