

and just, and I move, seconded by Mr. Carvell, that the report which I laid on the table of the House a few days ago be now concurred in.

Mr. HAUGHTON LENNOX (South Simcoe). Mr. Speaker, I recognize that in appointing a small committee the House expected us to occupy a somewhat judicial position and to endeavour, regardless of what our preconceived opinions politically might be, to arrive at a conclusion which would be in the interest of the country. I am sorry that I cannot concur in the motion of the chairman of our committee for the adoption of the report to which reference has just been made. The order of reference to that committee was made on April 28th last. The hon. gentleman who has just moved the adoption of the report has stated that certain matters were known to the House, certain matters were of public notoriety at the time the order of reference was made. That is true. At the time the order of reference was made it was known to the House and to the country that Major Hodgins had made certain charges which reflected very seriously upon the conduct of public business by the Transcontinental Railway Commission and, not only that, but that his statements had been followed up by comments and editorials in the newspapers which carried the matter even further than Major Hodgins' statements went. There was abundant reason why the investigation should take place. It was the motion of the government and not of the opposition. It was a position taken by the government which the government thought was justified by the circumstances. But whilst the charges of Major Hodgins and the editorial and other comments in the press were known to the country, it was not known to the country or the House, but known to the government and the government alone, that statements had been made by the Grand Trunk Pacific engineers which were far more damaging and far-reaching than any charge made by Major Hodgins or the public press. The Grand Trunk Pacific in fact was up in arms against the classification which prevailed, not upon any special section of the eastern division, but from one end of the line to the other. The charge was made by that company—as the government knew, but as the country did not know at that time—that this was not the result of ignorance on the part of the government, but was due to malice aforethought. At the time the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) made the motion it was not known, but it became known in the committee afterwards, that there were attached to the memo. of the Chairman of the Transcontinental Commission the letters which constitute Exhibit No. 38, as filed before the committee, and which contained the dam-

Mr. GEOFFRION.

aging statement I am about to refer to. It is alleged and reiterated by Mr. Parent that attached to the memo. laid on the table, and upon which the right hon. gentleman moved, were not only clippings from newspapers, but the bundle of papers which form Exhibit No. 38 filed in the committee as well, and which contained the charges I am about to refer to. In other words, the right hon. gentleman, for reasons unexplained, saw fit to detach from that memo. a portion of the documents which had been transmitted to him with it. I do not wish to read any more of this correspondence than is absolutely essential, but I believe it is essential that this House should know exactly the class of material and how it was classified, in order to be in a position to decide whether the motion I am about to make, namely, that the matter be referred back to the committee for further investigation, should be adopted, or whether the inquiry should be burked at this stage. Before reading the letter of Mr. Wood, Chief Engineer of the Grand Trunk Pacific, I wish to make an explanation in order to elucidate certain statements in it. In the specifications in the various contracts on the eastern division we have it defined that earth excavations have a slope of one and a-half foot to a foot; that loose rock excavations have a slope of one foot to a foot, and that solid rock excavations have a slope of only one-quarter of a foot to a foot. Therefore, when we find in these letters reference to the fact that a slope is one and a-half to one, that means that the engineer is calling attention to the fact that whereas the slope is a slope of common earth the percentage returned for the work is a large percentage of solid and loose rock.

Having said that, I want to read the first letter of Mr. H. A. Wood to the chief engineer:

Montreal, October 7, 1907.

H. D. Lumsden,
Chief Engineer,
Eastern division of the National Trans-
continental.

Dear Sir,—At the request of District Engineer Armstrong, he was furnished recently with a statement of classification for the heavier work on the above section, which were, when given in detail, so different from his expectations that he requested the writer to visit the work.

During the past week we passed over portions of the work from the Batiscan river west for fifteen or twenty miles, and later from mile 115 to 132.

With reference to the former portion, the classification was given in distances of from three to five miles, and as we did not have total quantities of graduation, could not judge with reference to any particular cutting, although percentages for entire distance seemed excessively heavy in both loose and solid rock.

With the latter portion we had detailed percentage for each cut, and were greatly sur-