

other two tenders. I submit, shortly, that this is a most unfair system; if a second and third tender is to be allowed in respect to these supplies, then every person who made a tender in the first place should be given the same privilege. There are certain regulations governing the weighing of the coal. When this firm had been permitted to submit the second and third tenders they should have been satisfied, but I find from the records of the department that this coal was not weighed on military scales. The payments have been made, the coal is in the bins, and we must let it go.

A third method of delivery was by truck. Weights were submitted for 8,800 pounds, 8,700 pounds and 8,400 pounds, but it was finally discovered that the scales upon which this coal had been weighed had a capacity of only 8,000 pounds. It is to the credit of some official of the department that this discrepancy was discovered, and a certain amount of money was refunded. If that were done with a few truckloads, how much did the department suffer in the delivery of 1,500 cartloads which came in unweighed?

These tenders have been handled in a very unfair manner. I find that the department has two kinds of notices. One is sent to the tenderer when he is not the lowest; if he is the lowest and does not get the contract, he receives a different kind of notice. That is a most unusual method to be adopted by any department, and one which enables people to bid the second time. This matter should be investigated and had I known of it earlier I would have brought it before the house earlier in the session.

Mr. RALSTON: When my hon. friend mentioned the other day the matter of the return, I made inquiry of the deputy just before he went away and I understood that the difficulty was as to the weigh bills. As my hon. friend knows, I arranged that he should be allowed to see the original weigh bills.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): I took advantage of that opportunity and it was from that examination that I discovered that the regulations had never been complied with. It was claimed that they possessed two or three signatures of the quartermaster, but there was not a single item of payment which was initialled by that gentleman. I might state that the man who was supposed to weigh this coal was taken away on the last day by the tenderer. There should have been a check made of the weigh bills presented by the tenderer, and military form No. 19 should have been used. However, that was not done in the case of about 1,100 cartloads.

[Mr. Ross (Kingston).]

Mr. RALSTON: I thought the only matter in dispute was with regard to the weigh bills, and I asked the department and the commandant to give me a report in this regard. Therefore I am unable to give my hon. friend all the facts which he desired. Two tenders were put in—

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): There were three.

Mr. RALSTON: My officer here tells me that two tenders at least were put in for delivery at two different places. One tenderer quoted a different price for each place and the other tenderer quoted a flat rate. Later on, without any suggestion either directly or indirectly from the department, a telegram was received from the tenderer who had quoted different prices for each delivery point quoting the lower price for both delivery points. This telegram was received before the time for receiving tenders had elapsed and the contract was awarded to that particular tenderer.

The report of the commandant regarding the weighing of the coal is as follows:

It is explained that, although M.F.B. 19 has not been utilized, nevertheless all of the coal was weighed on the government weigh scales at Kingston by a qualified representative of the commandant, R.M.C. in the person of E. H. West, caretaker, R.M.C., whose signature is appended to weigh bills, with the exception of those signed by the quartermaster himself. The other signature, viz., that of A. Cockerham, cleaner and helper, R.M.C., vouches for the actual receipt of each load of coal at the R.M.C. at the end of the journey between the government weigh scale in the city of Kingston and the R.M.C. grounds. The greatest possible supervision and care has been exercised over the weighing and cartage of this coal; the government weigh scale was daily visited by the quartermaster R.M.C. who personally witnessed during his visits the weighing of coal and has himself signed certain weigh bills, in addition to giving his certificate on the fact of the firm's account.

So long as the coal was weighed on government weigh scales and the weighing carried out—as has been done in this case—by a responsible and competent civil employee representing the R.M.C., it was felt that the regulations governing the receipt of coal were being properly and adequately carried out; importance was unfortunately not attached to the use of M.F.B. 19 to record weights, in fact the regulation governing this point did not come to mind when the forms supplied by contractor were taken into use. As soon, however, as it was pointed out by district auditor that M.F.B. 19 should be used, a supply of that form was immediately obtained from the D.S. and T.O., M.D. No. 3, and is now being utilized, and will accompany the accounts for the balance of the coal still due under this contract.

That is signed by C. F. Constantine, Brigadier, commandant, Royal Military College.