

Mr. GRAHAM. Every tenderer tendered on the chairman's design, the official design, first, and then they could put in an alternative.

Mr. FOSTER (North Toronto). The St. Lawrence Company tendered on the chairman's design, and then tendered on a design of its own. The British Empire Company did the same.

Mr. GRAHAM. The British Empire Company was the only company that did not take advantage of the opportunity to tender on its own design as well.

Mr. FOSTER (North Toronto). Then, in the end, design 'B' of the St. Lawrence Company was not the one that was finally accepted. Another design, 'X,' by the same company, was, after the extra engineers had been called in, recommended by them, and the suggestion was made that if the roadway was left out, the cost would be diminished by some \$2,000,000; and the opinion of my hon. friend, which he gathered to be the view of the engineers, was that it would be better to have the roadway eliminated and to build the bridge simply for railway transport. What appears to me is this, that when neither the one design nor the other was taken upon what there seemed to have been an agreement, with the exception of the chairman of the board, and a decision was come to to eliminate the roadway, whether it would not have been fair, when the government had made that fundamental change, which would make a very great difference in the attitude of the tenderers, and which was introducing an entirely new element, to have allowed the British Empire Company to have tendered for a structure without the roadway. That was not done. In an immense affair of this kind, in which are interested eminent contractors of very high standing, whose goodwill it would be always well to have, and whose arrangements must be made with great financial security, and consequently with a very wide interest in their contract, when so fundamental a change was made as to eliminate the roadway and consequently one-fifth or one-fourth of the cost, it would have been fair to have allowed the other company to have amended its tender, or to have called for new tenders on the amended basis. But the main thing I want to impress on the House and the country is that, in the statement my hon. friend has made, he has uttered the severest condemnation I have ever heard passed by any hon. gentleman upon the action of his own government. What I mean is this. In his statement my hon. friend elaborated two things. One was the unprecedented nature of the work. No such work had ever been attempted in the world; no such work was at present being carried on anywhere; it was a stu-

pendous work, unique; and he strongly emphasized the care, the attention, the absolute domination of the idea which possessed him that in such a stupendous work no effort in time or cost of scientific ability should be eliminated in getting the very best men to examine the problem and to devise from that examination the very best design and specification that could be had. No amount of money should stand in the way of that; no lapse of time was too long in order that that might be accomplished, to the end that the most stupendous work in the world in that form of construction should be conceived and set into operation by the very best engineering skill that could be had. The extreme levity and light-heartedness with which my hon. friend's government approached this most stupendous task stands out in relief against this elaborate and serious statement of my hon. friend. I do not suppose any great work was ever approached in a spirit of such carelessness, lack of consideration and utter abandonment of responsibility—certainly not in the history of Canada, and I doubt if in any other country, in regard to a work approaching this in magnitude. What was done? This most stupendous work was handed over to a small number of promoters and left in their hands. The legislation that made it possible for these promoters to work was passed through parliament between dark and daylight at the last end of a long and tired session. No supervision worthy of the name was given by that government, though its credit and its money and the reputation of the country was at the beck and call of the promoters.

I just call the attention of the House and the country to the condemnation, the severe condemnation, that my hon. friend has felt called upon to utter against the method, the practice, and, I think, the almost criminal negligence of the government of which he formed a part. The government was not content with putting this into the hands of promoters, heedless of the stupendous character of the construction, careless of everything, it would seem, but the carrying out of some petty design of promoters, but left it in their hands without supervision by the government itself, and when they had played with it and burned their fingers—as they were certain to do and should have been allowed to heal the burns themselves—the government which had been guilty of such levity and such criminal carelessness, made up to those promoters every dollar that they had put into it, and gave them much that they had never put into it, and interest upon all that was paid.

I hope the lesson is one which Canada will profit from in future. The country has paid dearly for its experience. And