

two vehicles doing work that one vehicle can do and causing unnecessary expense.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND TECHNICAL SURVEYS

General—

704. Polar continental shelf project—further amount required, \$89,940.

**Mr. Herridge:** Would the minister explain the purpose of this item, polar continental shelf project, \$89,940? Is this another form of winter works program?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** No, Mr. Chairman, although part of the operation that is here provided for is carried on under Arctic conditions. This is an additional provision to enable the field program of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys to be carried forward in relation to the polar continental shelf project. This project has been described in the house on earlier occasions and is, I am sure, well known to hon. members. The principal element in the figure of \$89,940 is an item of \$78,381 for materials and supplies. This additional amount is required for aviation gas and oil, totalling \$72,000, and for camp and field supplies including fresh provisions which will be transported to the Arctic in this present month. There is an additional item of \$10,959 for the charter of aircraft and the rental of equipment and there is a small item of \$600 for the purchase of field notebooks and a typewriter for field use.

**Mr. Chevrier:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to discuss this matter and raise some questions about the manner in which the contract for the helicopter part of the polar continental shelf project was given. I state that it was given without the calling of tenders and it was given to the same person who received it last year although it was brought to the minister's attention that that too had been done without tender.

It has been the practice in most departments, I believe, to call for tenders on work of this nature, particularly when it is done by means of the filing of tariffs with the air transport board. In this case the minister, for some unknown reason, decided not to call for tenders, as I will indicate in a moment, and simply awarded the contract on the basis of information obtained through the filing of tariff rates. On March 8, 1961, I asked the following questions of the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys, as found on page 2774 of *Hansard*:

1. Did Autair Helicopter Services Limited obtain a contract or contracts from the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys for the continental polar shelf project and for topographical work in 1960?

*Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys*

The minister replied as follows:

The answer to part No. 1 is that Autair were awarded one contract for helicopter services required on the polar continental shelf project in 1960.

Then I asked what was the amount of such contract and the minister's answer was "\$183,500". I also asked the following question:

How much was paid to Autair Helicopter Services Limited in 1960?

The answer was "\$137,551.36". Then I asked the following question:

Has Autair Helicopter Services Limited a contract or contracts from the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys for the continental polar shelf project for 1961?

The answer was:

The answer to part No. 1 is no. A letter of intent was, however, sent to Autair on February 23, 1961, pending, and subject to, final consideration by the treasury board who, on March 2, 1961, approved our proposal.

Therefore the answer to that question was in the affirmative, namely, that there was a contract awarded to this company. The second question was the following:

If so, were tenders called, and who were the other tenderers?

This was the answer:

—we do not call tenders in those cases where rates are filed with the air transport board. We do, however, review the rates of all companies considered capable of performing the service before making our selection.

Here is my criticism of the manner in which this is being done, and I say this without any fear of contradiction. The minister may contradict it but I have it on reliable information. It is well known in the trade that, notwithstanding the fact that tariffs had been filed, Autair was not the lowest of those who filed tariffs in accordance with this policy of the minister which merits only condemnation. Autair filed a tariff afterwards which was lower than those that had been filed by the other applicants and in that fashion the contract was awarded to them.

**Mr. Bell (Carleton):** Should the hon. gentleman not read the answer to part 3?

**Mr. Chevrier:** I will come to that in a moment and to a further question. I am complaining at the moment about the manner in which these contracts are awarded for the work on the continental polar shelf. Contracts for helicopter services elsewhere are not awarded in this manner. The third question, with respect to which the parliamentary secretary wishes me to deal, was the following:

Did Autair submit the lowest tender?