

*Supply—Indian Affairs*

to be given to the department so that the minister or the department may choose from that list those firms qualified to tender for supplies. I have in mind a firm in my constituency which has been sending supplies of flour to Indian reservations for a considerable number of years, not only during the regime of this government but during that of the last, and previously. Tendering for this year's supply of flour this particular firm was told they were not on the list handed to the department. I wish to learn from the minister if it is his policy or that of his department to get the names of individual firms who are to be allowed to tender on various commodities.

Hon. T. G. MURPHY (Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs): Mr. Chairman, the supplies of flour for the Indian department are, I believe, purchased to a great extent from the manufacturers of that product.

Mr. VALLANCE: I am referring to a manufacturer, a miller.

Mr. MURPHY: The different firms manufacturing in western Canada are asked to quote on that particular commodity. I am not able to state at this time whether the firm he has in mind has been asked or not. I am prepared to accept, however, his statement that it has not been asked.

Mr. VALLANCE: This particular firm had been delivering flour supplies for quite a number of years. They wrote to ascertain why they were not asked for tenders and were politely told that their name did not appear on the list of firms from which tenders were required. Is it the decision of the Department of Indian Affairs that purchases shall be confined to certain individuals? I have no objection if that is the policy; if so, however, I should like to know it. I wish to know if that is the policy of the minister and his department.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not think there has been any change of policy with respect to buying supplies. It may be that when firms are asked to quote all firms are not included. If however the name of this particular firm did not appear on the list, I suppose they were not asked to tender. I may say that on some occasions a firm which has not been asked to quote on certain orders has written asking to be allowed to quote, and permission has been granted.

Mr. VALLANCE: I refer to the Bishop Milling Company in my constituency, right in the midst of the Indian territory, who for many years have been supplying flour to the

[Mr. Vallance.]

Indian department. When they asked permission to quote on this occasion they were politely told their name did not appear on the list handed to the purchasing agent, and therefore they could not tender.

If that is the policy of the government, all right. I want to be in a position to tell those who come to me regarding purchases, or tendering on produce for the Department of Indian Affairs, that unless somebody other than myself vouches for them to the department they will have no consideration. I merely wish to make it quite clear, and have it understood whether or not my opponent, the Conservative candidate, will be extended that courtesy; I wish to know.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I should like to ask again if the rules of the house are to be observed. I understand the time of sitting is from eleven o'clock to one o'clock. According to the clock it is now some seven or eight minutes after one o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Smith, Cumberland): I have not looked at the clock.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It is your duty to do so.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Smith, Cumberland): I look at the clock now, and it is one o'clock. My information, however, is that there is no rule which provides that this house must rise at one o'clock.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I submit it has been the custom and practice in the past; I do not know where the chairman obtained his information, but certainly the house usually sits from eleven o'clock until one o'clock. However, if my hon. friend thinks he is going to further the progress of the business of the house by causing us to depart from our usual practices, by all means let him so proceed. I am doing what I can to get the house prorogued in accordance with the rules and practices of the House of Commons, and if the deputy speaker and others desired to combine to seek to prevent that they must blame themselves for whatever difficulties they may encounter in proceeding in that way.

Mr. BENNETT: There is no necessity for threats of this kind; do not threaten us.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There are no threats.

Mr. BENNETT: Let us be better natured about it. I direct your attention to the fact, Mr. Chairman, that it is now one o'clock.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.