

## ITALIAN AND DUTCH MIGRANTS FOR RURAL AREAS

**P**“PRIMARY producers would, in future, get migrant labour in preference to metropolitan employers provided they could employ it,” said Mr. Holt, Minister for Labour and National Service. Relief for primary producers whose efforts to increase production were being hampered by labour shortages, was announced by Mr. Holt today.

As a result of the Government's Assisted Passage Agreements with Italy and the Netherlands, there had now arrived in Australia the first 500 migrants from those countries, selected specially with a background of rural experience.

This first group would be employed initially on seasonal work in the Murray Valley until early April, and after this useful introduction to Australian rural conditions, would be available to primary producers in the Eastern States. A special group would shortly be disembarked in Western Australia.

Mr Holt said that these rural workers, all single men and all under contract to the Common-

wealth for two years, should prove of much more immediate value to farmers than did many displaced persons who, despite their commendable courage in tackling rural work, needed some time to adjust themselves to farm life.

The new migrants, and they are largely Italians in the first 500, have the benefit of previous rural experience. Mr Holt emphasised that all the migrants