

the civil service salary cut, I am speaking of the rights of this House of Commons, the rights of the Senate and the rights of parliament as a whole with respect to all legislation.

An hon. MEMBER: Another constitutional question.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: If hon. gentlemen opposite are going to be so rude as not to permit me to have a hearing, they might just as well take the floor themselves because I am not anxious to pursue this matter any further. I have been doing so as much in their own interest as in the interest of hon. members on this side. Hon. gentlemen opposite will find out very shortly just where they stand on some of these questions.

An hon. MEMBER: Do not worry.

Mr. GOTT: We are going to be here a long time.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The minister has said that the government has come forward in a perfectly straightforward manner, and, so to speak, has put all its cards on the table. What was done when the announcement was sent out with respect to these estimates? Look at the press of Canada and what do we see featured in the headlines? It is stated that as a result of these estimates presented to parliament there has been a saving to the country of something like \$43,000,000.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Hon. gentlemen opposite applaud that sentiment as the country has applauded it, but do they believe the country understood that that saving included a 10 per cent cut in the salaries of the public service?

Mr. STEVENS: Certainly.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The minister says "certainly."

Mr. STEVENS: It was stated the other day.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not believe one person in a hundred assumed that for one moment—

Mr. STEVENS: Everybody knew it.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING:—that the total reduction in the estimates included this 10 per cent cut which was to go into effect after some statute had been passed by this parliament. It was an effort to make the reduction

which the government is seeking to effect appear very much larger than it actually is. That is what is was so far as the government's presentation of the matter is concerned.

Mr. STEVENS: Absolute nonsense.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It is the truth.

Mr. STEVENS: Utter nonsense.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: If the minister has got into such a petulant frame of mind that he cannot permit others to have the same hearing as was accorded to himself, he must take the consequences. I repeat to the minister that at the present time he is endeavouring to have this house commit itself to a flat all round reduction in the salaries of the civil service regardless altogether, as I have said, of the grade, tenure of service and everything else pertaining to the position of the civil servants. We are not prepared to meet him in any action of that kind.

With regard to the cut in salaries, may I say that personally I would have been prepared to support the government to a certain extent so far as taking something off the higher salaries for a period of time is concerned. I would have been quite prepared to support the government in that. But I would not have been prepared to go right down the line in applying a 10 per cent cut, regardless of the grade or remuneration of employees, in fixing the amount to be taken from them. Far from seeking to make any capital out of the matter, I have simply been endeavouring to see that justice is done, so far as it is possible still to have justice done to those who have not yet been heard in regard to what affects the means of their very livelihood.

Mr. CHEVRIER: With what has been said by speakers on this side with reference to the manner in which this vote is now before the house I fully agree. I thought that we had reached a point about an hour ago when after asking a question of the hon. minister it had been agreed that this matter would stand over in order to afford an opportunity to those primarily concerned with the proposed reduction in civil service salaries to interview the proper authorities and express their views for the purpose of obtaining some satisfaction. I had understood that that was the understanding. I would like to know now from the minister whether that is so or not. If not I am quite prepared to go ahead with my remarks.

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend made no such presentation that I heard. The point raised in connection with vote No. 29 for

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