

the War, consisting of Colonel A. Bertram, Chairman; Thos. Cantley, Esq.; Geo. W. Watts, Esq.; E. Carnegie, Esq.; representing the manufacturers; Col. T. Hanson, Master General of Ordnance; Col. Greville Harston, Chief Inspector of Arms and Ammunition; and Lt. Col. F. D. Lafferty, B.C.A. Superintendent of the Dominion Arsenal, representing the Department of Militia and Defence."

"The Executive work of the committee has been very wisely entrusted to the Chairman, Colonel Bertram, **WHO REPORTS WEEKLY TO THE MINISTER OF MILITIA** and also to the committee when it meets (which is usually monthly) or more often, at the call of the Minister."

(See Vol. 3, p. 2614, House of Commons Debates, 1915)

That the British Government held the Canadian Government responsible for the Shell Committee is proven by a statement which Earl Curzon, Lord Privy Seal in the British Government, stated speaking in the House of Lords on June 23rd, 1915, as follows:

"In Canada the system adopted by the War Office has been this: They have made their orders from an early date **THROUGH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT**, treating the Canadian Government in fact, as their agents for the supply of munitions of War. **ANY REQUIREMENTS FROM THE WAR OFFICE HERE ARE COMMUNICATED BY LETTER OR TELEGRAM TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT, OR RATHER, TO THE MINISTER OF MILITIA THERE.** This officer constituted quite early in the day the Shell Committee to which the noble Lord referred. That is a body presided over by a gentleman whose name he mentioned, General Bertram, and upon it are representatives of the various manufacturing interests in the Dominion, and the function of the Committee is to advise the Minister as to the contracts, which, on behalf of the Imperial Government, he shall conclude. All applications are made to him. They go before the Committee, who examine and adjudicate between the claims or the capacities of the different parties; then the contract is concluded over there, **AND FINALLY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INSPECTING THE MUNITIONS FOR US WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN PRODUCED.**"

#### **EXCESSIVE PRICES PAID, FRIENDS FAVOURED**

For a time after the Shell Committee had been appointed little was known publicly of its operations. Not many months had elapsed, however, before it became common talk that enormous and excessive profits were being made by a few favoured firms in the manufacture of shells.

Ottawa was besieged with Tory members of Parliament, lobbyists, manufacturers, middlemen and agents of all kinds and descriptions, tumbling over one another to secure orders for the manufacture of shells. Additional orders were from time to time