

speech of the Minister of Finance was in great part, not an argument, but a mere statement of facts which nobody denies, and as his great reason for giving this contract to the American Company he said, there were 153 thousand reasons. If it is a fact that the prices tendered for and charged previously by the British American Company were fair prices, were not higher in 1892 than the prices charged to our banks by the American Bank Note Company; is it not a fair inference that the American Company's tender was a cut-rate tender, put in, in order to be sure of getting the contract and with a hope that on some extra work they might be able to make up for these low prices. I have very little doubt, Sir, that they will do it before their five years term is up.

Mr. MCGREGOR. Would you be in favour of giving the British American Company \$153,000 more than the other company?

Mr. CRAIG. I was going on to say, that I had no doubt that in the course of five years the American Bank Note Company will have an opportunity of making a good deal on extra work.

Mr. TALBOT. That is a supposition.

Mr. CRAIG. Certainly it is a supposition, and it is a supposition not of mine but of the Deputy Minister of Finance himself. He gave that as one of the reasons why the American tender was so low, and I think he is perfectly right.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The Deputy Minister of Finance has expressed no such opinion, and does not hold such an opinion, but fully recognizes the fact that there is a saving of \$153,000 on the transaction.

Mr. CRAIG. Perhaps I might read for the benefit of the Finance Minister, what I read a little while ago. The Deputy Finance Minister is writing about the difference in the two prices, and in trying to account for it, says this:

In the first place, the new tenderers, the American Bank Note Company, may possibly think that they would be able to make up the difference at the increased rates at which they tender for supplies that are not generally in demand.

I think that bears out entirely what I say. I did not wish to misrepresent the Deputy Minister.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. My hon. friend said it was not clear that there was any saving, and that the Deputy Minister of Finance was the party who had suggested that. I said that was not fair to the Deputy Minister of Finance, who had not suggested anything of the sort. He made a report suggesting that certain figures required explanation, but he did not say that there would be no saving in the transaction.

Mr. CRAIG.

and he will not say so if called before the committee.

Mr. CRAIG. I did not say that the Deputy Minister suggested there would be no saving. I merely said that no doubt the American Company might be able to make up the difference, which is just what the Deputy Finance Minister said. I do not know whether they will or not, but it is very likely they will in the course of five years. They have taken this work at a low rate, and the Deputy Finance Minister thinks they may make up the difference. He says further:

Seeing there is such a manifest difference between the two tenderers on this item, the undersigned thinks some inquiries should be made through some expert, and he would suggest that the matter be submitted to the Queen's Printer in order to ascertain whether the tender of the American Bank Note Company is one that could be carried out successfully, seeing they may have tendered at unremunerative prices in order to secure a foothold in the country.

I mention this to show and I think it shows conclusively that the Deputy Minister, who has had a large experience, thought these prices were extremely low. He knew the prices of the British American Bank Note Company were fair prices, and he thought the matter should be referred to an expert like the Queen's Printer to see whether the work could be done at those rates. Now, I regret that the Government have gone out of the country to get this work done. In doing so I think they have made a mistake. I thought so at the time, before I had examined the matter at all, and I think so still. I think this business should be confined to Canadians. Canada is well able to print its own bank notes, postage stamps and inland revenue stamps. It seems to me it is rather humiliating to say that we have to go to the United States and get an American company to come here and do this work for us, because we are not able to do it for ourselves; and that is especially the case when we read the remark made in one of the letters of the American Bank Note Company. What do they say? They say that we have not skilled workmen in this country capable of doing this work. The ex-Finance Minister was perfectly right when he said that any Finance Minister should resent such an imputation on the people of this country. The work has been done well in the past. We have skilled workmen in Canada able to do this work as well as it can be done in New York, and therefore there was no reason on that account for going out of the country at all. But I repeat, a business of this kind should be confined to Canadians. The Finance Minister said that the previous Government had allowed foreigners to tender for public works. I suppose they have; but this is a special kind of work, a work which must be done in the city of Ottawa, according to the specifications of the Government. You