

dollars of generosity which we dole out to them represents a thousand dollars paid by the taxpayers of this country. We who are here to carry on the public business should not look at the question only from the standpoint of being generous to these gentlemen. From the statement made by my hon. friend it is evident that it will be the year after this before the work is completed, and if the architect is allowed 5½ per cent on \$10,000,000 we shall have to pay him for his work \$550,000. To my mind such an expenditure is unreasonable and should not be tolerated by this committee. What is true of the architect is true of the contractor. I am not here to criticise Peter Lyall and Sons, but we were told last year that they entered into a contract under which they were to receive a commission of 8 per cent on the cost of building up to \$4,000,000, 7 per cent on any further amount up to \$5,000,000, and over and above that amount no commission at all. I do not criticise the present minister in this respect, because he is in no way responsible for what was done when the erection of this building was commenced. But he is responsible to-day for what is done in connection with the completion of the structure, and within the next few days he should have a conference with the contractors and the architect with a view to coming to a definite decision as to what is to be done. This matter should not be left in abeyance for another two years and payments made—as I claim, improperly—to the architect and the contractors for work they have not performed. It was stated in the discussion that took place on this matter last year that the architects had been paid \$255,000, in round figures. I did not hear all the discussion yesterday and I do not know whether the architects have been paid anything since last year, but any amount paid to them in excess of \$275,000, the full amount under their contract, would, I submit, be improperly paid. I do not say that these men should not be paid something, but I do submit that the Minister of Public Works, on behalf of the people of Canada should enter into an arrangement with the contractors in regard to future work to be done on this building. We should not wait until the work is completed and then have to make a payment involving a total of \$550,000 or \$600,000 for supervising the construction of the building from start to finish. I feel very strongly about this matter; I think that unbusinesslike methods have

been followed, and that the work has been conducted in a very slipshod and unsatisfactory manner.

Mr. MURPHY: It has not been my privilege to hear all the discussion that has taken place with regard to this item since it first came before the committee this session. In years past I have occasionally listened to discussions with reference to the partial destruction of the old Parliament Building and the arrangements made for its reconstruction, and it has amazed me to hear the statements made and to observe the positions taken by hon. gentlemen on both sides who apparently have had a total misconception of the facts. Now, in view of the amount of money involved and of the character of the building to which this amount relates, it is worth while placing on record the facts relating to the destruction of the old building and to the steps that have been taken from time to time in regard to its reconstruction.

The fire that destroyed the old building occurred on the night of Thursday, February 3, 1916. That is not the date which was inscribed on the mace that was presented to this House to replace the mace that was destroyed in the fire, but notwithstanding the error on the mace, the date which I have given was the date of the fire.

Immediately after the fire the then Minister of Public Works, Hon. Mr. Rogers, appointed two architects to investigate the damaged building as it then stood, to report upon its condition, and to advise what should be done to replace it. The gentlemen who were so appointed to make that inquiry and report were Mr. John A. Pearson, architect, of Toronto, and Mr. J. O. Marchand, architect, of Montreal. Just about that time rumours were persistent that the firm of P. Lyall and Sons, of Montreal, were going to be given whatever contract might be awarded, without tender and without competition. That rumour was not only heard in the corridors of Parliament but was persistently repeated in business circles, both in Ottawa and in Montreal. As a member of Parliament, but more particularly as a citizen of Ottawa and as representing a constituency, a portion of which is within the municipal boundaries of the city of Ottawa, I took, perhaps, more interest in the matter than any other member of the House, with the exception of my hon. friends who represent the city of Ot-