

government proposes to make, to become effective on April 1, to strengthen the manpower mobility program.

It will be recalled that this program was introduced late in 1965. A worker who has been unemployed for four months may qualify for a grant to help him to move with his family to another area where there is a job for him. A worker who has been unemployed for less than four months may obtain a loan for the same purpose.

Parliament in this fiscal year provided \$3,500,000 for grants, and a revolving fund of \$5 million was established for the loans. In the first 12 months, however, there were 1,207 grants and 982 loans amounting to a total combined value of approximately \$1,185,000.

Clearly the program is not providing as much help as was intended. The reason is that we recognized from the beginning that it would be a difficult program to administer, and that therefore we should start cautiously, broadening the program as we gain experience. I took one step in that direction last April by providing that people living in an area where a shut-down or a lay-off removed a major source of employment would be eligible for grants and not be subject to the previous requirement that they be unemployed for four months.

We are now ready to take a further major step. The following three changes are proposed. First, we will drop altogether the restrictive condition about four months' unemployment. That is to say, this will no longer be partially a loan program. Any man who is unemployed, or has been notified of his permanent lay-off, will be entitled to a grant if there is little prospect of suitable employment in his home community and there is a definite job for him to go to in another area.

Second, we propose to amend the grants to lessen what is often the main obstacle to moving, in that the man who owns his own home faces considerable expense and even loss in selling a house in an area where there is unemployment and has to obtain what is likely to be more expensive housing in another area. To offset this we will make a grant of \$500 when the former home is sold or when a new one is purchased.

Third, we propose to make small grants to enable unemployed people to look for work in the nearest area where there are better opportunities than in their home district. This grant will cover the person's return travel expenses and, if he has dependants, a modest allowance to help support them while he is

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away. This allowance will be up to \$20 a week for the first dependant, \$30 a week for two dependants, and \$40 a week for three or more. The allowance will be available for a maximum of four weeks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I believe that these changes greatly improve our mobility program. They do not, however, make it complete. The people who most need help in relocation are not always unemployed but are people such as marginal farmers with very low incomes from their present occupations. We want to help these underemployed people but it will be appreciated that there are difficult problems of definition and administration. We therefore want our officers to gain experience with the broader grants for unemployed before making the further extension of coverage.

Accordingly, the government plans that, while the changes I have announced will take effect on April 1, further changes to cover underemployed people will be introduced with effect on September 1.

I would like to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that we will implement this broadened program in a way that co-ordinates it with the industrial development activities of the provinces and of other governmental agencies. Generally speaking, we will be helping workers to move to the nearest community where there are jobs. It is not our intention to divert manpower from emerging employment in nearby areas or elsewhere in a province, but rather to make it possible for people to move to such employment and thus strengthen regional and provincial development programs.

There is one final point. This program now operates on the basis of regulations. That is appropriate to the developmental stage that it has been in and that will continue for some time yet. By the fall, however, I think we will have brought it to a form that can be regarded as fairly complete. The government's intention therefore is at that time to introduce legislation by which parliament would give the program a permanent basis.

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to compliment the minister on trying to improve the experimental manpower mobility program which was originally introduced. It was quite evident at the beginning that this program contained too many restrictions so that people could only qualify for