

was to be made of No. 9 wire proves conclusively there was no barbed wire in it. It is, to my mind, a very much better fence than a barbed wire fence. I hope if the government ever construct a fence along the boundary line they will not be so barbarous as to construct a barbed wire fence, one of the most barbarous erections that ever was constructed on any man's farm.

In reply I was advised by the company that their representative would be in Ottawa about the 18th of January and submit a tender for the fence. On the 19th of that month their tender—which is shortly to the following effect—was submitted to the department:

To supply and deliver No. 510 fencing (as per the attached) 9 horizontals of No. 9 hard steel galvanized wire with uprights of No. 9 hard steel galvanized wire 22 inches apart, 51 inches high—

That would be a fairly good height for a fence, perhaps a very proper height, I think the regular height and No. 9 wire would make a fairly strong fence. I think that throughout the province of Ontario Nos. 9 12 and 13 are the ordinary numbers of wire used for the purpose of erecting fencing; No. 9 being a coarser wire than No. 12 or 13 would make it stronger than if it were made of No. 12 or 13 wire.

Mr. FISHER. Does it say how many horizontal wires there are to be?

Mr. HENDERSON (reading):

9 horizontals of No. 9 hard steel galvanized wire with uprights of No. 9 hard steel galvanized wire 22 inches apart—

That is a considerable distance apart. It would not make a very strong fence to have the uprights 22 inches apart. It is pretty nearly 2 feet. If a fence were to be erected I would recommend something stronger than a fence with uprights 22 inches apart.

To supply and deliver posts required to be 6 inches or over in diameter at the small end.

I presume that would be wooden posts.

To supply and deliver staples, brace wire, braces, anchor pieces for end posts, and all other material required to set posts 20 feet apart, to erect fencing complete in a substantial and thoroughly workmanlike manner.

To supply, deliver and hang 'all metal' gates as required at the following prices:

Fencing, per mile \$550 00

According to my calculation that would make \$1.72 per rod. In my judgment that is a pretty expensive fence, a pretty good price for a fence. This, I understand, is to include posts. The gates are charged for separately. I presume it includes hanging the gates so that \$1.72 per rod would be a very good price for the fence and I would be indeed surprised, if competition were invited for the construction of that fence, if it could not be built for a figure lower than \$1.72 per rod. One dollar per rod for a woven wire fence, or wire woven on the

ground, I think would be an outside price and I believe McGregor and Banwell could supply a fence at \$1, which would be a very good price. That leaves 72 cents for the posts.

Gates, each 10 00

If this tender is accepted we agree to enter into a contract with the department covering the above work and the supply and delivery of above material.

The minister, Mr. Sifton, being then absent, I held this matter for submission to him on his return, but as you will remember, almost immediately after such return, he resigned. I therefore decided to hold the matter for the consideration of his successor.

In the meantime letters were received here from different parties asking for information with regard to this fence, and my answer in all cases was that this matter was under consideration.

The only other action I took was to obtain from the Deputy Minister of Justice a draft of the contract which he would consider necessary to be executed by the company in this matter, so that I might be able to submit it, with my letters, the company's tender, and the other letters referred to and my replies to them, to the new minister.

A letter dated 20th March last, was received here on the 22nd of that month from the Page Wire Fence Company, stating that they had heard of the government's intention of building the fence in question, and would like to know to whom they should apply for further information with regard to it. The secretary, Mr. Keyes, having on the 25th March last signed the letter to the Department of Justice asking for the preparation of the draft contract before mentioned, incorrectly assumed that the matter had been settled and that the contract had been given to the McGregor-Banwell Fence Company, and replied on the 8th ultimo to the Page Wire Fence Company, as follows:

Replying to your letter of the 20th ultimo, in reference to the erection of a wire fence at the southern boundary of the Northwest Territories, I beg to state that the government has awarded the contract in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) W. W. CORY.

The whole matter seems to be involved in a great deal of mystery. Has the government entered into arrangements, or taken into consideration the erection of a fence the cost of which, to my mind, must run away up into hundreds of thousands of dollars, and all this without ever consulting parliament as to whether parliament would approve of the erection of a fence in that section of the country? That, I think, in the first place, was an improper thing. Then, an undertaking such as that, I certainly say, should have been given the widest publicity. Tenders should have been advertised for all over this country, because fence building companies are not rare. I wonder what the hon. member for North Grey (Mr. Telford) will think of supporting a government which would undertake to do a work of this kind in this way. In his town, I think, there is a fence company that would be very glad to tender for a work of this kind. You find them here and there through-