

ble opinion it is necessary to have agents in the West to look after them when they arrive. There was a time several years ago when our two hon. ministers who have spoken homesteaded in the West. Homesteading then could be done very cheaply. But that day is past. The cost of equipment and of living while they are waiting to be settled has greatly increased, the cost of the land has increased, and unless these people have a considerable sum of money with them there is no prospect so far as I can see for them to immediately settle on the land and make good; and unless the department is prepared to have some organization that will take care of these people for the first few months I cannot see any prospect of evading this trouble. I would appeal to the minister, unless he is entirely convinced that conditions are not as represented in that press report, that he lend his influence and the influence of his department to making the conditions at least somewhat better than they are.

Hon. E. M. MACDONALD (Acting Minister of National Defence): I shall not detain the House more than a few moments. I happen to be a son of the Macdonalds of the Hebrides islands. My forefathers came to this country 160 years ago. They came to what was then an unknown land. They landed in Nova Scotia and they had no buildings prepared for them; the land was not ready for the plough; they had to go into the forest and cut down the trees to build their houses. Then they had to clear the land. Day by day and year by year hundreds of these men and women endured these hardships. Then there came in a continuous stream of other men from the Hebrides and the Western islands and peopled the whole of eastern Nova Scotia. The men who came in after years had to go through all these privations that the first settlers endured. There was nobody there representing the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment or any other governmental institution to look after them when they arrived. They fought their way along and they gave to Canada, to the church and along educational lines the leading men of the Dominion for the last seventy-five years. There are more men and women speaking Gaelic in eastern Nova Scotia than there are in the whole Western islands to-day. This year, within a month, we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of the landing of these first Scotch settlers in the town where I have the honour to live and the county I have the honour to represent. I mention this fact because as one who has read the history of the pri-

privations of these men and women and the story of their wonderful achievement, I sometimes wonder whether the men of this twentieth century are built of the same fibre as the stalwart men and women of one hundred and fifty years ago, and I would ask the House in considering the situation of these sons of the Hebrides who have come here in these later days to make a comparison in some slight degree between the difficulties they may be undergoing for the moment and the hardships which their fellow-clansmen endured and the difficulties they overcame over one hundred and fifty years ago.

I had the pleasure of meeting Father Macdonell on his way to the West, I had not had the opportunity of meeting him before. I discussed with him, being a Highlander myself, the story of the Macdonald highlanders and the genus of the race from which he and the men whom he was taking to the West sprang. I pointed out to him that, as the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Ross) has said, the Highlander is naturally a mystic. He is born under the conditions outlined in the poem which the leader of the Progressive party (Mr. Forke) so aptly quoted, and it is under such conditions that the genus of the race has developed. When these people are transplanted to the foothills of the Rockies, knowing the sentiments they entertain towards the land of their forefathers, transplanted into a community which is utterly foreign and where conditions are vastly different from those they have been accustomed to from boyhood—

Mr. McISAAC: And a dry province.

Mr. MACDONALD: —I can understand something of the strangeness and perhaps a little irritation that they feel for the moment. My hon. friend suggests it is the absence of the beverage to which they have been accustomed. Well, at least there will be a lack of something out there to cheer them in their dull hours and pessimistic moments. I am sure it would only be fair on the part of the hon. member for Red Deer—in view of the explanation which has been given by the minister, and which indicated that the solicitude of the department and the interest of the government is to see that these sons of old Scotland who have come to the Dominion and gone out to that western land shall be given every possible attention—to withdraw his motion.

Hon. R. J. MANION (Fort William and Rainy River): I wish to make a few observations on this question because it illustrates to me, and I think will illustrate to the House,