

Immigration of Jamaicans

These measures are liable to be of assistance to certain areas such as those the minister mentioned. I should, however, like to call the minister's attention to other areas which he has not mentioned this afternoon, for instance the area of Val d'Or-Malartic, where gold mines are to close. Other mines are discontinuing their operations and we have to attend to moving such manpower as is no longer needed.

If the minister were to make a thorough study of the situation prevailing in our region, I think he would ask his colleagues to urge the government to help create new industries and develop new mines wherever this can be done, so as to keep our manpower in our region and avoid any relocation. This would not only prevent relocation of workers, but it would also prevent them from running into debt because, according to government policy, they would have to pay back, over the next five or ten years, the loans obtained.

I, therefore, draw the attention of the minister to this matter. I hope that he will examine it thoroughly and that new industries will be attracted to areas where workers are already established so that they may go on living there.

● (2:50 p.m.)

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION**FARM LABOUR FROM JAMAICA FOR
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO**

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement on government policy with regard to the entry into Canada of Jamaican workers coming to help with the crops and other agricultural work.

A thorough study of seasonal labour demands undertaken by the department and the national farm labour committee indicates that Canadian workers can meet the demand in the various parts of Canada, provided however that recruiting is intensified and the movement of labour is well planned.

Nevertheless, a shortage of workers for picking fruit and vegetable crops in southwestern Ontario is almost assured, this coming summer and fall.

Under those circumstances, my department has agreed to authorize, in advance, the entry of Jamaican workers, so that farmers and fruit growers might prepare for their crops. I wish to make it clear that the entry into Canada of foreign workers is permitted only under strictly ordered and specific conditions

and must not interfere with the salaries, conditions of work and job opportunities enjoyed by Canadian workers.

After consultation with the Ontario branch of the federal-provincial committee on farm labour, the government stipulates that farmers, before hiring Jamaican seasonal labour, must agree to a number of conditions, including a minimum salary of \$1.25 per hour, in addition to adequate lodgings; a period of work of not less than eight weeks and not more than 16 weeks, but which shall be extended so as to guarantee an average weekly salary of \$50 during the period of employment; and the payment, by the operator, of travelling expenses to and from the operation.

Casual employment will be offered Canadian workers under similar or even better conditions than those I have just outlined, under the federal-provincial agreement on farm labour. Travelling expenses of workers hired for at least five weeks will be paid, as well as the return fare in the case of those having worked at least for that period of time. If, for one reason or another, a worker cannot complete his assignment, he will be paid the return fare of a substitute.

Fruit and vegetable growers in southwestern Ontario are requested to notify without delay the National Employment Service in regard to the workers they want to hire, under those or better conditions. Applications for Jamaican workers will not be accepted after May 15.

After the applications reach the National Employment Service, discussions will be held with Jamaican authorities with regard to the conditions of employment laid down by the department. The producers themselves will then conclude the negotiations with the Jamaican authorities. The Immigration Service of the department will look after the official procedures governing the entry of workers into Canada, in accordance with the agreements entered into with the authorities of Jamaica.

The Canadian government has agreed to seek in Caribbean countries, Commonwealth members with which our country has special ties, the labour it might need. The government of Jamaica has shown interest in our seasonal workers on several occasions. During his visit to Jamaica in November 1965, the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Pearson) was approached on this subject. But since the agreements will have to be entered into over a limited period of time, it has been decided