

as Sable River and Louis Head. The people in the neighbourhood, regarding the road as now controlled by the Government, not unnaturally made representations to their members of Parliament, and I brought the matter before the railway management. I must in fairness say of them that they acted very promptly in the matter of an investigation. An official was sent down and made the necessary inquiry. My impression is he reached the conclusion that the claim was a just one, but when some delay occurred and representations were urged upon the management, the reply was that under the Railway Act not more than \$5,000 could be paid on one fire claim—I think that was the statement made to me—and as the claim of these people exceeds that amount nothing could be done. Now this is one of the anomalies arising from the questionable character of the ownership of the road. If it is a government road there should be no limitation; if it is a private road, a corporation road, I suppose the general principles of the Railway Act will apply. It would certainly seem to me that the claim is a just one. I do not wish to assert that; I only speak of it because I think the inquiry that was made rather led to the department having the impression that the claim was a just one. If the claim is found to be a just one and these people have a real grievance, I do not think this \$5,000 limit should stand in the way in the event of their having suffered damages to a larger extent. I do not suppose the minister himself has any particular knowledge of the subject, but there is an impression in the minds of the people down there that they have not had fair treatment in the matter, and I would be very glad if the minister could, in any way he thought best, look into it.

Hon. Mr. REID: I will be glad to look into the matter and find out exactly what the situation is. Of course the railway in question is part of the Canadian Northern system, having been built by a private company, and the Railway Act would apply to this particular case. However I will look into the matter and perhaps at the next meeting of the committee I will have some information with respect to it and be able to discuss it.

Mr. ARGUE: I would like to have a more definite statement from the minister with reference to the branch line in Saskatchewan to run from Gravelbourg to Swift Current, on the Canadian Northern. In 1918 we were promised by the president

of the company that the railway would be in Swift Current in 1920, and we have been very patient so far in waiting for the road to be built. Now the grade is up to Neidpath, and steel is laid to within ten miles of that point. The farmers of that district have made arrangements, and laid all their plans, to build an elevator at Neidpath but they were advised that it would be better to wait until they could get some more definite assurance with regard to laying the rails on that branch. What I would like to know is whether the rails will be laid on the branch in time for these people to get out their wheat this fall. There is something like 40,000 acres of grain which will be marketed in Neidpath providing the elevator can be built so as to store the grain until it can be got out. I would like the minister to give me that assurance so the the farmers can go ahead with the arrangements for building the elevator with the certainty of being able to take out the grain this fall.

Hon. Mr. REID: In speaking to Mr. Hanna about the matter he mentioned that they would lay this ten miles this year for the reason that an elevator would be built, and it was for that purpose the rails would be laid. I am quite satisfied that it is the intention of the Canadian National Railway management to lay the ten miles in question, and I feel satisfied from the way Mr. Hanna mentioned it to me that there is no doubt it will be done. Unless something unforeseen should happen it is the intention anyway to lay the rails before that time. The 50,000 tons of new rails which were purchased are now being rolled and sent on to the main line. The rails thus released will go on to the branch lines and the branch in question is one of those that will be taken up first.

Mr. DAVIS: Can the minister give us the Manitoba programme?

Hon. Mr. REID: In Manitoba: Amaranth extension, starting point Delta junction. When the present track is complete the grade will be to mile 61.9; track on December 31, 1920, was at mile 44.1; 17 miles yet to lay. That will be laid this year. St. Rose du Lac branch, starting point Ochre river. When the present track is complete the grade will be to mile 40; track on December 31, 1920, was at mile 14.9; 25.1 miles will be laid this year.

Mr. COWAN: What policy is being followed in putting steel upon grading al-