

Every day his proposition is violated. It is well known to the public that the names of some of the parties who were negotiating were paraded in Ottawa as men of distinction and strength long before the right hon. gentleman went to England to negotiate, and some people are inclined to think that my right hon. friend did not intend to give these gentlemen a chance; and they will be surprised that he gives as a reason for protecting them in Parliament, that they failed in making good their propositions, and that therefore he is obliged to keep their names from the public.

Mr. ANGLIN. The country, I think, Sir, will be rather surprised to find the dignity of Parliament pleaded one day as a reason for withholding information to which we are entitled, and the rights of the parties tendering pleaded on another day for the same reason. There will be no necessity for stating in any return asked for by the motion of my hon. friend, the member for Lambton, that the parties who have chosen to withdraw their tenders, withdrew because they were unable to carry out the contract. It would be quite sufficient to say that they chose to withdraw their tenders, or that hon. gentlemen on the other side, acting for the Government, did not choose to accept them. But when we are told that the greater part of these negotiations were carried on *visa voce*, we cannot surely be expected to believe that propositions made on an all-important matter like this were not reduced to writing in all cases. Surely there were enough members of the Government representing the country on the occasion to do that, and I have no doubt they had ample means at their command to have work of that kind properly done. It was due to the hon. gentlemen themselves, it was due to the party upon whom they call for support in this matter, and it was due to the people of the country that all the information should have been put together and submitted to the House without any such demand as that now made. I am delighted that the hon. member for Lambton has declared that he will divide the House, and that at the very opening of this Session of Parliament, we shall know who are of opinion that it is proper to demand information with which the people have a right to be furnished, and who are prepared to support the Ministry in withholding that information.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the heat which has been exhibited by hon. gentlemen on the other side in relation to a matter which seems to me to require no such display of ardour. The statement of my right hon. friend, I think, will carry conviction to the mind of every fair-minded man.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Over there.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Yes; and I hope a good many over there as well. I say that the course which the leader of the Government has pursued on this occasion, is one which will commend itself to the judgment of hon. members as one which is only a matter of justice to the parties with whom we have been negotiating. My right hon. friend has stated to the House, and stated truly, that in the proposition which we have laid upon the Table of the House—the contract which we have made, subject to the approval of Parliament, for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, is the very best—

Mr. BLAKE. I rise to order. It is quite out of order for the hon. gentleman to speak of the contents of any paper which he is not prepared to lay on the Table.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I am now referring to the paper on the Table.

Mr. BLAKE. Yes, but the hon. gentleman is declaring that the paper on the Table is more favorable than one which he will not bring down.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I thought the hon. gentlemen opposite were desirous of information. Now they seek to prevent it.

Mr. HUNTINGTON.

Mr. MACKENZIE. We will read the information ourselves if you give it to us.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Then, Mr. Speaker, since the hon. gentlemen are afraid I shall disclose some of the information for which they profess to be desirous, allow me to state that, at this moment, there is no offer before the Government. I say, Sir, that it is not in the power of the Government to lay on the Table of the House an offer from any parties who were found able to carry their offer to a conclusion. They have no such offer before them. What took place was this: the Government having determined to endeavor to secure the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, in conformity with the declared policy of Parliament, placed themselves in communication with a number of parties; other parties placed themselves in communication with them, and they exhausted every means at their command. They had a proposal which they were led to suppose by the parties from whom it emanated would be backed up by such a support, and such an organization as would warrant the Government in making a contract with them. For the purpose of exhausting every possible means of finding the very best terms upon which this great work could be accomplished, in conformity with the will of Parliament, declared again and again, three Ministers were authorized to go to London, and the parties with whom we had been negotiating, and other parties from whom we had any reason to suppose a favorable offer might emanate, were communicated with, and having exhaustively discussed the whole question, we stand in the position to-day of dealing with the parties who made the very best proposal.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Hear, hear.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The very best offer that was laid before the House is the proposal that we submit for the consideration of Parliament, and the only one that emanated from any parties, who, upon full investigation, were found prepared to take up this work and carry it out upon the proposed terms, and that we believed could furnish the evidence necessary of their ability to do so. That is a plain statement of the case, and yet the hon. gentleman seemed to demand that, because men who were anxious to undertake this work entered into negotiations, without prejudice, which subsequently resulted in nothing, as they were finally not in a position to carry the negotiations to a conclusion, they should be placed before the people in the position of parties who, upon investigation, were found not to be possessed of all the means necessary to carry on this work. So far as relates to the business before the House, the leader of the late Government ought not to say—it is a little premature for him to say—that the Government proposes to force this House to a decision without an opportunity being given the House to make a full investigation.

Mr. MACKENZIE. The First Minister said so.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Not at all. All that the First Minister said will commend itself to the judgment of every fair-minded man. All that he said was that it was a matter that Parliament was called, at perhaps an inconvenient period for some gentlemen, to consider, because it was of great moment that no time should be lost in bringing this matter to a prompt conclusion; but no intimation has emanated from the First Minister, or anybody else, that this Parliament will not have all the time that, in its judgment, it desires to give this question the most exhaustive consideration. The contract is upon the Table of this House for acceptance by the House on its own merits or rejection. If, after full discussion, it is found to be in the interests of Canada, it will be accepted.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Will the hon. gentleman allow me to read from the *Hansard* what the First Minister said? I