

when I am making a speech, but the other day when I was saying that it was a crime to let the children of our race die of hunger, some hon. members opposite dared to shout "Hurrah." There may be some excuse for their not understanding fully what I was saying but they should not make fun of these distressing cases. It is not a pleasure to me to bring up these matters before the house; I do it because I feel it to be my duty to defend these families who have been placed in the middle of a wilderness, cut off from everyone. I feel that my action is not only in accordance with the rules of this house but in accordance with the rules of humanity. I feel sure that no man or woman in this country wants to see a human being go hungry. These men do not ask for money; all they ask is that a fair investigation be made of their cases. They do not want this investigation to be held by those who are paid according to the number of settlers they place on the land; they want it to be held by someone who is fair, impartial and independent. They want someone who will tell the truth to the Minister of Labour in Ottawa and the Minister of Colonization in Quebec. That is all I ask of the minister here and all I have been asking of the Minister of Colonization in Quebec. The latter writes me under date of the first of this month that he intends sending a man there to make an investigation. I ask the government—and I urge upon them the necessity of doing this—to send there a man who is competent, independent, fair, who will interview those people who are starving in the wilderness and report as to their condition. Then we shall find out whether Mr. Laforce is telling the truth when he says that no one is dying of hunger in Quebec. I want the minister to understand what I say. Mr. Laforce says that no one who is willing to work has been in distress. Can you expect a starving man to show unwillingness to work?

Mr. CANTLEY: Better go home and put your head to soak.

Mr. POULIOT: I am sorry, but I shall put the hon. member for Pictou in the same class as those who shouted "Hurrah" the other day. I pity him. A man of his age, who must have a heart in his body, should not say anything like that when I am speaking of human misery. If the hon. member for Pictou were bringing to the attention of the house the sad case of those who are suffering in his constituency, he may be sure I should not jeer at him, but I would sympathize fully with him, and I promise, when he speaks in the house I shall pay attention to him. If he has a stone instead

of a heart in his body, I shall leave him alone and I shall not mention him again in my speech as I would not honour him by paying any more attention to his gibes.

I have made an appeal to the sense of justice and good heart of the minister. I am asking him something that is fair and reasonable, something that any man who has a heart in his body would do at once. I urge him to see to it immediately that an inspector is sent there to find out whether those men who sent sworn letters about their miseries and grievances, are telling the truth or not. The minister must take with a grain of salt those reports that are sent to him or to the provincial government stating that everything is well in those newly settled districts. That is all I have to say, and I say it in all earnestness and sincerity, hoping at least that the minister will believe I am not playing petty politics; that all I wish to do is to open his eyes and tell him that those who have already made reports to him have not told the truth.

Mr. J. A. BRADETTE (North Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, on account of the fact that the hon. member for Témiscouata (Mr. Pouliot) has brought up this matter, I wish to say that the policy of the government in connection with the back to the land movement has placed a number of families in my constituency. I believe during the coming summer the number who will be placed by the government in conjunction with the provincial government will be nearly 400 families, so that on account of these facts the house will allow me to say a few words on this important question.

I am absolutely in favour of the movement because I believe out of it will come a great deal of good as ultimately it will help to bring about a balancing of population between urban and rural centres. I said, I believe five weeks ago, that the government should have a better follow-up system, but taking the movement as a whole, I think it is good and that some benefit has been accomplished. Of course it is always easy to single out certain individual cases and on them build up an argument before parliament, but, as I say, the movement as a whole will be of benefit. For one thing, it makes the governments, both federal and provincial, realize the serious situation that exists in our rural sections. I believe I mentioned a few weeks ago to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gordon) the case of a man named James McLean, a very fine type of Canadian, at Frederickhouse, who has taken up a lot under that scheme, but who finds it almost impossible to make both ends meet.