

BRITAIN'S RE-APPLICATION FOR ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

As the House is aware, the Government of the United Kingdom has recently reapplied for entry into the European Economic Community. Accession by Britain to the Community could have serious trade and other implications for Jamaica and other Commonwealth countries.

2. The Government has naturally been following closely the course of events leading to Britain's re-application for entry into the Common Market. Arrangements were made for consultations between Jamaica's High Commission in London and the appropriate Government Departments in the United Kingdom. The U.K. High Commission in Jamaica has also been in close touch with this Government and has provided verbal accounts of the probings made by the British Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary in the capitals of the members of the European Community. The Government has assigned an officer with wide trade experience to Brussels and it is intended to strengthen our representation there.
3. The British Government has indicated that a basis for joining the European Community is the safeguarding of essential commonwealth interests. We have also been assured that there will be full and detailed consultations with the Government of Jamaica on all points of concern to this country.
4. At the invitation of the British Government, the Government of Jamaica has commented on the implications for Jamaica, should Britain join the Common Market. It has been pointed out that export of certain agricultural products is only possible because these products enjoy in addition to general commonwealth preferences specific protection by non-tariff measures. It has been emphasized inter alia that it would be vital for Britain to maintain the existing protection for our agricultural products in the British Market.
5. In view of the importance of British membership of the Common Market to all Commonwealth Caribbean countries, the

Government has invited the Trade Ministers and other representatives of all these territories to a conference scheduled to commence on 19th May. The purpose of this conference is to examine together the implications of the British move for the territories in the region as a whole and to consider future action.

6. The House will, of course, be kept informed of important developments as they occur.

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MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY.
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