

they have been deceived in coming to Canada. It has been said, not only to-day, but on previous occasions, that the protest, or the appeal as it is called, was only made by one man, and that, at all events, there were only twenty-nine who supported it. I do not think that is a fair statement. I do not think that properly represents the case. I take up the appeal as it has been put out, and I find that it says:

Before everything else, we must extend to you from the communities which delegated us.

And so on. Necessarily those who are writing and who are signing the document may be few, but it states that they are speaking for the community who delegated them. Then again, they replied to the letter that has been addressed in these words:

Kamenka, Oct. 14, 1900.

Immigration Agent, Yorkton.

Delegates from the settlement of the Society of Universal Brotherhood, situated in townships 31 and 32, ranges 27 and 28, assembled to-day in Kamenka to consider your proposition, whether they will be willing to accept lands.

And so forth. The delegates assembled and these delegates themselves drew up this protest. To prove that this is so, we take the reply to these gentlemen of Mr. J. T. Turiff, the commissioner of Dominion lands. He addressed them as follows on the 7th of January, 1891:

Ottawa, Jan. 7, 1901.

Semen, Semenoff, Vasilie Popoff and others,
Village Blagodarofra:

Dear Sirs,—In further reference to your petition to the government of Canada of the 22nd of June last, I beg to say that since my interview with your head men in the month of November, I have discussed the subject-matter—

He had evidently met the head men, the delegates and he refers to this. Therefore, I submit that it is prejudicing the question to say that the protest does not come from the people at all, that it has only a few signatures and that it has been got up by somebody else altogether. Now, I am not prepared to say that the principles they are maintaining and for which they suffered are right. I do not think though, that it is sensible for me to suppose that people brought up in a different land, under different conditions, and taught different views would not come to different conclusions from those at which I have arrived. However, I do not know that I have any right to assume that I am altogether right, and that they are altogether wrong. In other words, until the Doukhobor interferes with our laws, until he becomes a factor in our political life, I am willing to allow that he may be right. Perhaps he is right. We sympathized with these people when they were in Russia, and when they were being persecuted, but I wonder how it is that the Immigration Department did not thoroughly investigate the causes of that persecution and see whether it was safe that these peo-

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ple should come into Canada, not only whether we should induce them to come, but whether it was safe for us to allow them to come, because it seems to me that the position now is that if we have given these people an asylum under false pretenses. The question must be considered: What are we going to do about it? If they do not wish to be governed by our laws, what is to be done with them? We have invited them to come here; are we going to pay their way and put them out of the country, or are we going to try, by various methods, mostly commercial, to convert them to our way of thinking? The hon. gentleman who introduced the subject this afternoon thought fit to quote from, and likely quite properly, or to refer to the records of the Trades Congress of Canada on the question of immigration. I do not complain that he did so, but I feel that there is ground for a little complaint in that he did not go far enough but that he dropped off at 1896. I think that the position of the Trades Congress on the immigration question has always been a logical and consistent one, and that their position is not very different to-day from what it was in 1893 or 1894, except that it has been a little further developed. In 1893, referring to the Proceedings of the Trades Congress, the hon. gentleman read the resolution in which the Trades Congress condemned any governmental means of bringing in immigration that would interfere practically with industrial business; that is that would bring in immigration in bulk, that would be placed in direct competition with men who are at work or who are looking for work, or in other words that would increase the supply of the labour market and have the effect of reducing wages. In 1894 the resolution passed was practically to the same effect. And then again in 1896, after the present government came into office, the Congress met again and drew up a resolution very much on the same lines and which called for a remodelled system of immigration, a system that would result only in bringing people here to go on the land. Now, I do not see that there is any inconsistency in these resolutions at all. Then, there was another resolution on the question of immigration in 1899, which I find in the Proceedings of the Congress:

Whereas, the Trade Congress is on record as raising no objection to honest frugal and industrial agriculturists coming of their own volition and expense to Canada, and settling on our vacant lands, at the same time we do most emphatically protest against the action of the Dominion government in spending the people's money by granting assisted passages, as the present system of immigration is largely maintained in the interests of those connected with transportation, and those employers to whose profits cheap labour contributes. The right stamp of immigration is not obtained by bonus-ing transportation companies, as those corporations never do exercise proper judgment in selecting a desirable class of settlers.