

Supply—Immigration

other Canadians were out of work. That is simply an illustration of what has been going on all along. I would not be doing my duty by the class of people who send me to this house if I did not protest against any more immigrants being induced to come here while any of our own people are unemployed.

Just one other aspect of the case. I read the other day the annual report issued by the public school board of my own city of Winnipeg. Of the 6,938 pupils between the ages of 14 and 18 who left school, 4,449 are employed. There are still, however, 760 boys and 1,587 girls over 14 years of age who have left school and have not found employment. Now, that is a serious state of affairs for any one city. And what is true of Winnipeg is equally true of a large number of towns and cities in the west. Our own girls and boys do not know which way to turn for work. Any of us who have children in our families know how difficult it is to find work for them. I have scores of my own constituents come to me imploring help in this direction. They say: "Tell us how we can place our girls and boys; what is there for them to do?" And yet these girls and boys walking the streets of Winnipeg and other cities not knowing what to do meet at the trains thousands of people who are brought in here, and who in too many cases are given the preference by employers of labour.

Had I time I should like to have presented to this house a series of statistics prepared for me by a professor of economics that go to show that after all we have needed immigrants only in the pioneer stage when there were not large numbers of young people growing up in our own homes, but that to-day we have reached the stage where young families are rapidly coming to the working age, and in the years to come we will have increasing numbers of these young people, especially in the west, thrown on the labour market. So we will not have the same need of immigrants, and cannot absorb them as we have been doing in the past. I would impress upon the government the urgent necessity of refusing to permit more immigrants to come into this country until our unemployed people are reabsorbed into industry. I would also suggest that before very long this department be transferred in the way I have indicated.

Mr. SPENCER: What is the reason for the big increase of \$75,000 in the outside service?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): In this case it is not immigration work but preventive work. We have eleven new employees in the eastern district located at the entrances

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

from the United States. At the new bridge in Windsor, where there is very heavy traffic requiring a large staff, we have twenty-two people employed. As new ports are opened for entry to and exit from Canada they have to be manned by immigration officials whose duty it is to examine the people passing to and fro. I think that accounts very largely for the increased staff which is required.

Mr. LUCAS: Do I understand the government contemplates making a change in its immigration policy? Will the minister state briefly what the plan is, and also when the present agreement with the railways expires?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Some years ago, acting in the capacity of minister, I thought we should have more care exercised to ascertain where we could place people. I agree entirely with the remarks of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. In the year 1923 I visited the various provinces of Canada to discuss with them the advisability of the provinces taking the responsibility for colonization. At that time we were administering the western resources, the Peace River block and the belt in British Columbia. I was told that the matter of immigration was a responsibility of the federal government and that therefore the provinces could not agree to assume any responsibility in that connection. Upon that occasion I was not successful in interesting the provinces, but we have now reached the stage in our history when the federal government will have no control of crown lands. The provinces are taking them over, and for that reason I have again entered into correspondence with the provincial legislatures with a view to having them take over the colonization of their own provinces. The provinces are almost unanimous that they should accept this responsibility. I have sent the deputy minister to visit all the provincial governments for the purpose of discussing this matter with them. We had decided to hold a conference when he returns in June, but with the election before us we find that such a course would be impossible. There is no doubt the election would interfere and it would be utterly impossible to hold a conference during an election contest, particularly when two of the provinces are engaged in provincial contests. With those facts in mind we have decided to call a conference in the month of August to settle the details. Briefly, my hope is that the provinces themselves will stipulate what numbers of people they can absorb; I hope they will give us the details of the numbers they may require and from what countries they want them. We will endeavour to super-