

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I am quite sure the lowest tender was accepted, but I will have the matter looked up.

Warlike and other stores, \$350,000.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. This is the usual vote.

Mr. TAYLOR. There is an increase of \$37,000. What does this include?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Accoutrements, camp equipment, general stores, engineer's stores and medical stores.

Mr. DANIEL. What is meant by the up-keep of armament?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Ammunition both for practice and reserve supply, field and garrison artillery, ordnance stores, transport vehicles, extra parts of outfit for big guns, &c.; artillery stores of which there is a great variety.

Mr. J. D. REID. In these different items for the militia department there is an increase in the total vote of about \$342,000.

Mr. TAYLOR. And then there are the supplementaries.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. There will be no supplementaries except for the militia annual drill.

Mr. J. D. REID. This vote for clothing and necessaries in stores amounts altogether to \$800,000 and that seems a very large amount to expend in one year. One would think that the stores and clothing would not have to go on increasing year after year. Why is there this increase?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. The increase in the number of the militia is the principal reason. New corps are being formed in the new provinces of the west to take the place largely of the Northwest Mounted Police. I have a comparative statement here which may be interesting:

	1903-4	1908-9.
Total number of militia...	47,423	57,718
Total number of horses...	7,892	11,798
Number of men trained...	32,000	*46,000

*Estimated.

The very great increase of the growth of the militia between the two periods will account for a considerable increased portion of the increased cost. The men must have clothing, arms, and ammunition.

Mr. DANIEL. How often is new clothing issued?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Once in three years. There is an attempt being made to be more economical, and I think the overcoats are now issued for nine years.

Mr. DANIEL. You do not issue boots?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Not except to the permanent force.

Mr. J. D. REID. \$300,000 a year for clothing seems a large amount.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. It is only an average of about \$6 per year for each man.

Provisions and supplies, \$430,000.

Mr. DANIEL. Why the increase in this vote?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. That is principally for the permanent force.

Mr. J. D. REID. I have seen complaints that the goods furnished have not been up to standard in some cases.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. These supplies for the permanent force are purchased by tenders called for in the newspapers.

Mr. DANIEL. Open to everybody?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Open to everybody. As to complaints, there was a complaint from Halifax by a man who did not get the contract, as his tender was not low enough. He was very much annoyed because the bacon was brought somewhere from Ontario, and endeavoured to make all the trouble he could. As a matter of fact, the food is inspected every day, and every soldier has an opportunity to make a complaint if he chooses. There is absolutely nothing in that story.

Mr. J. D. REID. I have heard of other cases; but in that particular case I understand that it was rolled bacon that was supplied. I am not in the militia, but I understand that if a militiaman were to make a complaint to the officer in charge, he would be liable to get into trouble. If the officer in charge stands in with these parties in any way, it would be useless to make a charge to him.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I can assure my hon. friend that we are not running the militia in that way. If I knew that an officer refused to take cognizance of a complaint of that kind, I should dismiss him at once. Our object is to get the very best food we can, and we always accept the lowest tender. Sometimes, when there is keen competition, and a man is foolish enough to tender below the value of the goods supplied, there may be an attempt to skimp, and deliver food which is not up to the mark; but our inspectors will detect and punish such conduct at once.

Mr. DANIEL. Has the supply officer any control over the purchase of goods?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Not over the purchasing. That is all done by tender, and is determined by the director of contracts here. But the supply officer has absolute control over the quality of the food. That is his business, and he inspects everything that is delivered every morning.