

*Salaries Act*

Before dealing with that, may I say that I know I cannot debate the bill which has already become law in respect to our own indemnities. At that time there was some criticism of us which came about in this fashion. It was said that we, as parliamentarians, raised our own salaries. The answer to that criticism, of course, is that we are the only ones who could do that. Nobody else could do it. Either we did it or we did not do it.

The bill before us is a little different because the members of the government cannot raise their own salaries unless they come to parliament with a bill. It then becomes the responsibility of the entire house to say whether or not Her Majesty's ministers can have an increase in their salaries. I am not seriously disturbed by the bill, because I do not think the salaries called for are out of line with salaries paid for men with similar responsibilities in private industry. I do not know that I should make a broad statement, but there are some members of the cabinet who are stronger than others; that is so wherever we go. No matter what line of work, profession or industry we consider, some men rise to the top and command perhaps a greater salary than others. In the case of the cabinet, each cabinet post pays the same amount, whether or not one minister is more capable than another. So far as I can see, I do not want to draw any distinction; most of those holding cabinet posts could undoubtedly command salaries much greater than they are now receiving if they were to move out and seek the dollar somewhere else.

I do not think there is any need to mention who they are. I cannot help thinking of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) who is sitting there evidently signing his mail. There is no question in my mind that if he went into private practice he could command an exceedingly healthy income. I look at all these gentlemen on the front benches, and they look like wise individuals. I am quite certain they could all do the same thing. I do know that in some governments in this country they have difficulty holding men, because they become familiar with their posts over the years and are strong executives who could command a lot more in private industry than they are getting.

For these reasons, I do not think the government is unjustified in requesting that the salaries for these positions be brought in line with those paid for similar positions. I know the criticism might be made that in a service of this kind you must consider the sacrifice. That is all very well, but I think perhaps they have considered some sacrifice if they could make more on the outside than

[Mr. Hansell.]

they are making here. I believe the people must recognize that a responsible position demands some equivalent income concessions. I think that is common sense.

I cannot ask the minister a question now such as I might ask if we were in committee, but I will ask this question in committee and the minister can answer it if he wishes. I do not believe there should be any reluctance on the part of the government to reveal other salaries that are paid to government officials outside the cabinet. When I say "government officials" I mean the officials of crown corporations and officials of various branches of government service who receive a fairly healthy income. I should like the minister to give to the house the salaries received by those who are employed in government service or crown corporations who receive remuneration in excess or the equivalent of the present cabinet salary. I believe the people are entitled to know; then the people can judge whether or not these salaries might be out of line with those of other responsible positions.

There is another observation I should make. Perhaps when these figures are revealed it might be said that Mr. so-and-so, the head of a crown corporation, receives so much in salary, and that is in excess of the salary of the minister under whom this corporation comes. If we ask why he receives that salary, the answer might be that this is a specialized thing and we have to have a man there who can handle the job. Well, that is all right. I may agree with that. But supposing he does not handle the job. Supposing that some way or another his work, or the crown company or the department, whatever it might be, is not successful? Supposing they fail in their obligation. Who is it that takes the rap? In the final analysis the responsibility is not there; it is that of the government. In the final analysis the government, or some minister in the government, must take the blame. So therefore I say once again my personal opinion is that if the bill is asking for salaries somewhere in line with those paid in other government positions, or positions of similar responsibility in private industry, then I see no particular reason why the bill should not pass.

Had the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) proposed a motion for a committee or commission, I do not know whether we would have voted for it or not. We do not become enthusiastic about commissions and committees, as a rule. But at least it would have been something to substitute for his bald statement that he is going to vote against