

My hon. friend is only playing with words if he seeks to make out that that was not an undertaking that the deduction would be for one year only. Salaries of civil servants would be where they were two years ago, but for my hon. friend continuing his deduction which is equivalent to a reduction, or continuing his reduction which is equivalent to a deduction, whichever way you wish to put it. What the civil servant is concerned about and is finding out is that he is getting 10 per cent less than his salary was before last year's measure was introduced while he was told by my hon. friend last year that at the end of the fiscal year he would be exactly where he was the year before. I realize that the minister has been disappointed in his expectations; I believe he hoped and genuinely believed that, at the end of one year, conditions would have so improved that it would not be necessary to make this deduction for another year. I trust, however, he will not attempt to say that he did not leave the impression that the deduction would be for only one year. I think he has learned wisdom and is now taking the wiser course of giving no undertaking along that line, so that next year he will be free to deal with the matter as circumstances permit. But by his statement of last year he misled the public service into believing the deduction would be for one year only, and now he finds it necessary to continue it for another year.

Mr. RHODES: An old colleague and old associate of mine in the house once made the wise statement: There is a great deal in the point of view; much depends on which end of the gun you happen to be at. My right hon. friend in stating to the house that last year I was playing with words—

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Was playing with words this year.

Mr. RHODES: Let me say with all deference to my right hon. friend that he is playing with words when he suggests the impression arises from the statement that never again would a similar deduction be asked.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I did not say that.

Mr. RHODES: This year we are asking for a contribution for one year only; that is all. I have said in the house at this session as I did last year, that I hope conditions will not again call for a similar sacrifice. But I cannot predict what world conditions will be a year hence, and I do not believe any hon. member would venture for a moment to make any such prediction. We hope they will be vastly improved.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Does the minister mean to say that what civil servants are receiving as salaries to-day are what they were receiving before this legislation was introduced?

Mr. RHODES: If we do not ask for a similar deduction next year, that is where the civil servants' salaries will be.

Mr. MacINNIS: Taking up again the point raised by the hon. member for East Hamilton of certain government employees who work on a day basis, let me say that their wages are paid according to the prevailing rate in the particular district in which they live. The government under this bill pays them not the prevailing rate, but that rate less 10 per cent. As the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River pointed out, these men have already accepted reductions of possibly 30 per cent, but despite that 30 per cent reduction, if they work for the government, they must accept an additional 10 per cent reduction.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the resolution covers only members of the civil service and of the House of Commons. Working men under contract with the government would not come under it.

Mr. MacINNIS: I am not referring to men working for contractors who have tendered on government work. I am dealing with men paid directly by the government and, for that reason, subject to that reduction. If next week the employers in that particular district, because of the government paying less than they are doing, make another 10 per cent reduction, these men, if they are still government employees, may be asked to accept another 10 per cent reduction, so that the point may be reached when these men will be working merely for their board and when the government employs them, they will have to pay to the government 10 per cent of the value of their board. When the Minister of Finance realizes this point, I believe he will take steps to correct it. It has already been rectified at Vancouver as regards locomotive engineers and so forth, working for the Vancouver harbour commission, who, because of the 10 per cent reduction last year in the same way as the other railway employees, were exempted from the 10 per cent deduction under the act passed last year. When the Minister of Finance sees the justice of this point, I am sure he will be willing to consider it and take steps to safeguard the wages of men working by the day.