

was not in evidence. Each individual had sold all his property in his homeland in order to pay the subsidized fare, and it is not likely that anyone had more than the bare necessity to face the inevitable and uncontrollable expense that was sure to materialize. They could not see their way clear to pay the additional cost of travel from Ontario to the west.

It was arranged that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Jonasson should meet with the Canadian authorities and seek the necessary help to defray these new expenses. Alexander Mackenzie, the prime minister, was sympathetic but the new request was not covered by any legislation and it involved a new policy in aid to immigrants. Money was available to help people to come to Canada and to get established after arrival, but there was no provision for moving them from place to place. However, it was agreed that the Dominion government would bear the expense of transportation to Winnipeg, but from thereon the immigrants would have to look after themselves in order to get to the site of their chosen colony. The committee was told that there was also the usual money available to help buy provisions necessary to maintain the people during the first winter, which could be used, if necessary, to get from Winnipeg to the Lake Winnipeg settlement. This arrangement was satisfactory to the committee.

This conference with the Prime Minister was the first of several meetings for the young Sigtryggur Jónasson and it left on him a deep impression and sense of gratitude for the helpfulness and understanding of the Liberal prime minister. Although he was not as yet a citizen in this new country, it drew him into the web of the Liberal party, where he remained steadfast and loyal over a long period of years when he himself became a prominent political figure.

It is now almost ninety years (1965) since the decision as to the location of the main Icelandic settlement in Canada was arrived at by the small group of Icelanders and John Taylor. This decision was one of unanimity in the party of inspection and was enthusiastically accepted by the main group in Ontario that had dispatched them and waited with eagerness the outcome of their findings. It was not until the arrival of the group in Winnipeg, October 11, 1875, that certain problems began to emerge casting some doubt in the minds of those who were inclined to question the wisdom of their leaders. After they had weathered the first winter in their new quarters at Gimli and suffered the many hardships and tragedies that befell them, the number of doubting Thomases' grew and reached its maximum in the spring of 1877, when they were notified that there would be no more government loans and that henceforth they were on their own. Life had not been too unpleasant so long as provisions had been readily available, but when they were left to survive by their own initiative and resources, it was, for many, a heart-breaking experience. This type of settler was easily influenced by