

*Supply—Immigration*

help all the year round, especially in view of the fact that they find it difficult to meet their own economic needs. What, then, will become of these immigrants in the winter months? Granting that there are men in the cities who will not work on the farms, if these other people also go into the cities and look for work, will there not be more unemployment? My question is: Will the Government assume now the responsibility for the situation which this action is very likely to create?

Mr. LEADER: I would like to ask the minister what attitude the Government intends to take with regard to Hutterites coming into Canada. We have in the constituency of Portage la Prairie a unique situation. During the war this class of immigrants came into Canada from the United States; I am told that their object was to avoid naval service. Anyway, they were allowed to come here and to settle up round Elie. They are regarded by the settlers up there as undesirable citizens; they segregate into colonies and are simply impossible of assimilation. Since coming down here I have received a resolution passed by the local branch of the United Farmers of Elie and in St. Eustache, a copy of which I handed to the minister, protesting against any further immigration of this class of settlers. Is it the intention of the Government to remove the restrictions that now exist with regard to the entry of this class of immigrants?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): That has already been done by Order in Council, with respect to both Hutterites and Mennonites.

Mr. LEADER: The restrictions have been removed?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes.

Mr. LEADER: Well, what shall I do with regard to the resolution passed by my constituents protesting against the entry of these immigrants into Canada?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): No settler can come into Canada on the specific understanding that in any way he can avoid the obligations of Canadian citizenship. As I understand it, that has been the difficulty in the past. Moreover, some of these people have persisted in settling in colonies. That cannot be charged against the Mennonites, except the old colonies in Manitoba.

[Mr. Irvine.]

Mr. LEADER: Do I understand the minister to say that if these people come in with the intention of settling in colonies, that will be prohibited?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I could not say we would prohibit it, but I can say this. These people will have to assume all the obligations of a Canadian citizen, with respect to military service and everything else. But to say that they shall not settle on three or four sections of land would be going beyond that point perhaps. Every effort, however, will be made to prevent them colonizing.

It is my intention as soon as the House prorogues to visit every provincial government in Canada for the purpose of working out with them a scheme of settlement, particularly in the western provinces, and in that way give them a larger control of the individual after he arrives in Canada. The complaint has frequently been made—I have made it myself in Alberta—that the Dominion government was bringing in settlers a large percentage of whom were mentally deficient. That is why I am insisting to-day on very strict medical examination and a careful scrutiny of the family history of intending immigrants. I know I am being accused by many good people of being too strict in this connection. Friends and sometimes members of parliament object very strenuously to my action in deciding to deport people who are not physically and mentally fit.

Mr. IRVINE: Does the minister think it would be feasible for the Canadian authorities to make the examination that is made on this side of the water, before embarkation? It does seem to me that the present system puts the immigrant to a very great deal of inconvenience if he is found unfit on his arrival here and is returned.

Mr. LEADER: I am pleased to hear the remarks of the minister, and I trust that he will pay a visit to the district that I speak of and examine conditions there. If he does, he will find out that what I say is true, and that these people are living in colonies. I think they have perhaps seven or nine now. I had the opportunity of going through one of these colonies, and I do not believe that the conditions that exist there are desirable in Canada. These people are good farmers but I do not believe we shall ever be able to assimilate them. The settlers up there are protesting against their entry, and I would ask the minister