

Servants overpaid? They do not think so. The Government has had two long years of strenuous demand for further and further increases in salaries of Civil Servants. Material advances have been made, but Civil Servants, as a body, do not feel that they are paid enough. Are there too many of them? I can say only that they all are reasonably busy and that no unnecessary positions have been created.

Mr. Bowser gives you some figures showing the comparative cost of overhead in his time and in ours. It is true the figures are not the correct figures, but it scarcely would serve his purpose to state the case correctly. He told you that the last year his Government was in office overhead expenses amounted to \$1,661,000; that the Liberals were elected in 1917, in which year overhead went up to \$1,764,000, or an increase of \$100,000. Both these years are wrongly stated, for the amount for 1916-17 was \$1,177,000 and for 1917-18, the first year of Liberal regime, it was \$1,336,000. In their first year of office, therefore, the present Government reduced overhead expenditure by \$229,000. He says that by 1918-19 they had risen to \$1,982,000, and this increase was to help out Liberal followers. What a gratuitous insult that statement must appear to an intelligent audience who may be presumed to know that there were large increases in salaries during that year. The imperative necessity, owing to increased cost of living, compelled this increase.

Then he went on to tell you that for 1919-20 they had gone up to \$2,270,975, which he accounted for by saying: "The boys were still crying for more, and the Government said, 'Come on boys,' etc.," meaning, of course, the Liberal "boys." That must have sounded very convincing and was altogether too grave a statement to be accounted humorous. But Mr. Bowser did not tell you that a new system of accounting had been adopted by the Government, and that for the first time in the history of the Province everything was charged up to overhead that properly was chargeable. The statement in the Public Accounts of 1915-16, under the old system, gave Civil Service salaries as \$1,596,000, whereas the actual expenditure to this account was \$2,100,000. Half a million chargeable to this account was not so shown. It is not fair to tell any audience half the truth.

I am free to confess to you that there have been marked increases in salaries of Civil Servants and general overhead. I am free to tell you that I feel often, and other members of the Government feel, that the overhead expenses of the Provincial administration seem disproportionate to expenditure as a whole. But there are explanations as to why this is the case, and, to my mind, they are perfectly valid and satisfactory explanations.

In the first place, we have not compact, solid, and continuous settlement in the Province. Our community centres are scattered and in many cases isolated. Yet it is necessary to maintain Government offices and agencies at convenient locations throughout this whole vast area. People cannot be compelled to travel long distances in order to record land claims or mineral claims or transact such other business with the Government as may arise. They must have, within reasonable distance, access to Govern-