

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

they wish it done—we will ask the appropriate attache in Moscow to write to the relatives in Russia.

Mr. Lennard: We do not want too many.

Mr. Knowles: As a matter of fact, I have in my hand a letter that came to me today concerning one of these cases. It so happens that in this instance the person in Canada asked the minister's department to instruct our embassy at 23 Starokonyushny Pereulok, in Moscow, to write to the intended immigrant. But the officials in Moscow still wrote back and stated that they felt they should not do so and in fact would not do so until there had first been an approach to the embassy by the intended immigrant in the Soviet union.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is the policy at the present time. I would have to get the concurrence of my colleague the Secretary of State for External Affairs before I could change that policy. However, I am quite willing to consider the matter.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask whether the minister's department has any person at the embassy in Moscow or whether the department works through the Department of External Affairs?

Mr. Pickersgill: No. We are not carrying on any immigration activities in the Soviet union and have no intention of doing so. All we do is deal, as best we can, with these cases of near relatives. I hope there is no member of the committee who thinks that we are not anxious to do everything we can to help these families to be re-united.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): In what other countries of Europe besides Italy are there travelling teams of our immigration department interviewing potential immigrants?

Mr. Pickersgill: There is not any in Italy at the present time. There was the recruitment of a small number of people for a specific purpose some time ago but there is no team in Italy at the present time. There is just the immigration office in Rome, to the best of my knowledge. There is a team in Austria going to the camps and interviewing Hungarian refugees. I believe we have a team in the United Kingdom selecting the 5,000 Hungarian refugees we undertook to take from the United Kingdom so that they could take 5,000 more. I believe there is also a team for a similar purpose in France. But it is not the normal procedure to use these teams. They are only used for refugee camps or for some specific purpose for a very limited time.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

Mr. White (Middlesex East): What prompted my question was this. A citizen in London came to me asking for help to bring out a close relative.

This is only about three weeks ago, and I was told that there was a travelling team interviewing prospective immigrants in that area near Rome. I was also told that there was a backlog of intending immigrants—people who had made application—going back for 12 months. It seemed to me that if this type of work is 12 months ahead there was no great need for a team to be travelling in that area. I wondered whether this was the procedure in other European countries—

Mr. Pickersgill: No.

Mr. White (Middlesex East):—and in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Pickersgill: In the United Kingdom we have a lot of people going about giving lectures, and so on; we conduct a much more active promotional campaign in the United Kingdom than anywhere else in the world.

Mr. Cardiff: I would like to ask the minister a question. Is the immigration department making any special efforts to bring immigrants to Canada to help agriculture?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, for the number we get we probably spend four of five times as much effort in trying to bring agricultural immigrants as we do to bring any others, because they are unfortunately very hard to get. We have had some success this year in attracting some farmers and farmers' sons and even some farm labourers from the United Kingdom. I do not think we shall ever get very large numbers, because British agriculture still seems to be very prosperous. But there are some people who want to have a change of scene, and we are getting some. I wish we could get more, and I shall certainly look into the case of the islanders to which the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre referred earlier today, to see whether any of them would be interested.

Mr. Herridge: Has the minister any idea of the percentage of Hungarians who go on the land and work for farmers?

Mr. Pickersgill: A very small percentage. These are nearly all urban people.

Mr. Leboe: I would like to ask the minister a question in connection with agricultural immigrants. I have noticed press reports saying that the C.N.R. and the Canadian Pacific were sponsoring certain immigrants to do farm work along the railroad, and I was wondering whether there was any connection between that and putting gravel under the ties.