

Mr. McKENZIE: Is there anything in this vote for the temporary help the minister spoke of?

Mr. REID: We are appointing permanently, when this vote is passed, three officers who have been assisting us temporarily.

Mr. McKENZIE: Are they being appointed in conformity with the Act? Have they passed the examination?

Mr. REID: Oh, yes.

Mr. BUREAU: Does every one who has reached the maximum in his class and has passed the qualifying examination get his promotion?

Mr. REID: Yes, every one of them.

Salaries and contingent expenses of the several ports in the Dominion, including pay for overtime of officers, notwithstanding anything in the Civil Service Act—further amount required, \$300,000.

Mr. REID: I have received very many complaints from the officials of the Outside Service in regard to the salaries they are receiving. Owing to the high cost of living the salaries in many cases are much lower than I think they should be, but I cannot grant increases without a vote, and I have asked the Finance Minister to place this amount in the Estimates to provide for an increase for these officials. This vote provides for the salaries of approximately 3,000 officers, many of whom are receiving less than \$1,000 yearly salary. In view of the increased cost of living, owing to the war, it is desired to grant a general increase to these officers. It is estimated that this further amount of \$300,000 will be required as the present appropriation is insufficient for this purpose. The commissioner and I went into this matter, and we felt that the least we could give was an increase of \$100, which accounts for the item of \$300,000.

Salaries and travelling expenses of inspectors of ports and of other officers on inspection and preventive service, including salaries and expenses in connection with the Board of Customs—Further amount required, \$50,000.

Mr. REID: This vote provides for the salaries of approximately 230 officers, many of whom are receiving small salaries. In view of the increased cost of living owing to the war, it is desired to grant a general increase to these officers. It is estimated that this amount of \$50,000 will be required, as the present appropriation is insufficient for this purpose. The high cost of living is affecting very many of the officials very

seriously. The commissioner and I have provided for increases to those getting the smallest salaries, to the full amount of the vote last year. We can do no more until a further vote is passed, and I can assure the House that if this vote is passed we will see that it goes as far as possible towards assisting those drawing the smaller salaries.

Mr. NESBITT: I quite agree that a good many men in the outside offices are getting very low salaries, which they have difficulty in living on at the present time. How much of an increase would the minister give to a man drawing, say, from \$850 to \$1,200? Will these salary increases be distributed regardless of party politics? Complaint is heard sometimes that the older officers who have been in the service for some time do not get their increase the same as the others.

Mr. REID: In the Outside Service there is no stated statutory annual increase, but a maximum is fixed. The policy that was followed by my predecessor and by myself is this: The commissioner and the officials of the department make a list of what they think all of the officials in every office in the Dominion are entitled to, and then submit it to the minister for approval, and it is only in an exceptional case that the minister interferes. As far as I am concerned, I do not think that the hon. member could cite many cases of political interference. I think you will find that in cases where such interference is alleged, there is some reason why the increase was not granted.

Mr. NESBITT: I did not accuse the minister of that, but I said I understood that complaint had been made.

Mr. REID: There are many cases like this: A man may be appointed as a landing waiter in the city where my hon. friend lives, at a salary of \$850 or \$900, and another man working alongside of him may be getting the same salary. Often you will see a man has been increased probably \$50, and the man beside him has not had any increase, but you will find in every case that the man who has not received an increase is getting \$300 or \$400 a year extra.

Mr. NESBITT: What does the minister mean by "extra?"

Mr. REID: Overtime. The regular hours of the customs office in my hon. friend's city are from nine to four, for which the officers are paid probably \$900 a year each.