

a private corporation enters into an agreement with a city or another corporation, if the agreement is taken over by a third party, that party is expected to fulfil its terms just as though he had been one of the original parties to the agreement; and in the same way when the Government takes over a railway, as it has done in this instance, it is expected that the agreement will be observed. The Government must live up to the agreement just as the Grand Trunk Pacific would have had to do. There is not only a moral but a legal claim as well, and the citizens of Fort William have legal opinion behind them in this position. As I have stated, I believe that the minister and Mr. Hanna have both tried to be fair. They both claim that they have been endeavouring to do justice by Fort William, and the minister on various occasions has taken the matter up with Mr. Hanna to see that everything that could be done to ensure a fair deal by Fort William should be done. But the citizens of that city have reached the stage where they demand a show-down and they expect that this agreement will be fully lived up to. I expect the same thing, and I may say that the people of Fort William will certainly fight to see that they get their rights in the matter. If the agreement is not lived up to the Government is sure of a lawsuit; and if the lawsuit does not give the city justice I can assure the Government that during the next session of Parliament I will see what the Parliament of Canada has to say about it. Finally I would like the minister to assure me—he has done so privately and I feel sure he will be quite willing to do so publicly—that he will make strenuous effort to see that Fort William will not suffer injustice under this agreement with the Grand Trunk Pacific.

Hon. Mr. REID: The hon. member has several times very forcibly brought this matter to my attention, and I think the people of Fort William can rest assured that he is looking after their case satisfactorily. The trouble is this: It is impossible for me to take the matter up at the present time on account of the railway situation being in an unsettled state. There will be some dissatisfaction as a result of placing the Transcontinental system, and the Canadian Northern and the other railways together on account of the changes that must be made, which changes are in the interest of economy. These cases, when the Government gets control of the

[Mr. Manion.]

whole system, must be dealt with, and I would say would be dealt with fairly by any government. I am sorry that we have not been able to take this matter up and get a decision earlier than this. I have within the last few weeks taken up the case of Fort William with Mr. Hanna and urged him to do what he could to carry out the agreement so far as it was consistent with the operation of the railway. I am satisfied that the question will have to be taken up by the management within the near future, and if an agreement cannot be come to between the management and the city it will, of course, have to be settled through the courts. The Government, however, has no desire whatever to take advantage of any claim the city of Fort William may have. All it would wish to do would be to see that in any settlement made—if it is necessary to make a settlement, on account of placing the two terminals together at either one point or the other—such settlement is fair and reasonable, and I am satisfied Parliament will vote any amount that would be necessary to settle a claim that was properly established.

Mr. MANION: May I say, in justice to the minister that he has done what he stated; he has taken the matter up with Mr. Hanna and has endeavoured to get the matter straightened out to the satisfaction of the people at Fort William. May I also say, in justice to Mr. Hanna, that he always asserts that he intends to do the same and that at the present moment he is dealing with the matter. The reason I brought the question up to-night is because when we are dealing with the Estimates, as we are now doing it is practically the only opportunity when I can reasonably bring it forward. I wish to put myself on record as stating positively here that if the city of Fort William does not get justice in this matter, that when the time comes I will again bring it before hon. gentlemen, if necessary, and ask the House to deal with it.

Mr. FIELDING: May I bring to the attention of the minister a matter concerning one of the railways which are included in the Canadian Northern system and therefore entirely within his department. There is a railway running through the western part of Nova Scotia known as the Halifax and South Western, which is one of the subsidiaries of the Canadian Northern. A fire occurred along the road a year or two ago in the district known