

sure by the Department of Railways and Canals. The work is advertised to be let on a cost-plus basis. One contractor will send in a tender offering to do it for cost plus 4 per cent; another contractor will send in a tender offering to do it for cost plus 4½ per cent, another at cost plus 5 per cent, and so on; so it is quite possible to secure competition even on the cost-plus system. May I point out this further, that the rule obtains among commercial and industrial companies that when work is awarded on the cost-plus basis there is usually a penalty set for failure to complete within the stipulated time and a bonus paid for more speedy completion than the date mentioned in the contract. These features were absent from the contract made with P. Lyall & Sons, although they were, as I claim, to be paid an excessive percentage on the work, which they got without tender and without competition.

The members from the Opposition side of the House who were appointed to act on the joint committee were the then member for St. John, N.B., the hon. Dr. Pugsley, my hon. friend, the member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux), and myself.

After I returned to the city I made inquiry about the facts relating to the appointment of this committee and for the reasons which I have already made fairly clear this afternoon, I considered it my duty to resign. I did so.

The next incident of interest was that all the lumber in eastern Ontario seemed suddenly to have been collected in front of the ruins of the old building, and an enormous scaffold was constructed, which practically hid the whole of the north face of the building from view. The tremendous quantity of lumber used gave rise to a great deal of discussion. The then Minister of Public Works was interviewed, and he explained, according to the newspapers of the day, that it was necessary to erect a huge and costly scaffold for the reason that the old building, in pursuance of the architects' report, was to be rebuilt, that each stone was to be taken from the old building, marked, and placed carefully on this scaffold, so that later on when the work of reconstruction was proceeding each of these stones could be put back in its original place. Not to make the story too long, Mr. Chairman, the scaffold disappeared one fine night, and on another fine night the whole building disappeared. The whole building was razed to the ground, and there was nothing left here on Par-

[Mr. Murphy.]

liament hill but a cleared space of so many acres. I recall being rather curious as to how this building, which, according to the architects' report over their own signature, after making what they described as a careful examination, represented an asset of \$2,000,000, came to be destroyed overnight, and as to the authority for its destruction. The then member for St. John, who was one of the members of the Joint Committee from the Liberal side of the House, said that he did not know on whose authority the building had been removed. The Minister of Public Works said that he had given no authority for its removal. The thing remained a mystery for a few days, and nobody could ascertain how this national asset of \$2,000,000 had disappeared overnight until Mr. Pearson, the architect, gave a statement to the papers that it was on his authority it had been removed, that defects had been found in the building, and that he considered it the proper thing to have the old building pulled down. Well if Mr. Pearson was right on that occasion, what is to be said about Mr. Pearson and his fellow-architect who signed the report stating that the building as it stood after the fire represented an asset of \$2,000,000, and that it could be re-used? I do not know, Sir, that these facts have previously been drawn to the attention of the committee. Assuming that that has not been done I consider it a duty devolving upon somebody to acquaint the committee with the facts, and that is why I am making these observations, to be followed by a few others, this afternoon.

Shortly after the period to which I have referred, my hon. friend from Gaspé retired from the committee. A little later on, in the fall of 1917, the then hon. member for St. John retired from public life and became Lieutenant Governor of the province of New Brunswick. So that that left the Joint Committee, as it is improperly called, and as it has continued to be improperly called, without any representatives from the Opposition side of the House. Since 1917, there has been no representative from this side of the House on this so-called Joint Committee for the reconstruction of the Parliament building. And yet Sir, notwithstanding that fact, each year a vote is solemnly put through this House which is explained in the Estimates as follows:

Ottawa Parliament Building—Restoration. The plans for the said building and the method to be adopted for securing the reconstruction