

Mr. MEIGHEN: The American Government have been aware for almost two years that the Canadian Government were the owners of a system which controlled, owned, or operated—or all three together—lines in the United States. They are now the owners of another system; by means of the same process, stock ownership, they do the very same thing. The American Government has not felt concerned about the first case, and I do not see any reason why they would feel concerned about the second, which is absolutely the same.

Mr. VIEN: The reason is very clear and apparent. It is because these connections, such as those of the Canadian Northern system and of the Grand Trunk Railway system, are at present in the hands of the American Government. The American Government is not concerned as long as it does not hand over these railway lines and connections to their private owners, but they will be concerned when the time comes to hand them over. It seems to me that it is a fair question to inquire whether the Canadian Government has ascertained what would be the attitude of the American Government if it took such a step.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman is wrong again. The lines of the Canadian Northern system, the stock of which is owned by the Canadian Government, are operated by the system, not by the United States; nor have they ever been operated by the United States.

The hon. gentleman is misinformed on that; the United States Government did not see fit to take them over. But they took over and are still operating certain line; of the Grand Trunk railway. When the American Government hand those lines back, if they do, they will be in just the same position that the Canadian Northern American lines are in now. So I am still unable to see why the American Government would feel concerned as to one situation any more than as to the other in which they were not affected at all.

Mr. J. E. ARMSTRONG: Would the Minister of Railways be good enough to furnish the House with a statement of the amount of interest that has already been paid by the Government since the Grand Trunk Pacific was taken over by him as receiver, and of the annual amount of interest that will be necessary for the Government to pay from this time forward on that portion of the system?

[Mr. Vien.]

Mr. J. D. REID: I will give that information a little later—I had it here yesterday—but I could not give the exact figures. I think since the first of February something like \$2,500,000 has been advanced for interest charges in respect of the Grand Trunk Pacific.

Mr. J. E. ARMSTRONG: Annually?

Mr. J. D. REID: That is since taken over by the receiver.

Mr. FIELDING: Before leaving the question of American mileage, could the hon. gentleman (Mr. Meighen) tell us from memory what is the mileage of the Canadian Northern in the United States?

Mr. MEIGHEN: There are two Canadian Northern lines in the United States, neither of them very long. One is a connecting link south of the Lake of the Woods of the main line from Winnipeg to Port Arthur; the other, known as the Duluth and Western, is all in American territory. Speaking from memory, I do not think the total mileage would be over one hundred miles.

Mr. FIELDING: They are probably small sections running through portions of the United States, but practically not in any degree serving American territory, and the question might not come up so prominently as it would in the case of the Grand Trunk lines, which have quite an expensive mileage in the United States. It may be that the American Government have no definite policy against allowing foreign Government owned railways within their jurisdiction, but if they have any objection, they will certainly have the same objection when they are told that a foreign government owns 100 per cent of the stock. If there be any such objection, I do not think the device of stockholding will satisfy the American Government.

Mr. GAUTHIER: Referring to the same question, is the Government aware that last week the representative of a syndicate was with the officials of the Grand Trunk system bargaining to take over the American lines, namely, the old Central Vermont, the New London line, the steamship line running from New London to New York, all the branch lines in the peninsula of Michigan, and the line running from Chicago to Detroit and Port Huron, subject to the understanding that these lines would be handed over by the American Government to the former owners?

Mr. J. D. REID: I never heard of anything of the kind. Did the hon. member