

not publicly then privately, with such information as would enable him to investigate. It is not fair to the officials of a great public department that a charge should be made on the floor of the House that some of them did a very wrong thing, and then let the matter stand in that way by saying: I believe it, I made the statement in good faith, but I decline to go any further. I think he will see on reflection that he ought to go further, and assist the minister in making an investigation.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I do not agree with the Minister of Finance.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. If the rooters desire to fulfil their proper function let them all root together. The First Minister has behind him a number of gentlemen who have no other function than to root; but the great drawback is that they do not root together, and there should be some person to give the signal so that these rooters may all come in together. The Finance Minister suggests that when a charge is made against the officer of the Railway Department, the man making the charge should help clear it up. There is the responsible head of the Railway Department, and he is the gentleman who is covered by the charge. My hon. friend here assumes responsibility for his words, and cannot be bluffed down. That little bluff game of getting up and calling, 'Name, name,' is played out in the House. This gentleman has had the hardihood and the manhood to stand on his dignity, though he is a new member of this House, and to assume the responsibility of his statement. The government has its usual recourse if it wants to get at the facts. Let them appoint a Royal Commission with a gentleman of the calibre of Judge Britton at the head of it, and perhaps we will get some information on the subject.

Mr. FIELDING. It sometimes happens that my hon. friend is mistaken. He has not stated the case accurately. The hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Boyce) stated that he did not make any charge against the hon. the Minister of Railways. He did not make the charge against anybody in particular, he made it against the department.

Mr. COCHRANE. He merely stated the fact.

Mr. FIELDING. That is not enough. If I make a statement that an hon. member has stolen somebody's purse and say I believe it, that is not enough; I must give some evidence. If the statement were made as affecting the Minister of Railways, my hon. friend from Algoma would be obliged to withdraw it, because the statement could not be sustained once the denial is made. But there is no responsibility involved in an hon. member simply saying: I am informed and believe that some official of the

department has done something very wrong.

Mr. COCHRANE. He did not say the department at all.

Mr. FIELDING. Oh, well, now that is another thing. My hon. friend from Northumberland (Mr. Cochrane) says he did not say the department at all. If the hon. member for Algoma says he made no statement about these plans—

Mr. COCHRANE. But he did not refer to the officials in the department at all, and the Finance Minister is drawing a red herring across the track.

Mr. FIELDING. The hon. member for Algoma distinctly stated that these plans had been given out of the Railway Department; my hon. friend will not deny that.

Mr. BOYCE. I think the Minister of Finance has made a little mistake himself, he has misconstrued my words. The whole matter arose out of the question which I addressed in the early part of my remarks to the Minister of Railways asking him how it was that the plans of this proposed route were withheld from this House when, as the information which I had given to me, and which I believed to be reliable information, was that they were handed out to others.

Mr. FIELDING. The Minister of Railways stated that these plans could not have been given out because to his knowledge they were placed under seal and remained under seal. Thereupon the member for Algoma said that he had information that that could not be the case, because he was aware that these plans had been given out to friends in order to be made the basis of speculation.

Mr. BOYCE. The Finance Minister will remember that the Minister of Railways then stated that the plans might have been derived from some other sources.

Mr. FIELDING. But that is not the statement of the hon. member for Algoma. He did not say they were derived from some other source, he said they had been given out of the Railway Department. Therefore my hon. friend's observations, standing as they do now, leave a cloud on the reputation of Mr. Collingwood Schreiber and all the officers of the Railway Department. I do not think that is a fair position in which we ought to leave the officials of our public service.

Mr. FOSTER. I thought I could see a light twinkling in the eye of my hon. friend when he was putting this forth with such an assumption of seriousness. He is too old a parliamentarian and has been too long in this House not to know that it is the privilege of any member to get up in his place and make a statement, from in-