

GRANT TO NIGERIAN AGRICULTURE

A grant of \$3,683,000 has been approved by the Canadian Government over a five-year period to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The announcement of this grant coincided with ceremonies that were being held in Ibadan on April 20 to officially open the Institute. Representing Canada at the opening was Dr. Stuart Peters, special adviser to the President of the Canadian International Development Agency. Dr. Peters was elected to the Institute's 15-man Board of Trustees at a meeting on April 18.

Established in 1967 by the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture provides international research and training to increase the output and improve the quality of tropical food crops. Its program is organized in five major sectors: soil and crop management, crop improvement, plant protection, agricultural engineering and agricultural economics. Although the Institute is located in Nigeria, its work will be applicable to all tropical agricultural areas.

The initial outlay of funds for construction of the physical plant and provision of equipment was financed by the Ford Foundation at a cost of \$14.5 million (U.S.). Ford has also agreed to provide, with the Rockefeller Foundation, operational funds in the form of annual grants of up to a maximum of \$75,000 (U.S.). The Government of Nigeria provided 2,300 acres of land at a cost of \$1,750,000 (U.S.) adjacent to the University of Ibadan for the Institute's central headquarters.

In providing assistance, Canada joins with the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in the direction of the Institute. Canada's experience in crop storage, handling and disinfection is particularly important to the IITA because in some tropical areas as much as 60 per cent of the new high-producing food crops are spoiled or infested.

CARIBBEAN SUGAR REBATES CEASE

The Canadian Government has decided to discontinue sugar rebates in 1970 and to offer instead a special agricultural development fund of \$5 million.

Since the beginning of 1967, Canada has been making direct annual payments to the governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries equal to the duty collected on imports of their raw sugar. The value of the sugar rebates amounted over the last three calendar years to about \$1 million a year.

A new International Sugar Agreement, which Canada was instrumental in negotiating, came into effect in 1969 and has resulted in a stabilization of and substantial increase in free-market sugar prices of benefit to sugar-producing countries generally and Commonwealth Caribbean producers in particular. The Canadian Government therefore concluded that

the proposed agricultural fund would be an appropriate way of trying to assist the Commonwealth Caribbean governments to promote the agricultural development of the area. The special fund would be additional to normal allocations of development assistance and, prior to its exhaustion, the possibility of replenishment would be reviewed with the area in the light of needs and objectives. The Canadian Government is consulting with the governments concerned about the establishment of the fund.

IMMIGRANT PASSAGE LOANS

Assisted-passage loans are now available for immigrants from all countries to Canada, Manpower and Immigration Minister Allan J. MacEachen announced recently. Before April 1, such loans were available only in Europe and the West Indies.

"We can now extend this financial assistance throughout the world," Mr. MacEachen said. "It is possible at this time mainly because immigrants have faithfully repaid transportation loans, with only a very small loss to the loan fund."

Loans are made from a \$20-million revolving fund. Since 1951, more than \$50 million has been provided in loans, with a loss repayment of only 2.2 per cent. Some 310,000 persons have benefited from loans since the fund was established.

Assisted-passage loans are available to immigrants who need financial assistance and who intend to work in occupations in strong demand in Canada. Loans may cover the transportation costs of the applicant and his immediate family, including unmarried children 18 years of age and under, up to a maximum of \$1,500. The applicant must pay the first \$50 towards the cost of transportation. Interest is charged at 6 per cent per annum.

According to Mr. MacEachen, despite heavy demands for loans in recent years, the fund now is in a healthy position, permitting the Department to offer loans universally at this time. The Minister noted that in 1968 and 1969 more than \$1.5 million had been provided in transportation loans to Czechoslovakian refugees.

ITALIAN OFFICER TRAINING

Last January, 53 officers of the Italian Air Force arrived in Canada to receive flying training under an agreement between the Canadian and Italian Governments.

The trainees, all 2nd lieutenants, have now completed language refresher training at Canadian Forces Base Gimli, Manitoba, before going to CFB Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, for flying instruction. They are to receive the same basic CL-41 *Tutor* jet course given to Canadian aircrew, and about 30 hours on the T-33. Their course will end in December.