

in Rouyn and other parts of Quebec, Mr. Laforce has wired me that "no families back to the land were placed Rouyn or immediate surroundings."

Mr. Marcel Essiambre's telegram which I have read on April 26th (Hansard, p. 4615-6) was sent from Rouyn and it mentioned that a letter was to follow.

I have received that letter only yesterday and I forward you a copy of it.

You will see by that letter that Mr. Essiambre or Essiandre is one of the settlers at La Rivière Solitaire, and that man walked the whole way, about twenty miles, from La Rivière Solitaire to get some work in Rouyn wherefrom he sent his telegram.

I did not mention in the house that Mr. Essiambre was living at Rouyn, but it appeared by the telegram itself wherefrom it was sent.

Mr. Laforce, who, as you said, "acts for the Canadian National Railways on the committee with respect to this work" has added: "No back to land families province Quebec in distress provided they have shown willingness to work."

You will note that Mr. Essiambre's letter has been sworn before a justice of the peace. The only thing he asks, and it seems very fair, is the visit of an inspector. He writes: "You will then see if I perjure myself."

Therefore the sworn statement made by that man is most serious and deserves every consideration.

Mr. Essiambre says that he is the father of an eight months' child and who is refused milk. Can you expect from such a child "the willingness to work" mentioned by Mr. Laforce?

You have stated that only two settlers had been assisted by your government in my constituency and that you believed that the other settlers there had been placed by the province of Quebec; but the above mentioned wire came from Rouyn and the sender was a settler from La Rivière Solitaire.

Therefore, will you kindly let me know at once if your government had anything to do with the settlement of La Rivière Solitaire? This is my first question.

My second question is: What are the settlements to which your government has made any contribution in the province of Quebec?

My third question is as follows: If your government had anything to do by contribution or otherwise with the settlement at La Rivière Solitaire, will you kindly see to it at once that an inspector from your department is sent there to interview Mr. Essiambre and the people mentioned in his letter, in order to have a true, complete and impartial report on the matter which seems to be very serious.

In fact, this morning I have received another wire from J. D. Valiquette, dated Rouyn, but I presume that that gentleman is one of the settlers of La Rivière Solitaire. You will note that he says that his children are very weak.

I am anxious to receive his letter and I will send a copy to you as soon as I get it.

I regret not to have the time to translate some of the documents which I send you but it is easier for you to have it done at once by your staff.

My only appeal is to your sense of justice and to your good heart. This is why I expect a fair answer with great eagerness.

I wrote another letter to the hon. gentleman on May 1 but as yet I have received no answer. I desire to take this opportunity to thank the newspapers which have published the letter written by Mr. Essiambre. I refer particularly to the newspapers *La Presse*, *La Patrie*, *Le Devoir* and *Le Droit* which have brought these facts to the notice of the public. They must be known to everyone. Only this morning I received another letter, also sworn to by the same gentleman, which reads:

Sworn Statement

I, Marcel Essiambre, a settler of Rivière-Solitaire, hereby swear on the Holy Bible and make the following statement: I arrived this evening from Rivière-Solitaire, together with my nephew Frédéric Larocque, after having walked 32 miles. As we had no money and had not eaten any food, we had to make up our mind to beg for food. After having, explained to a Rouyn citizen that we were poor settlers having come from Montreal and settled at Rivière-Solitaire, and that we had not eaten any dinner that day, he gave us our supper, and a bed for the night. He showed me in the newspaper "*La Presse*" what the minister, W. A. Gordon, had said regarding the statement I had made in my telegram; the newspaper contained the following: That my name did not appear on the files of the department, that in the back to the land scheme under the Dominion government, no settler was located in Rouyn or surroundings. I deem it my duty to furnish to the one who defends our cause in the House of Commons, Mr. J. F. Pouliot, the facts such as sworn to, in order to make known the truth and prevent those charged of resorting to lies justifying their actions. I left Montreal on October 6 last, and after reaching Rivière-Solitaire, I settled on lot 7, range 8, township of Desandrouin; my family left Montreal on October 26 to join me and ever since then we have been residing on my lot, located at a distance of 32 miles from Rouyn. To-day I am looking for work because I am certain that if I remain on my lot we shall all starve to death. I have no hesitation in advising my relations and friends who reside in Montreal not to come and settle at Rivière-Solitaire, it is a real snare and the best place to starve to death. All our surroundings here consist in deceit and hypocrisy. We are shamefully robbed of the few dollars granted to us by the city of Montreal and the Dominion government. The provincial government does not seem to have paid its quota, because the drivers who transferred our household effects have not, according to them, been paid.

I cannot vouch for these facts; I simply quote the sworn statement such as it is:

Food and other articles were sold to us at twice their value. Our letters are unsealed, taken out and lost, while the goods sent to us through the mail are stolen. We have no mail service, we must depend on every one. If the minister, Mr. Gordon, wishes to be better informed, let him send some one to hold an inquiry (some serious person) and he will discover quite a number of poor settlers who had their goods stolen, their letters opened or stolen. For months past our member, Mr. Bélec, has been promising us that mail service—