CABINET

IMMIGRATION POLICY

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department

1. The Ministerial Committee on Immigration and Community Relations (IC) has recently considered three matters which I should bring to the Cabinet's notice.

a. THE PATRIAL PROVISIONS IN THE IMMIGRATION BILL

2. IC considered the action which should be taken following the amendment, in Commons Committee, to Clause 2(1)(c) of the Immigration Bill, which effectively removed the "grandparental concession". As the Bill stands only Commonwealth citizens with a United Kingdom-born father (as is the present law) or mother (as is now proposed) would be free from immigration control. This will substantially reduce the value of the intended patriotic concession to the old Commonwealth, where the Government's original proposals were welcomed. The objection to trying to restore the grandparental provision on Report is that this would give rise to serious political difficulties, and might even put at risk the remaining concession relating to the children of mothers born in the United Kingdom. IC therefore concluded that we should not seek to restore the grandparental provision, but that the decision should not meanwhile be disclosed.

b. ADMISSION OF ALIENS FOR EMPLOYMENT

3. In approving my proposals for the Immigration Bill (CM(71) 1st Conclusions, Minute 3), the Cabinet invited the Secretary of State for Employment to study possible measures to reduce the employment of aliens. Despite the increase in unemployment here, there has been a significant increase in the employment of aliens in recent years (especially in the hotel and catering industry), and the Secretary of State proposes to apply more rigorously the procedure for establishing that no indigenous local labour is available before issuing any permit for the employment of aliens. Other features of the changes approved by IC (summarised at Annex) are:

   a. No permits for unskilled and semi-skilled men in industry and commerce, apart from hotels and catering.

   b. No permits for semi-skilled men for non-seasonal jobs in hotels and catering.

   c. Present intake of 7,000 unskilled male seasonal workers in hotels and catering to be reduced,
4. Domestically the early announcement of these measures would help to counter criticisms that under the Immigration Bill aliens would fare better than Commonwealth citizens and would show our concern about the unemployment problem.

5. But there are difficulties in relation to the current negotiations on our entry into the European Economic Community (EEC). Like some of the other actions we are taking, the restrictions proposed would run counter to EEC provisions about free movement of labour and in announcing them we would have to be ready to show how they would be affected by accession to the EEC. It is also possible that any early announcement might embarrass our EEC negotiators.

c. UNITED KINGDOM PASSPORT HOLDERS IN EAST AFRICA (UKPH)

6. Talks have been in progress with the Kenya and Uganda Governments on the basis of the proposed doubling of the admission quota approved by the Cabinet on 26 November (CM(70) 41st Conclusions, Minute 6). Our High Commissioner has reported that Vice-President Moi of Kenya - the responsible Minister - will give a personal assurance that our basic requirements (on non-prosecution of UKPHs waiting in the queue, and the readmission of queue jumpers) will be met, but there appears to be little chance of getting a formal Kenyan undertaking. The Amin coup interrupted our talks with Uganda but we now hope to reach agreement on a similar basis. We would like to conclude discussions with the East African Governments in time for a Parliamentary announcement later this month. The increased quota would relieve pressure in East Africa and should do much to reduce the bad publicity we suffer at present. Any public statement on the quota should, however, be linked with the announcement of a decision to reduce the flow of other Commonwealth immigrants.

TIMING

7. Subject, therefore, to being able to settle the details with the East African Governments, and to EEC considerations, the right course would be to announce the UKPH decision towards the end of this month and to link with it announcements on the reduced entry of aliens as well as on the reduced Commonwealth entry.

RECOMMENDATION

8. I invite the Cabinet:

a. to agree that if there is no change in the Parliamentary position we should not seek to restore the deleted provision about grandparents in the Immigration Bill (paragraph 2);

b. to approve the proposed measures to reduce the employment of aliens (paragraphs 3 and 4);

c. to note the arrangements being made with East African Governments over UKPHs (paragraph 6); and

d. to agree that an announcement should be made about the end of May on UKPHs and on a reduced entry of both alien and Commonwealth workers; and to consider the timing.

Home Office SW1
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EMPLOYMENT OF ALIENS IN GREAT BRITAIN

The restrictions proposed by the Secretary of State for Employment and agreed by the Ministerial Committee on Immigration and Community Relations apply mainly to males, since unemployment is a male problem, and are as follows:

(a) To tighten up procedures for establishing that no indigenous unemployed labour is available - the "local labour" rule - mainly by requiring more extensive and prolonged notification of vacancies over a wider area.

(b) To exclude permits for unskilled and semi-skilled men in industry and commerce (apart from hotels and catering).

(c) To exclude completely permits for semi-skilled men for non-seasonal jobs in hotels and catering. (Permits are not issued for unskilled non-seasonal jobs for men.)

(d) To impose a quota (which for practical reasons could not be effective until next year) to reduce the present intake of 7,000 unskilled male seasonal workers in hotels and catering.

(e) To confine action as regards women, including resident domestics in institutions and private households, to the tightening of the "local labour" rule ((a) above).

(f) To apply the above criteria to applications for a change of job by aliens, but to make no change in present arrangements for dealing with applications for extension of stay by aliens so long as they continue in approved employment.