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We print in another column the motion passed by the Burrard Inlet Tunnel & Bridge Company, awarding the contract for the building of the Second Narrows Bridge to Mr. C. A. P. Turner and the Western Foundation Company on conditions. This is one of the most ill-advised and most mischievous pieces of business that has ever come under our notice. We cannot understand how the directors, charged with such heavy responsibilities, representing the interests of two hundred thousand people, can have discharged those responsibilities with such reckless disregard of the public interest. If it is wise to furnish work for a bridge designer, for two local fabricating mills who will employ a few steel men, for a foundation company who will employ a large number of workmen, and pay \$1,744,831 for the purpose, we must plead guilty to foolishness.

This action of the directors flies right in the face of the recommendations made in the very able report of Mr. Ralph Modjeski on the whole subject of a Second Narrows Bridge. Mr. Modjeski states that no contract should be made on the basis of any designs submitted, since they were only rough designs and sketches without specifications, and would give rise to endless differences of opinion as to contractors and engineers. This evidently will be gotten over by the designer, who is the engineer, and the contractor, being one and the same individual. Mr. Turner, the engineer, says to Mr. Turner, the contractor, to do so and so. Mr. Turner, the contractor, demures—and the public hold the bag.

By the terms of the motion Mr. Turner is to conform his design to the recommendations laid down in the Modjeski report. Who is to see that he carries out these recommendations? We presume that when he re-designs his bridge in conformity with those recommendations, he will draw up full plans and specifications. If that be so, since it is essential, how can he be depended upon to draw up those plans and specifications in the public interest when there is always dangling before his mind's eye \$1,744,831, out of which he must get some profit?

The Burrard Inlet Company has selected Mr. Turner to design a bridge which will embody some general recommendations of Mr. Modjeski, which shall pass the Dominion Department of Public Works, and has let a contract to him for its erection at a cost of \$1,744,831, on condition that he use local factories and local labor. If he designs and erects a good bridge, all goes well. If he fails in either design or construction, he is sorrow, perhaps he loses his reputation,

The services of this journal are offered through an inquiry column, which is open to subscribers and the public generally without charge, for detailed information or opinion as to financial or industrial affairs or institutions throughout the Province of British Columbia. Wherever possible the replies to these inquiries will be made through this column. Where inquiries are not of general interest, they will be handled by letter. We think that we can assure our readers that the opinions expressed will be sane and conservative, and that all statements will be as accurate as possible.

maybe a few workmen lose their lives, and the public pay the bills.

This is too great a responsibility and involves too much money to be let in this high-handed fashion.

We presume that the Provincial Government, which is putting up \$400,000 of the cost, will have something to say about this matter. In the meantime Mr. Turner has the Burrard Inlet Company bottled up so that it cannot move without litigation.

We mean nothing personal against Mr. Turner, the Western Foundation Company, the local fabricators, nor the workmen. In fact, we would like, nay, anxious, to see this work go to local concerns. But when the right way is known and the wrong way is known, for the directors to go the wrong way deliberately, being forewarned of the pitfalls, they cannot too severely be condemned.

When the Sir John Wolfe Barry bridge was eliminated as too expensive and unsuitable, it was up to the bridge directors to engage the services of a competent designer, familiar with American and Canadian railroad bridge practice, to design a bridge within the cost of their appropriations or funds available. Having done this, and received the plans and specifications, to submit same to the Dominion authorities for approval. Upon approval, to call for tenders, requiring tenderers to submit prices, including the use of local plants and taking cognizance of local labor conditions, and submit prices without availing of local plants. This would clearly mark out the increased cost on account of using local plants. If this could be done without enhancing the cost price too greatly in the judgment of the directors, then the contract could be let calling for the use of those plants. If it were too high, the local plants could not be used.

This is the regular procedure, and there was no valid reason why it could not be followed out. The directors seem to have lost sight of the prime purpose of being directors, which was to see that the best bridge possible is to be erected. It seems that they conceive that their chief duty is to supply work.

The embargo of the British Government on foreign and Colonial loans, except in so far as the proceeds are to be used in prosecuting the war, has caused no little concern among those interests in Canada who were shortly preparing to make appeals to the British public for funds. Canada will now have to meet its financial requirements through New York, and the more pressing loans can be readily made there. The financial strength of New York is astonishing, not only to Europe and ourselves, but also to themselves; and it is now fully expected that American bankers will find a way to finance our adverse balance of trade, as well as to look after our more pressing engagements.

London gives up the position of Canadian banker with reluctance. To finance the Allies is more and more becoming the obligation of London, and as these huge calls on her resources keep coming in, it is only natural that she should seek to fortify herself against any drains that might militate against her ability to furnish fully and freely the sinews of war.