

Salary Deduction Act

There are 4,200 families being cared for as regards food, rent, fuel and clothing. There are 21,000 people on relief. In December, 1932, it cost the city more than \$143,000 in relief and during 1932 it cost Ottawa \$1,000,000. Let me tell the minister that 6,000 unemployed are registered and that they are being looked after. But if this suffering and misery is not seen by him, this is because of the way in which the city council and the relief administration are looking after this work. In the city of Ottawa our citizens have always responded to the demands of charity. In 1931 the civil servants themselves gave \$24,000 to city relief, and although they had received a cut in their salaries in 1932, when the city asked for \$50,000, the total subscription of the city was \$100,000, of which the civil servants, notwithstanding the cut, subscribed \$29,000. So it ill becomes the Minister of Finance to say that this city is not hurt and that there is less suffering in Ottawa than in any other place in Canada.

It is not only the civil servants themselves who are hurt; I am not speaking for that particular class alone. I am speaking for the whole city of Ottawa. Here we have a population of 140,000 people, with about 10,000 civil servants. Ottawa is not a manufacturing or industrial centre. It is a city which has been built up along a special groove because for years the seat of government has been here and there has been a steady flow of money from the government to the citizens of Ottawa. The people of Ottawa, the merchants and professional men, the tradesmen and others have all become accustomed to the steady flow of money, and no worse blow could be dealt to the whole city than to hit at the very root of its purchasing power. It is quite true that in nearly every city of this Dominion people have to suffer these cuts, but in this city, because of the special flow of money in a special way, people have been in the habit of arranging their budgets and cutting their sails according to their cloth, making commitments according to their revenue, more so than is the case in other cities where the flow of money has not been so steady. In manufacturing and industrial centres, where it is true the wage-earners have to cut their sails according to their cloth, the same commitments were not made as were made here. That is why the city of Ottawa is being hurt to a greater extent than any other city.

The \$2,500,000 which is cut, if there is a turnover of three or four or in some cases ten to one, represents a decrease in circulation in this particular city of over eight or nine million dollars. As I said last year, I shall

[Mr. Chevrier.]

not go into details, but I desire to say to the hon. Minister of Finance that he should not have singled out Ottawa for that particular reason. I desire to pay tribute to those who have so willingly looked after the misfortunes and sufferings of the people of Ottawa and have done it and are doing it so quietly and with so little ostentation that even the Minister of Finance has been unable to perceive it.

Mr. RHODES: I do not propose, Mr. Chairman, to reply at length to my hon. friend (Mr. Chevrier) because he has covered no new ground. I must, however, make reference to one or two of his observations.

In the first place, in quoting the respective statements of the Prime Minister and myself last year, he said that we were asking for a contribution for one year, and that there was an implied promise that the request would not ever be submitted again. We have covered that ground before, Mr. Chairman. The undertaking given by the Prime Minister and myself was given in absolute good faith and was in strict conformity with the facts. The bill in its terms spoke for itself in that respect. The request was made for one year. I have stated in the course of similar discussions upon this measure that no one would be more delighted than myself if the government did not feel called upon to ask for this sacrifice this year, and nobody would be more delighted than myself, and I am sure I speak for the government as a whole, if we were never called upon to ask for a similar sacrifice again. So I do not for one minute submit to the contention of my hon. friend that there has been the slightest suggestion of lack of good faith or any failure to implement any understanding which was made at that time.

When my hon. friend speaks of references of my own to the city of Ottawa, I must say to him in all deference that he put words into my mouth which I never uttered. He placed an interpretation upon my remarks which could not properly be placed upon them. I took down his very words. He said: It ill becomes the Minister of Finance to say that the city of Ottawa is not hurt. I not only did not use those words, but I did not use any language which could by any possibility be construed as meaning anything similar to what my hon. friend suggests. What I was doing was merely to indicate that relatively, as compared with other cities in Canada, Ottawa was in a more favourable position by reason of the fact that there was a larger proportion of its citizens in assured employment than was the case elsewhere in Canada. I was not for one moment suggest-