

to \$3.80, \$3.75, \$3.15 and finally got down to the possibly reasonable price of \$2.90 each.

For the 18-pound high-explosive shells, the first price of \$5.70 was later lowered to \$4.00, to \$3.25 and finally to \$3.00.

For the assembling of the 4.5" Howitzer shells, prices ranged from \$6.70 down to \$6.

For the machining and assembling of 60-pound high-explosive shells the price was \$6.95.

Some Estimates of Actual Cost.

In contrast with these contract prices are the careful cost findings which have been published by newspapers which have used the results of investigations by experts, to say nothing of the cold-blooded statements of actual manufacturing costs issued by certain corporations which sought to get capital interested and pointed to the large profits they were making and expected to make from War contracts.

Thus we find that the 18-pound shrapnel shell, for which the Shell Committee let contracts at prices varying from \$5.15 down to \$2.90, represented a manufacturing cost of \$1.80 at the outside. Much lower estimates of this cost have been published, some as low as \$1.

The 4.5" shell, for which the Shell Committee made the Imperial Government pay from \$6.70 down to \$6, it is stated could be turned out at a fair profit for \$2.25. A similar spread between contract price and a fair profit-yielding price has been quoted on the other types and sizes, and the whole situation is probably fairly summarized by the Ottawa Citizen when it charges that on the whole of the shell contracts let by the Dominion Shell Committee, the Mother Country has been forced to pay "about double" the reasonable profit-yielding price.

A Misleading Statement.

In an attempt to justify the outrageously high prices which ruled when the Dominion Shell Committee let its first contracts, statements have been published in the Conservative press as emanating from the Shell Committee, the Minister of Militia and other government sources, declaring that the first orders were only for 200,000 shells which the British War Office had asked from Canada as an experiment. As an excuse for the high prices allowed it is claimed that there was difficulty in getting the manufacturers to enter upon the business at all, and that it was difficult to determine what was a reasonable price. Only a month ago, the *Canadian Manufacturer*, the official organ of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association reiterated this argument and declared that "the price authorized for the initial order of 200,000 shells was reduced for subsequent orders."

Enormous Orders to Their Own Companies.

An analysis of information at hand as to the orders secured by various shell manufacturers

seems to prove conclusively that the Shell Committee paid the top-notch price for a great many more than the alleged 200,000. In the matter of the 18-pound shrapnel shells alone, reliable information indicates that Chairman Bertram's own firm at Dundas received an order for at least 50,000 of these shells at the top price; the Universal Tool & Steel Company of Toronto, known as a Mackenzie and Mann concern, and its sister company, the Canada Foundry Company of Toronto, with which Mr. Watts of the Shell Committee was directly connected, got orders for between 75,000 and 100,000 shells at the top price, while the Electric Steel and Metal Company of Welland, with its own Mr. Carnegie on the Shell Committee, took an order for at least 50,000 at the first price. Thus it is plain that three members of the Shell Committee saw that the companies in which they were interested got orders at the original top price for much more than the 200,000 shells which are declared to have been the limit of the first order.

Big Orders at Top Prices.

But this is not all. The Dominion Bridge Company of Montreal got an order for at least 150,000 at the same time and price; the Canadian General Electric Company of Toronto got its slice in the shape of an order for at least 40,000 at the top price; the Canadian Westinghouse Company got a similar contract for at least 40,000; the Manufacturing and Construction Company of Toronto was awarded an order for at least another 100,000 and the Massey-Harris Company of Toronto got in with an order for at least 75,000.

Thus it will be seen that some seven or eight firms were given orders for at least 600,000 shells at the first top price, and yet those interested seek to delude the public by official statements that the first orders and the first high prices applied only to 200,000 shells. As a matter of fact the orders listed above do not include the number of smaller firms which succeeded in getting in on a "good thing," and which it is quite safe to say, got orders at the top-notch prices which would swell the total by more than another 100,000.

Facts Warrant Full Investigation.

Enough has been said here to indicate in no uncertain way that the activities of the Dominion Shell Committee should be thoroughly investigated. It is the business of Canada to know how and why and by whom such a condition of affairs could be allowed to come into being and exist for a whole year until the Imperial authorities themselves had to take a hand and at least suggest a process of housecleaning.

**STILL MORE GOVERNMENT HONORS FOR BOURASSA NATIONALISTS!—
MR. ALBERT SEVIGNY, M.P. TO BE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS!
WHEN WILL THE CONSERVATIVE DEBT TO NATIONALISM BE PAID IN FULL.**