

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

become aware of the terms of their transportation in and out of this country? If this can be done, these prospective employers will know the proper channels through which they can obtain the services of these men, and the men in turn will know how to obtain immigrant status as workers here.

Mr. J. C. Munro (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the following statement will satisfy the query of the hon. member for Kent (Ont.).

When the government of Canada approved this special and experimental movement this year, it was solely to relieve a shortage of sessional harvest labour in Ontario. It was expressly stipulated that the workers must leave Canada upon the completion of their contracts, and must not use this means of gaining immigrant status in Canada. This was agreed to and clearly understood by the Jamaican government and the workers themselves. They cannot remain in Canada after the expiry of their contracts.

If any of these workers should decide in the future that they would like to become immigrants, and if they have the necessary qualifications, then they would at that time be admissible in the ordinary way. They cannot be accorded special treatment because they came for seasonal work, on conditions strictly defined as temporary.

INDUSTRY—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON BOYCOTT OF SUPERMARKETS

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday of this week I asked the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) the following question:

Has the Prime Minister anything to report to the house on the housewives' boycott of food chain stores in Ontario and Quebec?

My question related to a protest meeting that was held about two and half weeks ago by the Ottawa Consumers Protest Association. They protest the high cost of living and, in particular, high food costs in food chain stores in the Ottawa areas.

The spirit of that meeting would indicate an outrage on the part of Ottawa housewives toward the high prices charged by chain stores, and there was manifested a determination to take immediate boycott action against these high costs. They have had a boycott for the last two weeks, and the reports I have received are that the boycott has been a real success. In fact, the Ottawa

[Mr. Danforth (Kent (Ont.).)]

Consumers Protest Association will continue the boycott for a further two weeks to give encouragement to other protest organizations across the country which have contacted them for advice and help with regard to a similar problem which they have experienced in their own areas. It is also worthy to note that 2,000 Toronto housewives will make a check on prices in Toronto this week end to determine why there has been an increase in the price of food in general stores.

• (10:20 p.m.)

We feel that the government should give leadership in supporting the housewives' demands by taking immediate, constructive legislative action. We in the New Democratic Party feel that the following five measures should be taken into account: First, the establishment of a permanent prices review board to examine the prices of a wide range of items on behalf of the Canadian consumer. We have urged the government to do this on many occasions. We feel that if the government had followed the advice given them, the housewives may not have experienced the high food price spiral to which they have been subjected recently. We believe it is not sufficient to refer this problem to a special, temporary committee of the house which will take a long time to hear the evidence and bring forth a report. Experience has shown that reports tend to become buried and no action is taken by the government. A prices review board should be permanent in nature, having representatives from business, labour and consumer organizations and staffed with economists, consumer and accounting representatives so that consumer organizations can bring to the attention of the board matters which directly affect the welfare and well-being of the Canadian consumer.

Second, there should be legislation immediately to outlaw trading stamps and other promotional gimmicks. Housewives want lower prices, not gimmicks. They know that they, and they alone, are paying higher prices for these promotional gimmicks. They are not prepared to accept the excuse that promotion increases sales volume, which enables the company to keep prices down. Experience has shown that the opposite has happened; prices have gone up, and not down. Evidence before the committee has shown that the one large chain store that has not dealt in trading stamps has been able to offer most food items at lower prices.

Third, there should be a government educational consumer program to make the