

am wealthy; it is true that I could build the house, but I want to get out of my contract. He says, I have made a deposit, but I will forfeit that and I shall not go on with the work. If my hon. friend was a private individual, would he give the contract to do this work to the same contractor at a price nearly double what he had originally contracted to build the house for? I am sorry that my hon. friend defends that position, because I do not think it can be defended at all. The only excuse to be given is that the minister of the day knew nothing about it. The position of these gentlemen in New Brunswick, who brought about that extraordinary situation, under which they were able to get this large sum of money to do work that they were bound to do at a lower price, is utterly indefensible; and for that conduct these gentlemen ought to be punished, if it is possible to punish them. Shortly after the elections in 1911, these gentlemen formed a company to buy out Messrs. Loggie with a view to that very contract to dredge the Grand Dune flats. Having organized the company, they at once set to work to see how they could get this identical contract at an enhanced price. They did so at a cost to the country of about \$40,000 or \$45,000.

Mr. EMMERSON: When the new contract was let was it—

Mr. BORDEN: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to gag hon. gentlemen with regard to the Northwest Mounted Police, but I should like to have a little attention directed to that particular estimate.

Mr. ROGERS: I really cannot allow the exaggerated statement of my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Pugsley) to pass without some notice. At one point of his remarks, he left at all events, the implied insinuation that some attempt was made by my predecessor, the member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) to ask for tenders in such a hurried manner that no other person could tender except those particular contractors. That statement is absolutely incorrect. Tenders were called for in the most open manner.

Mr. PUGSLEY: What length of time was given?

Mr. ROGERS: A very considerable length of time.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Will my hon. friend tell me what length of time?

Mr. ROGERS: I cannot tell you exactly, but I am satisfied that ample time was given, not only that, but the tender was something like twenty-three or twenty-five cents a yard. My predecessor (Mr. Monk) felt that this was too much; he and the officers of the department examined the work and he had a report from the man who

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was in charge of the dredging under the management of my hon. friend the member for St. John. He reported to Mr. Monk that twenty cents a yard was fair and reasonable and very cheap for the completion of this work which had become more expensive as the work went on.

Mr. PUGSLEY: When the new tenders were called for, were there any other tenders except those gentlemen, the Northern Dredging Company?

Mr. ROGERS: I think there was only the one tender, if I remember correctly. I have not looked into the matter very carefully, because it did not come under my administration. At the same time my hon. friend undertakes to state the case in a very exaggerated form when he says that the loss to the country will probably be forty or forty-five thousand dollars. The facts are that something like six hundred and eight thousand yards of this dredging had been completed leaving something over three hundred thousand yards to be completed when the change of contract took place, which would, according to the figures of my hon. friend, mean a loss of about \$25,000. I answered the question put upon the Order Paper by the hon. member for St. John some time ago, and my answer gives the exact figures.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend did not give the quantity still remaining to be done. I remember there was a million yards altogether. My idea was that it was about half done at that time.

Mr. ROGERS: Your idea was incorrect. Only some three hundred thousand yards remained to be done. My predecessor, Mr. Monk, found himself in an unfortunate position, owing to the very elastic contract made by my hon. friend for St. John, that there was no power vested in the Government to exact anything from the contractors except the deposit, namely \$5,000, when the contract was let. That was forfeited to the department, and the only power which the department had to secure any return from the contractor who wished to give up the contract at any time he saw fit.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend says that owing to there being an elastic contract—there was a firm, binding contract.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the minister just wished to answer the hon. member. I am afraid that he is commencing to discuss the contract. I draw the attention of the hon. member that he is out of order.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend calls the contract an elastic contract. It was the ordinary contract of the department, which contained an absolutely binding covenant on the part of this company to do the work. Do I understand my hon. friend to say