

simply my duty, but I did it, and while I do not desire to weary the House by reading all the correspondence I desire to put this in such a way that it cannot be contradicted in view of the charge which has been made. Here is the letter of Mr. F. D. Jones, manager of the Canada Cement Company:

3rd June, 1912.

The only reason our shipments to the West have not been greater is because the transportation companies were unable to supply sufficient boats and cars to carry it. Mr. J. W. Norcross, manager of the Merchants Mutual Line, Toronto, who contracted to transport all our water shipments of cement this year states in his defence, first, they ordered two steamers in England and were promised delivery here on the opening of navigation.

This was in June, 1912.

These steamers have not yet arrived but will be delivered this month. Second, the amount of business offering is unprecedented.

The general manager of the Canada Cement Company had to admit that they were not in a position to make shipments to the West. But, he was trying to exonerate his company and he said further:

If there are temporary shortages these shortages are caused by the transportation companies and not by this company. As an example of this the Government work at Brooklyn and Halifax, Nova Scotia, is held up for want of cement—

The hon. junior member for Halifax appears to be critical of the Government in regard to this and here I would ask the hon. gentleman—

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): You have not heard yet; do not make any such assertion.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): I know. If my hon. friend will keep perfectly quiet I will not interfere with him, but if he will interrupt I will endeavour to answer him. There was a cement shortage not only in the West but also in the East. I had it on the authority of a member of the government of Prince Edward Island that during the entire month of June he could not get a barrel of cement for which he had contracted the preceding fall in Montreal because of the great congestion which existed with regard to all classes of freight. There was a three-months' congestion of freight in Montreal and there was a shortage of cement in Prince Edward Island. Mr. Jones said that:

The Government work at Brooklyn and Halifax, N.S., is held up for want of cement and the reason is that the Intercolonial railway is unable to supply us with cars, and the Canadian Pacific railway, the Grand Trunk railway and the Canadian Northern Quebec railway will not allow their own cars to go

over other lines. We are to-day 35,000 barrels behind shipment to the Maritime provinces on account of not being able to get Intercolonial cars. I beg to quote the following telegrams regarding this shortage for Government work:

Halifax, May, 30, 1912.

Work Brooklyn, Queen's county, hung up account cement organization demoralized causing great financial loss.

Does my hon. friend mean to say that there was a conspiracy among the people as well as among the boards of trade in the East and the builders' exchanges in the West for the purpose of getting this Government to adversely influence the Saskatchewan election? Now, the right hon. the leader of the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) is in his seat and I will repeat what I said a few moments ago that I consider an apology due me by him and the hon. member for Edmonton for making such unfounded charges against myself as representing this Government in regard to the reduction of the cement duty, and for saying that the reduction was made on account of political expediency. The right hon. leader of the Opposition did not hear me and I desire to say this to him: I have shown to the satisfaction not only of this side of the House, but necessarily to the satisfaction of his own side that unless there was a conspiracy amongst all the boards of trade and builders' exchanges in Edmonton, Saskatoon and Calgary, the Liberal press of the West and these parties whom I have mentioned in the East, his charge that this reduction was made out of consideration for political expediency must be branded as reckless and unfounded.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I have only this to say that I did not make the charge, but it was made upon the strength of a letter of a supporter of the Government.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): I have long had and still have a very high opinion of the intellectual qualities of the leader of the Opposition and I ask him, in view of the documents which I have submitted to this House, whether he considers it a sufficient answer to me to say that he bases his charge that the Minister of Finance had cut the tariff upon cement in two for the purpose of influencing the election in Saskatchewan on statements in the letter of a man who claimed that he was a supporter of this Government?

I took the matter up with Mr. Jones, the general manager of the Canada Cement Company, to try and help out the situation in the West, for which action these gentlemen are now criticising me. I received a copy of the following letter from Mr. Jones: