

I have gone into the thing so thoroughly, have discussed it with the financial institutions and with the ranchers themselves, and I realize full well the necessity for this change.

Mr. McTAGGART: Can a lessee convert his lease into a twenty-one-year lease? Say a lessee was holding at the present time a whole township of land, and his lease expires in four or five years, can he convert that lease into a twenty-one-year lease?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes, unless it is land that is liable to be useful for agricultural purposes, and always there must be inspection first. We do not grant these leases until after we have made a thorough investigation of all the circumstances in that particular area. There are some lands on which we would not grant a twenty-one-year lease, because they might be required for some other purpose, and in such cases the ten-year lease will remain in effect.

Mr. McTAGGART: Would that prevent residents in the district from joining together to take advantage of the proviso?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): We are not issuing leases on agricultural land for that length of time. These are lands that for the most part have been leased for years. Take, for instance, the foothills in the territory represented by my hon. friend from Macleod (Mr. Coote), or the Galician district. There is a possibility of these lands being required for agricultural purposes in some places, but they are all within the pre-emption area, and perhaps in Saskatchewan the same thing applies. We propose making a very careful inspection of the whole situation.

Mr. McTAGGART: There is another matter I desire to bring to the attention of the minister. There are a number of townships along the border which have been set aside as quarantine townships. There are two such townships in the vicinity of what is known as West Poplar, which is a customs port between the United States and Canada. I happened to go through that quarantine section a year ago, and I want to call the minister's attention to what I found there. There is a road leading through West Poplar, which is about half a mile from the customs office, and I found that that road is practically impassable except in very dry weather in midsummer. There is an old river bed very close to the boundary, and it is practically impossible for anyone to get across the line either coming from or going into the United States except in the driest weather. I would urge very strongly upon the minister that if we desire to encourage traffic,

tourist traffic particularly, from the United States, something should be done to put that road into such shape that it could be used by automobiles. It would not require very much to make the road passable, there is just the one crossing.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Does my hon. friend mean that the federal government should do this?

Mr. McTAGGART: Yes.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I am afraid we could not consider a proposition like that. The roads in all parts of the province are a provincial matter entirely.

Mr. McTAGGART: But it is Dominion land.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I quite appreciate that, but we do not do anything towards maintaining the roads.

Mr. COOTE: I wonder if the minister is able to state the amount of leases?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): The number of grazing leases in force during the year was 7,532 containing an area of 6,329,035 acres made up as follows: Manitoba 95,371 acres; Saskatchewan 3,012,037 acres; Alberta 2,870,957 acres; British Columbia 350,670 acres. Unfortunately I have not got the receipt for each province.

Mr. COOTE: Is the land leased at two cents per acre?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes, this land would be put up at two cents per acre.

Mr. COOTE: I wonder if the minister could tell me how much of this land in Alberta would be leased for twenty-one years?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): None of it at the moment. There are a considerable number of applications in and being dealt with, but we have not issued any leases so far as I am aware.

Mr. COOTE: Did the minister say that that only applied to the area south of township 16?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): No, the old pre-emption area; it is township 30, I think. The old pre-emption area ran down to somewhere in the vicinity of the Calgary and Edmonton railway, but we have extended it to the foothills in the case of the area from which these leases would be granted.

Mr. COOTE: Could the minister say whether there is any limit to the amount which one lease holder may secure from the government?