

East German Farmers Want To Come to Canada

BERLIN (Reuters) — Canadian officials say East German farmers fleeing to West Berlin are queuing up at a rate of 100 a day outside the Canadian labor office here to get details about emigration possibilities.

After hearing all the conditions, between 40 and 50 a day actually apply to emigrate.

Fifty farmers aged between 19 and 45 get labor contracts for one year or more if selected. They have to prove that they have not belonged to any political party in East Germany, though membership in farmers' unions, which are also Communist-dominated, is not held against a man.

The Canadian immigration mission, which has its headquarters in Karlsruhe in West Germany, regularly sends officials to Berlin to select farmer-emigrants.

During their last visit to West Berlin, mission officials granted 273 visas out of a total of 700 applications filed.

PERMANENT OFFICE

Officials of the Canadian labor office, a permanent advisory office here, which also collects applications, said that when the Karlsruhe representatives next come here they will have to handle over 2,000 applications.

The West German chancellor, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, proposed

when he visited Berlin in February, that German farmers should be allowed to go to Canada for periods of up to four years while retaining their German nationality. After that time, they should return "to recolonize" East Germany, once German unity was restored.

Under the present Canadian plan, farmers, while having to sign contracts for at least one year, must promise to pay back by instalments the fare to Canada. The cost of the fare is advanced by the Canadian government.

Farmers have to pay between \$160 and \$180 in fares to reach Canada, and another \$75 to \$100 for railway fares to destinations inside Canada.

In Canada, they begin working for about \$40 a week which can be raised to \$80.

Married farmers go alone, though their wives can follow them when family living quarters have been found.

Refugee farmers who have already emigrated have written to relatives here saying: "Pay is high and living is cheap. But one has to work hard. Canada is no paradise."

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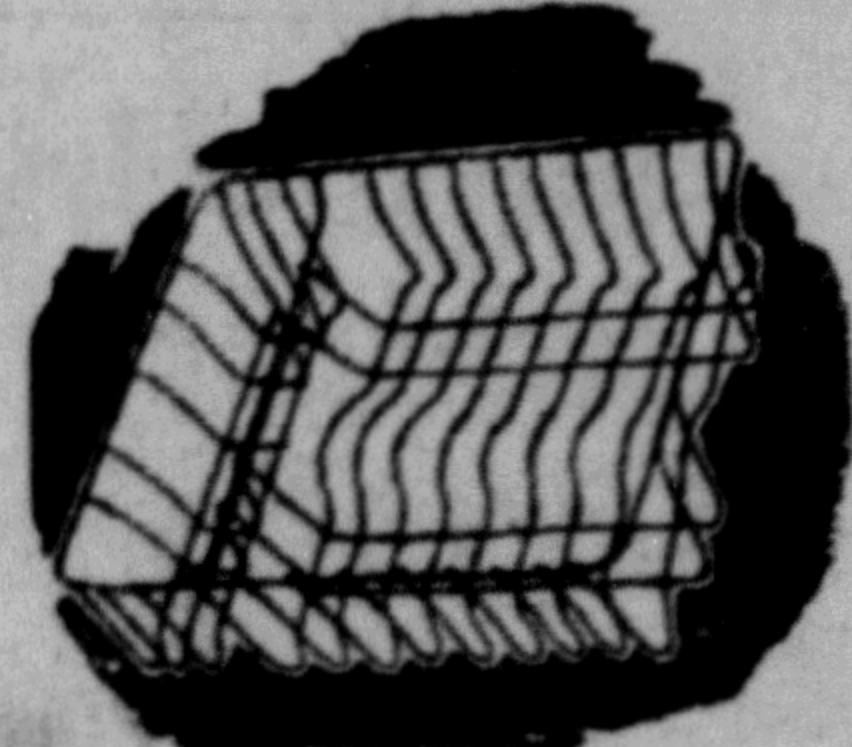
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