

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**FRIDAY, 3rd OCTOBER, 1947**

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Campbell Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. D. J. Parkinson (Acting).

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. M. Duke (Acting).

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. E. F. McDavid, C.B.E.

The Hon. Sir Eustace Woolford, O.B.E., K.C. (New Amsterdam).

The Hon. C. V. Wight, O.B.E. (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. J. I. de Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. H. N. Critchlow (Nominated).

The Hon. Dr. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E. (Eastern Berbice).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. C. R. Jacob (North Western District).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. A. M. Edun (Nominated).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. C. P. Ferreira (Berbice River).

The Hon. T. T. Thompson (Nominated);

The Hon. W. J. Raatgever (Nominated).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mr. D. J. Parkinson, Colonial Secretary (Acting), took the Oath of Allegiance and his seat.

The PRESIDENT : I welcome you, Mr. Parkinson, as a Member of this Council.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 26th September, 1947, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.**CONSOLIDATED STANDING RULES AND ORDERS.**

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. E. M. Duke, acting) communicated the following Message :—

MESSAGE No. 22

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

It has become necessary to reprint the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council in order to have copies available for issue to the new Legislative Council.

2. As there have been several amendments since the last publication of the Standing Rules and Orders in November, 1928, the opportunity has been taken to incorporate these amendments in the draft Standing Rules and Orders, copies of which have been circulated to Honourable Members. The Council will, I am sure, agree that the present procedure has operated satisfactorily, and no more is proposed therefore than to consolidate the existing Standing Rules and Orders already approved by the Council.

3. A draft, consolidating the Standing Rules and Orders, will be laid on the table at the next meeting of the Legislative Council, and the acting Attorney-General will move their adoption.

C. C. WOOLLEY,

Governor,

GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 24.

The PRESIDENT : At the last meeting of the Council I said I hoped to be in a position to give hon. Members some definite information about the life of the present Council and the dates for the nomination and election of the new Council. I now wish to announce that I am taking the necessary steps to dissolve this Council on the 24th of October; that nomination day for the new Council will be Friday, 14th November; and that polling for the election of the new Council will take place on Monday, 24th November.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

As I mentioned last week, I hope that before this Council is dissolved the Main Development Committee will be in a position to present its report to the Council. As hon. Members all know, probably only too well, the various Sub-Committees of that Main Committee have been hard at work for 12 months or more, and they have all produced very valuable reports. I hope myself to meet the main Development Committee on the 10th of October to discuss the reports with them, and I hope to help them in any way I can. I also hope it will be possible for them to place their final recommendations before this Council not later than the 23rd of October. It seems to me that to do so, and to have the general endorsement of this Council of the work that has been done, would be a fitting conclusion of the labours of the Committee during the past 12 months.

Mr. LEE : Sir, may I at this stage ask that Government consider the possibility of declaring November 24, a public holiday ?

The PRESIDENT : That is polling day ?

Mr. LEE : Yes, Sir.

ELECTIONS AND THE RICE CROP.

Mr. EDUN : Only this morning I forwarded a request to the Colonial Secretary that Government should consider the desirability of holding the General Election during the first week in December in order that it should not clash with the reaping of the rice crop. I did not know that Your Excellency intended to make the

announcement you have made this afternoon, but I think the request made by the rice growers ought to be examined in order that they may be given every opportunity to vote at the election. Your Excellency will agree that, if they are reaping their rice during the period of the election, it would be impossible for them to be in their rice beds to secure their crops against rain and to go to the polling stations. I make the request for the postponement of the election until the first week in December in the interest of the rice growers, and I am asking Government to consider it.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I wish to support the request made by the hon. Nominated Member that the date of the election should not be allowed to clash with the reaping of the rice crop. If I remember correctly, I think, one of the reasons why the General Election was deferred until now was because it was the unanimous view of this Council that it should be held under the new franchise. Now that the franchise has been extended and is available to practically 90 per cent. of the rice growers of this Colony, the holding of the election during the reaping of the rice crop will nullify the effect of the decision to hold the General Election under the new franchise. If it is the intention of Government to give the masses every facility to exercise the franchise, then a date should be fixed for the General Election which would suit a very important industry of the Colony, and would not clash with the reaping of the rice crop. Your Excellency should bear in mind that it is not only a question of election day; the rice farmers will be occupied for nearly two weeks with election campaigning and that sort of thing, which will interfere a great deal with the reaping of the rice crop. I therefore commend the suggestion to Your Excellency and ask you to give it due consideration.

The PRESIDENT : Would any other Member like to comment on the date of the election ?

Mr. CRITCHLOW : The only comment I would like to make is this. While I am not opposing the request I desire to warn Government that these same people will come back and say that Government

did not want the election to go on. I support the request, but I want to see the election held.

Mr. THOMPSON : I cannot see that any useful purpose will be served by postponing the election until the first week in December. The rice farmers have already started to reap their crop, and to postpone the election for another week will simply give colour to the suggestion made by the last speaker as regards delaying the election. It is current opinion that Members of this Council are doing everything possible to delay the election, and as reaping has already begun I do not think the postponement of the election for another week will help in any way. I cannot see how it will take two weeks for a rice farmer to leave his rice field in order to vote. I cannot support the appeal for a postponement.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : While the request may seem reasonable in view of the possibility of farmers engaged in the reaping of their rice not being able to exercise the franchise for the first time, we have to consider the other aspect of the Budget which should be got through by the end of the year. If we postpone the election until the first week in December I do not know when the Budget would be presented, and when it would be passed. By "the first week in December" I take it that the hon. Nominated Member means round about the 7th of December. The new Council will have to be sworn and the Budget presented. At this rate we may not have a General Election this year at all. I quite agree with the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Critchlow) that it will be laid at the doorstep of Government and some Members of this Council, that we were parties to the delay of the election, and it will also be charged by those candidates who will be opposing the present Members of this Council, that they are responsible for the longevity of the present Council. I think that is another consideration which must enter into the minds of hon. Members before they come to a decision as regards postponing the election.

Mr. LEE : Speaking for my constituency—I cannot speak for the other districts—there will be no difficulty in

reaping the rice crop in my district. The rice farmers there live around the villages, and their rice farms are not very far off. If they desire to exercise the franchise they can easily do so in the morning before they go to work, or in the afternoon after work, the voting period having been extended by an hour.

I agree with the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) that we have to think of the work of the new Council and the Budget session. We cannot always delay the passing of the Budget until the new year, and Members of this Council should consider the arduous task which will confront the new Council. There will, perhaps, be new Members, and I feel that Government should endeavour to carry through the General Election on November 24 as planned, so that the Budget might be passed before the end of the year.

Mr. GONSALVES : I would like to say a few words of sympathy with Government in not knowing what to do in this matter of the General Election. I thought we might have had a new Council by the end of the month, but we now understand that the election is being prolonged. I do not represent rice growers in Georgetown, although I represent rice eaters and, perhaps, they may not feel the same way as certain hon. Members do as regards the postponement of the election. As far as I am concerned it is immaterial to me whether the election is held in November or December, but in view of what I have heard in the past about the constitution of the new Council, I thought the desire would have been to have the General Election through as early as possible.

The PRESIDENT : I have listened very carefully to what has been said and, naturally, one wants to meet everybody's wishes as far as one can, but I do feel myself that November 24 is the latest possible date on which the election should be held. Hon. Members are well aware how long these elections have been delayed, and for myself I had in mind the holding of the election before the 24th November, but that, it seemed to me, was the earliest possible date, having regard to the absence of some hon. Members at the Jamaica Conference and otherwise, and I did promise that if they were going to stand for election we

should fix a date so that they would not suffer by that absence.

But a far more important consideration is, I think, the Budget for next year. It will be practically impossible as it is to get the Budget through before the end of December. It will be the first and most important task of the new Council, and the sooner it can get down to that task the better, I think. I should like to meet the wishes of hon. Members who desire a short postponement, but I do not feel myself that I can possibly agree to a later date than the 24th of November.

PAPERS LAID.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. D. J. Parkinson, acting) : I beg to lay on the table the following documents :—

The Report of the Select Committee appointed to examine the Gambling Prevention (Amendment) Bill in detail and to submit recommendations.

The Report on the Transport and Harbours Department for the year 1946.

REPORTS ON POSSIBILITIES OF NEW INDUSTRIES.

I also lay on the table five Reports relating to the possibilities of establishing new industries in British Guiana. Those Reports have been prepared by Mr. G. O. Case, Consulting Engineer, Chairman of the Secondary and Minor Industries Committee. They relate to the following subjects :—

- (i) White cement and aluminous cement.
- (ii) Manufacture of electro-cast blocks.
- (iii) Sand Lime Products.
- (iv) Manufacture of Glass.
- (v) Manufacture of Veneers and Plywood.

The Report on the manufacture of glass has already been printed. The other Reports will be printed as soon as possible. Meanwhile sufficient copies have been made to enable them to be given the widest distribution and publicity possible.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. E. M. Duke, acting) laid on the table :

Draft Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council.

The COLONIAL TREASURER laid on the table :

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on the 25th of September, 1947.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

DRAFT STANDING RULES AND ORDERS.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL gave notice of the following motion and of his intention to move, at a later stage, the suspension of the relevant Standing Rules and Orders to enable the motion to be taken that day :—

“That, this Council approves of the draft Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council tabled on the 3rd October.”

ORDER OF THE DAY

ADVANCES AND LOANS BY GOVERNMENT.

Mr. ROTH asked, and the COLONIAL SECRETARY laid over replies to the following questions :—

Whereas during the two-year period ending 12th September, 1946, Government advanced by way of travelling expenses to the Honourable A. M. Edun, Mr. D. M. Harper and Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard the sums of Twelve Hundred Dollars, Eight Hundred and Sixty-One Dollars and Seventy-One Cents and Eight Hundred and Sixty-One Dollars and Seventy-One Cents respectively on condition that the said sums were repaid on their return to the Colony, will Government now state :

Q. 1—The dates on which these gentlemen returned to the Colony ?

A. 1—The Honourable A. M. Edun—28th February, 1947.

Mr. D. M. Harper—29th December, 1945.

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard—30th December, 1945.

Q. 2—Whether the said amounts have now been repaid ?

A. 2—No; but \$225 of the advance of \$2,052.56 made to the British

Guiana Trades Union Council on behalf of Messrs. Harper and Hubbard have been repaid to date.

Q. 3—If the amounts have not yet been repaid in full or in part how much is still outstanding and by whom ?

A. 3—By the Honourable A. M. Edun—\$1,200.00.
By the British Guiana Trades Union Council—\$1,827.56.

Q. 4—What steps does Government propose to take to recover the amounts, if any, outstanding ?

A. 4—Undertakings have been given by the Honourable A. M. Edun and Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard, respectively, that these sums will be repaid to Government before the 31st of December, 1947.

ADDITIONAL MAGISTRATE'S CLERKS.

Mr. GONSALVES asked, and the COLONIAL SECRETARY laid over replies to the following questions :—

Q. 1—Now that four Courts are being held by Magistrates in Georgetown, is Government aware that the staffing of the Magistrate's Office in Georgetown is extremely inadequate for the work required to be done in that office ?

If Government is so aware, is anything being done to remedy the position ?

A. 1—The 1948 draft estimates will include provision for four additional Class II Clerks for the Magistrates Department, Georgetown.

PENICILLIN AT P.H.G.

Q. 2—Is it a fact that "penicillin" is only administered at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, to patients in the Paying-Wards of the Institution and not to those in the Paupers-Ward ? If so why is it not administered to such patients if and when deemed requisite ?

A. 2—The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative; the second part of the question does not arise.

INCREASED BONUS FOR PENSIONERS.

Q. 3—Has Government yet reconsidered, as recently promised in

the Legislative Council, the question of increased cost of living bonus to pensioners who at present receive war bonus ? If not, how soon will it do so ?

A. 3—A proposal for increasing the cost of living allowances payable to Government pensioners will shortly be placed before the Legislative Council for consideration.

RELAXATION OF QUOTA RESTRICTIONS.

Q. 4—Does Government subscribe to the view that relaxation as regards "quota restrictions" especially in regard to foodstuffs and clothing would largely assist in reducing the present high cost of living ? If so will it take steps to have the existing "quotas" favourably revised ? If not, why not ?

A. 4—Quota restrictions have been abolished both in regard to foodstuffs and clothing except—

(a) from hard currency areas, and

(b) foodstuffs on the reserve list of the I.E.F.C. or under control of the Board of Trade in the United Kingdom, which allocates quotas to colonial territories.

In view of the present economic crisis Government cannot consider any relaxation of the quota system.

LIVESTOCK STATION IN THE RUPUNUNI.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name which reads :

"That, this Council approves of the project for the establishment of a Government Livestock Station in the Rupununi District outlined in the Governor's Message No. 20 of the 2nd of September, and undertakes to provide the necessary funds."

I think that most of the Members of the Council will be familiar with this subject. It has, may I say, almost suffered from a great amount of consideration in one form or another. I see from the papers that it was first considered by the former Interior Development Committee, and was also the subject of consideration by the Legislative Council Advisory Committee for the Interior. In between, I think, it was

discussed, if not considered formally, by the Agricultural Sub-Committee of the main Development Committee, and again it was discussed by the Advisory Committee of the Department of Agriculture, and finally it came before the Finance Committee on the 27th of February, 1947, when there was no conclusive decision reached because, before the discussion reached a head, our meeting suffered from the lack of a quorum. Therefore, with all that consideration I feel sure that hon. Members are at least very fully acquainted with the subject.

Your Excellency's Message, No. 20, does set out the facts and the history of the subject, but I think some of those facts can bear repetition. In the first instance, I want to recall to Members that the origin of this proposal was the visit of Professor Miller of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, who was carrying out an animal husbandry survey of the whole of the Caribbean. He came to British Guiana, and as a result of various discussions he had with the authorities of the Department of Agriculture, this particular scheme was propounded. The whole idea is, as stated in the first paragraph of Your Excellency's Message, to provide a supply of improved breeding animals for sale to ranchers in the District, and thus eventually to produce more and better cattle for slaughter and consumption on the coastlands to meet the increased demand for beef there; to perform experiments in order to find suitable pasture grasses for the District, and to assist in cattle diseases control.

I think I mentioned that Professor Miller was the initiator of this proposal. I am not quite sure he was, but I do know that Sir Frank Stockdale was very interested, and he gave the idea his blessing. Following on that the Department of Agriculture prepared a scheme, and the Governor authorized it to be submitted as an application under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. At that time the capital cost of the scheme was estimated at \$26,000, and the annual recurrent cost at \$7,000. The application was very favourably considered by the Colonial Office and accepted in principle, but just at that time some of our applications suf-

fered from the unfortunate fault of being delayed because the question of allocation under the new Act and the preparation of the 10-year plan was at that time being adumbrated. So the Colonial Office, while accepting the proposal in principle, suggested that the whole matter be deferred until it could be included in our general sketch plan.

Just at that time we were suffering from a shortage of beef and had, we are ashamed to say, to seek further supplies from Brazil. The question came up again before the Interior Development Committee who regarded it as completely unfortunate that in such circumstances we could not go ahead with the scheme at once, and advised Sir Gordon Lethem that, notwithstanding the decision of the Secretary of State to defer it, he should take steps to initiate the scheme at once. Sir Gordon approached the Executive Council who gave him the same advice. Hon. Members will remember that at that time the general principle was accepted, actually by formal resolution of the Council, that where a Development and Welfare scheme was propounded and accepted in principle by the Secretary of State and there was every expectation that money would be forthcoming from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, the proper course would be, if the scheme was important, that we should advance local funds for it. Consequently, the Governor proposed and the Executive Council advised and authorized, the initiation of this scheme, advancing the money for it from local funds pending recovery when the scheme was actually put forward and approved. The Governor approved an advance of \$21,500 to start the scheme, of which \$17,600 was for capital expenditure and \$3,900 for operating expenses in 1946. The original idea was to start these experiments at Karasabai, but subsequent inquiries seemed to point to the fact that St. Ignatius was the best site, and that is where the scheme has actually been started.

As time went on we have done some of the capital work and purchased some of the initial stock to start the scheme going. The time has now come for us to come to this Council and get its approval, not only because it is the right thing to do but because it has now been ruled by the

Imperial Treasury that where a scheme has been started from local funds prior to formal approval as a Development and Welfare scheme it is not competent for us to recover the money. Consequently, if we are to go on with the scheme, we must find the money from local funds. A new estimate has been prepared; the capital expenditure is put down at \$27,000, and the recurrent expenditure at \$7,000 per annum. Members will see the details of that estimate in paragraph 5 of the Message.

I do not want to touch at all on the technical details of the scheme. Unfortunately, Mr. Croucher, the Director of Agriculture, is not here. It was intended that he should address the Council on the subject, but we have an appropriate substitute present in the person of Dr. Fraser who will, if necessary, and if Members desire it, explain to the Council any technical details in regard to the scheme. I would just like to say, speaking for myself, that we in this Colony often talk very glibly about development and pay lip service to our "Magnificent Province" and our "continental destiny", but we do very little to translate those terms into reality. We all know about the Rupununi. It is an area of about 6,600 square miles with one head of cattle to the square mile. We also know that the cattle there have deteriorated and they need—so I see—refurnishing with new blood. We also know that the pasturage is deficient in minerals and that there are distinct possibilities of improving it in a modern way, and this is the time to begin. We have also seen that the B.G. Airways have recently purchased two large aircraft which can be used for the transportation of beef from the interior, and we are talking about exportation to Trinidad and so on. All this is development along the right lines and, consequently, I hope this particular scheme will commend itself to the Council. It is a small beginning but, I think, it is a beginning in the right way. I beg to move the motion.

Mr. JACOB : I am not opposed to this scheme, because as a member of the Interior Development Committee I hate to do anything that will hamper development in this Colony. Whether we are doing

anything progressive I am not certain; sometimes I think that we are not. Recently I took opportunity to go to Ebini where I heard that the stage had been set for actual development in this Colony, but I was not satisfied with what was going on there and, I think, the sooner it is closed down the better it would be. I would just like to refer to what I said about livestock some time ago. This report—a minority report which I submitted as a member of the Agriculture and Fisheries Sub-Committee of the Main Development Committee—is dated June 28, 1947, and as regards Livestock and Cattle I said therein :—

"The stage had been very carefully set during the last eight years to reduce pasturage and to adopt various means to discourage the rearing of cattle on the coastlands by peasants. At the present time there is an acute shortage of fresh milk and beef, and various excuses are being made by those responsible. I am confident that the position would grow worse unless there is a radical change of policy."

Then, in conclusion, I made this comment :—

"The cattle position is most unsatisfactory and, in view of the retrogressive and short-sighted recommendations that are contained in this report, I am compelled to take no part in this very vital matter."

Well, Sir, it is all very well to think about developing the cattle industry around the Rupununi and in the savannahs, but that is a long-term plan. The immediate plan should be to place suitable pastures on the coastlands and any money spent in that direction would be well spent. I do not know if the Colony is anticipating that we would have to go to Brazil again for cattle, or to go to some other place. Perhaps that is why we are thinking about continental destiny—so that we will not have to do things ourselves. This is said to be a grass country, we can grow sugar cane and rice but cannot grow grass. Recently we had a shortage of cattle and we could not get milk. I think we should devote all our energies to the coastlands and get the peasants to rear more cattle. I think the sooner we do that the better it will be.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I think the hon. Mover of the motion said in the course

of his remarks that this is the time to make a start, but I must remind him that we made a start since 1941. Ebini was started since 1941 for a similar purpose and it was given a grant of \$30,000 for a period of five years. I predicted from the outset that at the end of the five years the funds would have been exhausted and nothing would have come out of the scheme. That is just what happened. In 1946 the funds were replenished by \$35,000 which, I think, would go until the end of 1948. I am certain that this experiment which has been going on for the last 8 or 9 years has not placed the Agriculture Department in a position to make any definite recommendation in so far as increasing the productivity of the Rupununi pasturage is concerned. That pasturage can only maintain—and maintain in a poor state at that—20 head of animals to the square mile and the Department has not been able to reduce that acreage as yet.

Experiments are still going on, but there is no definite data by which conditions in the Rupununi can be improved, and now we are embarking on another experiment for a similar purpose. I think this Colony is too poor to go on experimenting indefinitely; I think what we want is production. I make bold to say that if \$65,000 or a little more had been spent on the coastlands, we would not have found ourselves during the war period short of cattle to such an extent. Instead of gaining experience from the past we are going further and further into experiments along similar lines. I have a report in my hand to support the statement I have made, that up to now the Agriculture Department is not in a position to make any definite statement as to what should be done to improve the pasturage in the intermediate savannahs which are similar to those of the Rupununi.

I think it would be a waste of time, energy and money to give another plot far into the interior to make the same experiments over and over again. During the last 10 years all the half-bred bulls the ranch could have sold was 22. I do not know the reason why they also had to sell some steers. If they were breeding bulls in order to get stock, I do not see the reason why some of these animals should have

been castrated. I know that the Rupununi needs improved blood-stock, because the animals there were inbreeding for the last 100 years. I make bold to say, however, that during the last 8 or 10 years since that stock was put in some improvement has been shown. I think that instead of struggling to breed bulls on the Rupununi ranches it should be done on the coastlands—at places like Anna Regina where we will have earlier results — and I hope that the cattle bought for this experimental station will be transferred to Anna Regina or the Ebini area where we will have earlier results than in the Rupununi district.

I hope that in the interest of the Colony as a whole the Rupununi idea will be abandoned. According to the hon. the Colonial Treasurer we have already sunk \$20,000 in this experiment and, I think, it will be in the best interest of the Colony to write off that \$20,000 and start somewhere else. As a matter of fact, a start has already been made in the Anna Regina area and at Ebini, and we will sooner recover the \$20,000 there than by pursuing the project in the Rupununi. Nothing practical or beneficial has been done there to justify this Government in carrying on the experiment for another period.

Mr. ROTH : I cannot allow the last statement made by the hon. Member to go unchallenged. He makes a statement which surprises me, especially as he is a member of the Advisory Committee to the Agriculture Department.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I have always opposed this Rupununi experiment because I think better results can be obtained on the coastlands.

Mr. ROTH : I inferred from the hon. Member's statements that he was also referring to Ebini. Ebini is connected with Rupununi because it is considered to have pasturage similar to that of the Rupununi. I think that is giving a complete answer to the statement that the Ebini pasture is supposed to be better. As regards the \$30,000 to which the hon. Member has referred, it was a means of proving definitely that the proposition was a feasible one, that it was possible to improve the grass and the cattle. I do not know whether the hon. Member was present at the meeting when

the Director of Agriculture explained that to the Committee. It was as the result of that we recommended to Government a grant to prove whether it was an economic proposition—to see whether the ranches in the Rupununi could undertake that work. That experiment is now going on.

I am sorry to say that the remarks of the last speaker are smacking of those of certain Members whose parochial-mindedness will not permit them to see beyond the distance of their pastures on the coastlands. It is admitted that we have not got very much land on the coastlands now for cattle, in view of the increased acreage required for the rice industry in which the hon. Member is interested.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : Question !

Mr. ROTH : The rice expansion scheme is now working towards Berbice. Many people say it is a particularly level-headed scheme and that the wealth of the coastland lies in agriculture and cattle. We admit that they are the two best things and, therefore, it is our duty to try and develop them as much as possible. I say again that I am surprised at the remarks of the last speaker, especially as he is a member of the Advisory Committee to the Agriculture Department. I sincerely hope this motion would be supported by hon. Members, especially if they have the interest of the Colony at heart.

Mr. FERREIRA : I am surprised that the hon. Member for Western Berbice should have tried to compare the Rupununi savannahs with Ebini. When we look around and see that in the Rupununi we have some 20,000 square miles of very good land, we should spend not \$30,000 which is only a flea bite but very much more. The trouble in British Guiana, I think, has always been that we expect results very quickly without meeting the necessary expenditure in these schemes. I will not say that the Ebini scheme has failed, but I think it is for Government to encourage the people to support it. I have seen the lands there take the Brazilian cattle which were brought across to feed Georgetown. I have seen these cattle, which arrived looking lean and hungry, fatten on the lands there, and I have also seen lands which were barren

produce citrus trees which have borne fruit in three years. That is the land which we want to throw aside for the Jews and others to come and take from us.

I would ask hon. Members to go and see for themselves the cultivation and other things to which I have referred. Possibly Dr. Fraser, who will speak on behalf of the Agriculture Department, would tell us why the Agriculture Department is seeking to further the Ebini scheme. If we have proved that cattle can do well on the middle reserves, is it not time that this Government bring in the right type of settlers to dwell on the lands of the Rupununi savannahs and do the right thing? I refer to settlers from European countries—men who are hardy and can do their stuff not people who have no aims besides social and cheap amusements. I am satisfied that the B.G. Airways can be used to good advantage when it comes to taking beef out of British Guiana, and I am backing this scheme because I know it will do a lot of good.

I think hon. Members should realize that putting pedigree cattle on the coastlands would not help our position very much. We want to see our lands which are now supporting 20 head of cattle to the square mile supporting 30 head instead. We want improvement, and I am asking Government not to allow Ebini to die. I know that settlers are not there, but when they see what can be done by manuring the land and they know that they can get the manure to buy they will be willing to come in. It is no use finding out what is wrong unless you can give the settlers some help, and I hope Government would see that the settlers in these areas get the help that is necessary.

Mr. LEE : All schemes necessary for the progress of this Colony are essentials which every Member of this Council should support. The Ebini scheme was introduced in order to prove a certain thing, and if that thing has been proved then Government should take action and explain the success so that certain persons would not maintain the belief that every experiment brought forward by Government has been a failure. According to the scheme now being put forward by Government we are going to spend \$27,000 with a recurrent

expenditure of \$7,000 a year, and I would like to know what returns we are going to get because there is, already, breeding stock valued at \$16,000. I am sure that if we give these cattle to an interested businessman he would produce returns to show that the money was not being spent at a loss. If Government is going to come back to this Council every year and say that more money is needed for breeding stock to improve the stock already in the Rupununi, then I would say that this money is only being thrown away.

Every Veterinary Surgeon that has visited the Rupununi has reported that what is necessary for the improvement of the cattle in that district is improvement of the pasturage. Government has experimented in this matter already, and we now want a furtherance of these schemes. Don't let us spend money in dribbles; let us spend it as an investment. This motion shows that we are going in for an experiment, but I do not want any experiment. I want men from overseas settled in the district because we have passed the experimental stage. We want the right kind of cattle and the right kind of grass grown there. Even if it costs \$300,000—as the hon. Member for Berbice River stated—let us spend it and get returns. I ask Your Excellency to revise this scheme in the light of the experiments made before and let us get a scheme as a business proposition so that Members of this Council would not tell Government that it is always experimenting and throwing away money.

Mr. EDUN : I must confess that I have not heard any argument to convince me that this experiment in the Rupununi will not be a failure like the one at Ebini. On the other hand, I have heard so much said about the necessity for improving livestock on the coastlands that I am astonished at not seeing any improvement up to now. The Agriculture Department has been trying but we want more than mere experiments. If we have lost money at Ebini, as one hon. Member puts it, or if there is a probable loss and it should be abandoned, then I think it would be also unwise to spend this money in the Rupununi. Why is there all this haste when there are other experimental

plans for the country? Can we not wait until we get the fuller scheme?

I am one of those who believe in the continental destiny of this country, and if other people think otherwise it would be a matter for them. If there is to be experiment along with expansion then we should have it on a larger scale. I will be one of the first Members to support the borrowing of \$50,000,000 for the development of the interior, but I hate to think of putting \$30,000 here and \$25,000 there only to be wasted in the end. My advice to Government is to postpone this measure and let us see what the development plan would be. Let us see whether we cannot put \$1,000,000 instead into this Rupununi scheme. I should have expected a report—something tangible—from Government to make me feel that it is necessary to spend this money now. Nothing has been told to this Council, but I am asked to give a blank cheque to spend money on experimentation. Is it to be considered one of the revolving funds? I want development. I dream of the development of this country. I feel that thousands of people can come and live here. I have just read in the papers this morning that agriculture can be done in the Interior, and I am convinced about that, although some experts who came here some years ago said it could not be done. I do not know where I am in a matter of this kind, because I do not get the right facts. If the Rupununi cannot be a success, I ask Government to be chary in expending money in order to carry out this experiment.

Mr. de AGUIAR : I am somewhat disappointed at the discussion which has taken place so far on this motion. With the exception of the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), who asked a pertinent question and the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Ferreira), I think, the other hon. Members took the opportunity, perhaps rightly, to introduce another subject rather than the one before us for discussion. But, I think, they are entitled to make the remarks they made about Ebini, if they feel that those remarks should be made. Whether they can support the statements made is an entirely different matter. My own view is, the statements made by hon. Members who have spoken about Ebini are not supported by

the facts as they are. Some Members like to see quick results in everything, but the information given to me—and I think it was clearly stated at the time—is that results will be very slow as several experiments have to be carried out before a good deal can be seen. What surprised me is that some hon. Members, who have spoken in the terms they did against Ebini are, perhaps, familiar with the facts as much as I am, and yet in speaking on this motion they have used the facts they have about Ebini in condemnation of another scheme which Government is now introducing for the Rupununi. Quite frankly that is not playing the game. I think hon. Members should be a little bit fair in the discussion. If, as the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, has said, he does not have the facts before him and therefore is unable to support or reject the motion, he is entitled to say so and I would agree with him. If he has not the facts, it is quite true he cannot speak either one way or the other about the motion. He wants to know the facts and, I think, the hon. Mover of the motion stated that the technical officer concerned, who is going to look after the scheme and is in the room, will give him any information he desires on it.

The hon. Member for Essequibo River raised a very pertinent question, and that is the one of revenue. I think he was right in doing so. The answer will be furnished by the hon. Mover of the motion, but I would like to tell him this: In a scheme of this kind it must not be expected that the revenue in the first few years—I use the term in a general sense—will in any way be impressive. My own view of the matter is, it will probably take us another five years after the scheme begins before we see considerable progress, but from the records I know that some returns will begin to come in after the first three-year period. After that time then those good results will increase. I mention that, because I would like the hon. Member to know that in the earlier years you cannot expect spectacular results in a scheme of this kind. It is more for the future rather than the immediate present. Taking it by and large it will be seen it is a scheme that ought to be supported by Members of this Council, so that we can get on with the job.

I must support the hon. Member for Berbice River in his view, that if we are not prepared to do anything for the livestock industry in the Rupununi we may just as well abandon the whole thing. It is well that we abandon the administrative section of the interior. Let us abolish the post of Commissioner for the Interior and all the works going on there. Apart from cattle and, perhaps, one or two minor things, I am afraid it is too heavy a charge for the people of the coastal belt to carry unless we do something for the cattle in the Rupununi District. That is the position. The hon. Mover stated quite bluntly, and it is true, unless something of this kind is done the cattle industry in the Rupununi is going to deteriorate still further. This scheme has the object in view to improve the breed of cattle and, what is important, in five or ten years' time to improve the supply of cattle made available for the coastland.

What is true about Ebini? It is very simple. Members are aware that the Ebini Scheme was started in order to assist a position that was gradually growing worse in the transport of our cattle from the Rupununi to Georgetown. We have heard so many times that after every drive—I think that is the word used—so many die by the wayside because the cattle were unable to get grass and in some cases water. An examination of Ebini showed the soil was deficient in minerals, and the experiments that are being carried out are for the purpose of putting those mineral substances which are lacking in the soil so that proper grass will be grown and some kind of pasturage can be developed along that trail. The hon. Member for Berbice River said he had been there and had seen the grass growing, and he had seen heifers born. All of that is true. In other words, he has seen that this bit of land, which apparently was not good without technical work being done, can be converted into something that is worthwhile. What is true further is this: Whether this work can be carried on in perpetuity on an economical basis is a question that remains to be answered. But I think myself that having gone so far and having been able to turn to good account land that was definitely useless in its original state, we should go on with that in order to satisfy

ourselves as to whether this work can be carried on for all time on an economical basis. But, as I said just now, the answer to that is not yet available, but the preliminary investigation seems to indicate that with a little bit of struggle, a little bit of effort, it may be possible to carry out this work economically. I will not permit myself, or for that matter the Government, to make a definite statement that it will be economical, because the investigations in that regard are not yet completed, and that was one of the reasons which led to the proposal that funds should be made available for the continuation of the work at Ebini until the end of 1948. I have no doubt that by that time it will be possible to give all the answers to these questions, more particularly to the economical side of it and, perhaps, then will be the time when hon. Members can say whether the scheme or the works up there should be continued or not.

As regards the points raised as to the pastures on the coastlands, I would like to invite hon. Members' attention to the Report of the Agricultural Development Sub-Committee, pages 18 to 25, in which it will be found that the matter was very carefully examined and definite recommendations have been put up to Government in so far as pasturage on the coastlands is concerned. That Sub-Committee went further. Realizing the number of difficulties in the way, some of which are mentioned in the Report, they have suggested that a Pasturage Sub-Committee may be formed so that the matter will receive the fullest consideration in the interest of the landowners, the cattle dealers and, I will say, the general agricultural producers on the coastlands alike. There is a great conflict of interests in so far as making sufficient pastures available on the coastlands, and it seems that when the matter is examined the best thing to do is to have this sub-committee, so that the matter will be carefully examined and a final decision reached in order to develop the coastlands in so far as cattle is concerned. I have risen to make those few remarks and also to say I am supporting the motion before the Council.

The PRESIDENT: It may be of interest to hon. Members to know that I

myself propose to visit Ebini Station next Monday with Sir Geoffrey Evans, Chairman of the Settlement Commission, and as far as that Station is concerned I hope we shall be able to get the benefit of his great experience in these matters and of his expert advice. I think the position actually at Ebini is simply this: At the moment that Station has neither proved a success nor a failure. The question we have to consider and are considering now is, do the results so far obtained justify a continuation of the experiment. That, I think, very briefly is the actual position, but I must say also that I have been rather disturbed to hear certain Members' criticisms of such experimental work. We talk a lot about development of the Interior. One hon. Member said he dreams of development, but I should like to say that I despair of development unless we do far more experimentation in the Interior than we do at present. Interest in the Interior and its development was never greater than it is today, and those of us, or rather those of you, who have been into these problems and wondered what should be done and could be done find on every side you are crippled by the absence of proper information.

Where do we stand, for example, with the hydro-electric scheme? We say we have wonderful waterfalls, but we have not a scrap of information on which to base our judgment, purely because we have not done experimental work to begin with. As a result it must be some years before we can decide. It is quite true we have started it now and we are going ahead with the investigation, and it is quite true that in other respects we have results of experiments to work on, but there is quite a lot of hard, patient work still to be done before any dreams we have can come true. I, too, have read in the papers this morning that the Settlement Commission—in fact Sir Geoffrey Evans told me himself—had been impressed after superficial examination of soil conditions in the Potaro-Mazaruni area and went so far as to say there were possibilities of agricultural development there in conjunction with mining. I think they are right. There are definite possibilities there, but without anticipating any recommendation that this Commission would make I am sure that one will be—and it is one already made by the Agricul-

tural Sub-Committee—that we are bound to carry our agricultural experimental work in that area before we can say whether settlement would be a sound economic proposition. It is a matter for regret that this experimental work has not been done before. While we have schemes of all kinds propounded on all sides we can never form a judgment on many of them which is either sound or in which we can have faith, because we have not got the facts. We talk somewhat glibly about mining development, but before that can be a reality it must be preceded by experimentation and prospecting on an extensive scale. Until that has been done we shall not know where we stand.

I think the first remark I made in this Council when I arrived in the Colony was that although the Interior may not be the Eldorado, there certainly were possibilities and that surely it was up to us to find out what there is inside and get it. Until we get all the information by surveys, research and experimentation, be it mining, agriculture or the cattle industry, I am sure we will never really know the answer. But in saying what I have said, I am rather getting on to the general question, but my excuse for saying it is to rebut some of the criticisms I have heard about experimental work and experimental stations. May I say just another word. It is in regard to the Forestry Department. We boast of having 75,000 square miles of forest in this country, and yet on our Forest Department for the last 20 years we have been spending a meagre £7,000, less than the expenditure on Forestry in Trinidad, whose forests, as I have said before, are a back-garden in extent compared with ours. If we go on in that way, how can we possibly expect to exploit what wealth we have. So it is in other directions, and that is where, I venture to think, we have failed in the past—not to put enough money for investigation, experimentation, research and so on—and that we must do, I think, before we can get any real big results.

Reference has been made to the cattle industry on the coastal belt, and I do not know that it is altogether recognized how extremely important and valuable an industry it can be. But from all I have read and all I have heard, I believe that

the cattle industry is the least efficient of all our industries on the coastal belt. Paradoxical as it may sound in that we have not enough meat and enough milk, we should do well to decrease not increase the cattle population and rid ourselves of a large amount of useless livestock which use up so much of our limited pasture but contribute nothing to either meat or milk supplies. The whole of the livestock industry of the coastal belt wants a thorough reorganizing, and we must find a solution to the present clash of interests of the rice industry and the cattle industry. What we want is a proper land utilization scheme for the whole coastal belt. We have to decide what is to be cattle pasturage and what rice lands and put an end to the present conflict of interests. But it is a very big question and it is not an easy one to solve. It is as much a question of improving the quality and control of livestock as providing pasturage. As regards the Veterinary Station at Ibini it is more work of this kind that is needed not less, if ever the coastal belt cattle industry is going to be what it should be. And there can be no question about it, it can be a most valuable and most important coastal belt industry, but it wants thorough reorganization, and that reorganization must be brought about with the assistance of the Government and also an awakening of cattle-owners themselves. Criticism must not be one-sided, and I am not blaming any particular side or any particular person.

The actual motion before the Council is for one of these experimental stations in the Rupununi. I think some of the Members of the Council have been there. I have been there, as you know, and one thing that struck me about the savannahs in the Rupununi is that in the absence of any mineral wealth the only practical thing to do with that vast area of 6,000 square miles is to establish a cattle industry upon it. The people who have developed it during the last 20 to 25 years have made a very brave show. One actually has to see these savannahs before one can appreciate the troubles and difficulties with which they have had to contend—difficulties in establishing proper pasturage and getting the right type of animals. The savannahs are not nice and rich greenfield pastures, but at certain times of the year

merely clumps of very indifferent grass with little nourishment in it. I cannot see at the present much use for that country unless we can keep the cattle industry going. It is up to us to do everything possible to find out what is the best kind of cattle and how best we can improve the pastures in that country. It may be that our experiments will not succeed but even so I would not agree with any hon. Member that we would be throwing money down the drain. Negative information got from an experiment can be of great value. There is no question about that. If we fail, we should try and and try again. And it is not only Government experiments that fail. Ask the man in commercial enterprise how many experiments he has made and how many expensive failures he experienced before he achieved success. I would ask hon. Members to give this motion their approval. I think not only is it sound policy to conduct this further experiment, but that it will also have valuable results.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : After Your Excellency's statement I suggest that the question be put.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried unanimously.

STANDING RULES AND ORDERS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : There are no copies available of the Standing Rules and Orders of this Council which were made in 1928. Since that time various amendments have been approved by this Council and a consolidation has been made. A copy of that consolidation is now in the hands of every Member of the Council. It is a consolidation and nothing more than a consolidation, and the object of the motion, which stands in my name, is merely to implement the Governor's Message No. 22 of the 30th September, 1947. I therefore now move—

"That this Council approves of the draft Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council tabled on the 3rd October,"

Mr. CRITCHLOW seconded.

Sir EUSTACE WOOLFORD : May I just call hon. Members' attention to the

hours at which this Council has met for some time past. It is stated in Standing Order 2 (b) that the hours shall be from 2.00 p.m. to 5 p.m. I do not know why Members do not give expression of their opinion about these hours, although they have been very loud in their intention from time to time. In the original hours, Members will find that the Council used to meet at 11 o'clock in the morning and adjourn at 1 p.m. until 2.30 p.m. and then sit not later than 4.30 p.m. The times of sitting that we have been meeting within recent times are embodied in 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. but it never had any real legal sanction. I do not know whether Members have considered these hours the best hours because this is the time to do it. I do not know whether Members recognize that. I have always understood it to be a very difficult time. I do not think anybody really likes sitting after 4 o'clock and certainly not going on to 5 o'clock. I hesitate myself to suggest that 5 p.m., which is embodied now and which hon. Members are approving, should continue to be the hour at which this Council should rise in a Colony like this. I think most people take recreation after 4 o'clock in some form or other, and to leave here at 5 o'clock does not allow anyone to have recreation whether it be Bridge-playing or anything I know of — tennis, or golf, or any other form of outdoor sport. I do ask Members now to make up their minds as to whether these particular hours should remain.

The PRESIDENT : The only question is, the life of this Council is so short it would be better for the new Council to decide what it would wish to be done. For that reason I do not wish to suggest any amendment whatsoever. The real object of having the Rules printed is that I am anxious that the new Members of the Council should have copies of the Standing Orders, as we have no copies left. I would suggest that, perhaps, it would be better if we left it to the new Council to decide what are the most convenient hours of sitting.

Mr. JACOB : I think that would be far better. I am little disappointed to hear the Deputy President objecting to the present hours or asking for their confirmation by the majority of Members.

Sir EUSTACE WOOLFORD : I have not objected to them at all.

Mr. JACOB : I was about to say that I believe the present hours suit the members of the legal profession better than they do other Members of this Council, because I have come here many a day and found members of the legal profession absent because they were engaged in the Courts. Any hour will suit me. I think the present hours from 2 to 5 p.m. are very good, but it would be better to leave the question over for the new Council to decide.

Motion put, and carried.

INCREASED PRICE FOR RICE PRODUCERS.

Mr. EDUN : Sir, I beg to move :

"Whereas the cost of living index has risen from point 161 to 182 from December 1946 and at which point it has taken a steady stand to this date;

And Whereas the cost of labour has risen considerably in the Rice Industry;

Be It Resolved that this Honourable House strongly recommends that the Rice Marketing Board increase the price of rice on all grades to be paid to padi growers and rice producers by one and a half cent per pound, to take effect from 1st January, 1947.

And Be It Further Resolved that this Honourable House strongly recommends that the aforesaid Rice Marketing Board open negotiations immediately with West Indian purchasers of rice requesting an increase of two cents per pound on all grades of rice to meet the high cost of labour and the cost of living of the padi growers and rice producers of British Guiana."

The motion speaks for itself. It has been tabled in order to bring to the attention of Government and the Rice Marketing Board the woes and trials of the producers and consumers of rice in British Guiana. It serves no electioneering purpose; I desire to make that quite clear. Representing, as I do, the agricultural community and the sugar workers, I consider it my duty to bring an issue of this sort before this Council in order to examine the policy of the Rice Marketing Board which is the sole distributing agent with statutory powers. I consider the Board's policy re-

actionary and irrational, and if I take this opportunity to put the pros and cons as I see them it might help the Board to investigate and rectify the conditions as I see them. I wish to make it very clear that I have passed that stage of my life when I would seize an opportunity like this, on a matter of such vital importance to my own people, to do anything which would appear to have an electioneering smell.

Soon after my return to the Colony from India I toured the rural districts—the East Coast, West Coast, and the Corentyne Coast—where complaints were poured into my ears with respect to the bad quality of rice being sold for local consumption, and of rice not being procurable in several districts. I will come to the meat of my motion later. I am just making these preliminary observations in order that my hope in the structure of the Board might be fulfilled. Only yesterday the newspapers published a report about a shortage of rice on the Essequibo Coast which is essentially a rice-growing area. Just imagine people who produce rice not having sufficient rice to eat! I am sure that among the people on the Essequibo Coast there are many who had produced padi and rice sold to the Board, and who will have to buy rice at an enhanced price. I want the Board to examine that phase of its functions very carefully. On it rests the whole structure of the Board which operates in the form of a monopoly. I know of many producers of padi and rice who have sold their entire crops and are now buying rice—and rice of bad quality at that—at enhanced prices. When I see these anomalies I ask myself the question, has the Board been created to restrict production by multiplying instances of this kind, or does it exist for the protection of the industry ?

I have not been able to see the Report of the Board for 1946-47, if there is any at all. I am therefore in the unfortunate position of not being able to examine the finances of the Board. I have here the Report of the Board for the period 1st October, 1944 to 31st March, 1945. It is very old and I do not intend to examine it because I want recent figures. I want to know how the Board is functioning, and what service it has done in the interest of the rice producers generally. I have not

a copy of the agreement entered into between the Board and the Governments of the West Indian Colonies, but from what I have read in the newspapers I am satisfied that the interests of the producers of rice in this Colony have not been properly looked after in that agreement. Nobody can dare tell me that there is any immediate danger of competition with our rice in the West Indian market from any other part of the world. Not even within the next 15 years will we see one grain of Burma rice in the West Indian market. Therefore, when the agents of the Board entered into that agreement to sell the rice of the producers of this Colony at that low figure I consider that they did not look after the interests of the growers and producers in the best manner possible. Whether they were able to make a better bargain I am not in a position to say, but this much I can say — that rice is being sold at \$18 in the West Indian market whereas we are only getting a little over \$9 per bag for it. During the war we sold our rice at a low price in the West Indian Colonies in order to feed the people in those Colonies during a period of emergency. Nearly five million dollars' worth of the rice producers' substance was lost, but they never grumbled.

I have not a copy of the agreement which should have been published. I am therefore not in a position to say whether the other side made a hard bargain, and that our representatives could not stand on their own. At any rate the idea was to keep down the cost of living throughout the West Indies for Imperial purposes. That was quite justifiable during the war period, but to continue it now is, in my opinion, inimical and detrimental to the interests of the rice growers of this Colony.

As regards the Rice Producers' Association, that mythical body, I do not know how many branches it has or what are its functions. I do not know whether it is doing anything to represent the interests of the growers or producers of rice. I heard Mr. M. B. Laing say that there are many branches and that they are working well, but I am not convinced by that statement. The Rice Producers' Association should have taken up this matter with the Rice Marketing Board. Under the law

it was the Association's duty to do so. Whether it has done so no one knows; the public is absolutely ignorant of the attitude of the members of the Association towards their own people. This much I can say, that I have been placed in the unfortunate position of having to receive these complaints and to bring them to the notice of Government. Perhaps I do so too often, and Government officers have become disgusted with my representations. When the Ordinance was passed, I told the Council that I was finished with rice producers' representations, but is it fair when so much money could be secured for the rice producers of the Colony that the export price of rice should be restricted in order to keep down the cost of living throughout the West Indies? That is what I am grumbling about. Perhaps, those Members of this Council who are old enough to know will tell Your Excellency that during the first World War and immediately after the prosperity of the rice industry was so great that the local Banks established branches in three districts of the Colony — Suddie, Mahaica and Rosehall, Courantyne. In those days the prosperity of the rice industry was seen throughout the Colony, but today I cannot see such prosperity.

I want the Board to say whether there is any clause in the contract which will give them an opportunity to reopen negotiations for an increase in the price. If for some reason or other the cost of production of rice has risen, the producers and consumers in this Colony should benefit by an increase in the price and not the people in the West Indies who have not helped us to produce it. Five million dollars is estimated as the loss to this Colony by this deal by someone who is able to speak with authority. The cost of living in this Colony has risen considerably. Hon. Members will remember how effectively the hon. the Colonial Treasurer argued the case for increased cost of living allowance to civil servants, and how he quoted figures to convince this Council that \$600,000 should be voted for that purpose. I am going to use the same figures, and I think the representatives of the Rice Marketing Board ought to accept them, because they are not only authentic but have come from the highest financial authority in this Colony. Let me quote

those figures. The Colonial Treasurer in his speech in this Council on the 10th July, 1947, traced the rise in the cost of living index from 1945, when it stood at 1.61, to December, 1946, when it was 1.82, at which figure it remained more or less steady. I can vouchsafe that that situation has not improved; instead there is an inclination to rise.

The hon. the Colonial Treasurer went further and made comparisons between the prices of certain articles in December, 1945, and May, 1947. He began with bread which in December, 1945, was sold at 8½ cents per lb., as against 11.3 cents per lb. in May, 1947. Milk—in December, 1945, was sold at 6 cents per pint as against 8 cents per pint in May, 1947; Deodorised oil—in December, 1945, 14 cents per pint, in May, 1947, 18 cents per pint; Sugar (Y.C.)—in December 1945, 3½ cents per lb., in May, 1947, 4½ cents per lb.; Flour—in December, 1945, 5 cents per lb., in May, 1947, 6½ cents per lb.; Margarine—in December, 1945, 27.7 cents per lb., in May, 1947, 29 cents per lb.; Charcoal—in December, 1945, 3.3 cents for 2½ lbs., in May, 1947, 4.2 cents for 2½ lbs.

I have not quoted the price of rice which has been increased by one cent per lb. The cost of labour in respect of planting, ploughing, and other work in the rice field, has also increased, therefore I think an increase of not less than 2 cents per lb. to the growers and producers will meet the situation today. I would not for one moment, however, ask Government to increase the price of rice for local consumption. All I am suggesting is that we should tax the people who eat our rice in the West Indian markets. An increase of 2 cents per lb. will be quite equitable. That is why I have asked in my motion :

“.....that this Honourable House strongly recommends that the aforesaid Rice Marketing Board open negotiations immediately with West Indian purchasers of rice requesting an increase of two cents per pound on all grades of rice to meet the high cost of labour and the cost of living of the padi growers and rice producers of British Guiana.”

I consider it a reasonable request. I do not wish to go into the reserves of the Board. In the report I have before me its

reserve fund stands at about \$300,000. I do not think we should touch that, but I certainly think that the West Indian consumers should pay a little more for their rice. I hate to think that there is no saving clause in the agreement which will allow of negotiations being reopened in circumstances like the present. If there is no such clause, then I consider that the agents of the Board who made that agreement did not do their duty to the growers of rice in this country.

I think I have touched on the main issues as I see them, and I want the Chairman of the Board to examine very carefully the question of growers repurchasing their rice. I must lay stress on that. In the case of those people who sell their padi, it is their misfortune that they have to sell it to the proprietors. We have got a very excellent system where the producer manufactures his rice with the co-operation of the miller. He gets some to eat — he gets a good quality if he makes a good quality — and that system should be preserved.

Mr. de AGUIAR : I do not like to disturb the hon. Member, but will he tell me in what way that system is not being preserved ?

Mr. EDUN : In the case of those who sell their padi it is not preserved. I know of several instances where growers who sold their padi could not get rice from the mills. The point is that the Board should enquire into this matter and see whether or not there are some growers who cannot get rice from the mills. I have received a letter with many grievances which I intend to send to the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board. I only got it this morning. My great point is that in order to meet the high cost of living the growers and producers generally are entitled to an increase in the price of rice as sold in the West Indies.

Dr. SINGH : I rise to second the motion. I agree that the export price of all grades of rice should be increased by 2 cents per lb. Of course, this will not apply to Trinidad or to the other islands with which we have some agreement, but Jamaica and other islands are willing to pay higher prices. I have been told that in Jamaica they are now paying as much

as 16 cents per pint for rice, and that the people there are anxious to get our rice; but how can we supply them? That will call for increased production principally by way of mechanization. The producers are saying today that if they have to pay labourers to reap their crops they would lose on them and that it is only because all the members of the household combine and assist in the reaping that they are able to produce rice at the present price.

If this motion is accepted, Sir, I would suggest that the proceeds from the extra 2 cents per lb. be earmarked for purchasing tractors, combines and threshers which will be useful to all the producers. After this machinery has been paid for, the money that comes in from year to year should be given as a bonus to the producers. I heartily support the motion and feel that it is time for our expert—the Director of Agriculture—to give some indication as to whether the rice producers should continue to plant rice at the prices which are now being paid to them. There is an experimental station attached to the Department, and they should work it out and tell us honestly what it costs to produce rice.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I happen to represent a rice-growing area, and after having analysed this motion I have no hesitation in saying that any hon. Member who peruses it carefully can come to no other conclusion than that it is in the interest of the miller or the land-owner who purchases the padi. In Essequibo, as is known by the hon. Mover of the motion, the whole procedure is that the farmer sells to the miller and becomes an economic slave of the miller who is very often the landowner also. However, I am not going to make a long speech on this matter now; I shall reserve my remarks for the period around November 14 when they will have a lot to do with it.

I have stated repeatedly in this Council that the procedure adopted in Essequibo makes the rice farmer nothing more than an economic slave. There are instances where landlords have made large sums of money in purchasing padi and have boasted that they needed no financial assistance to purchase padi. Whether the Income Tax Authorities received tax on that

money is a matter for them, but I do know that as far as the Essequibo district is concerned this motion is only in the interest of the landlord-miller. In the first resolution we are asked to support an increased price of 1½ cents per lb. on all grades of rice and to pay that amount to the padi growers and the rice producers, but how that increase can be paid to these people I do not know, when we are being asked in the second resolution to increase the price of rice by 2 cents per lb? Why is there a difference; who is to benefit by the half-cent more?

I would like to see the Rice Marketing Board adopting a procedure whereby in all cases producers or farmers will sell their rice direct to the Board. That will involve a greater administration staff, but I have no doubt that the farmer will get his just due. I say again that how this increase will be paid to the rice producers I do not know. In Essequibo the farmer sells his padi by compulsion and in many cases below the fixed price so that the miller gets the real benefit. How the producer is going to get this increase of 1½ cents per lb. I do not know. Who is to benefit by the half-cent difference if the 2 cents per lb. increase suggested in the next resolution is approved? Is it the person who owns the land or the person who sells the rice?

The land-owners and millers, it is known, never take into consideration the high cost of living and do not pay fair and equitable wages, so that when the increased price is paid by the Rice Marketing Board one should like to know whose high cost of living would be relieved. Would anything pass from the miller-landlord to the farmer? As I have already pointed out, the 1½ cents will go into the pockets of the millers and yet this second resolution is asking for an increase of 2 cents per lb. on all grades of rice. I have stated how these resolutions will affect the Essequibo Coast, and while I agree that the farmer should get everything he can for his produce and that he should get more than he is getting at present, if this motion is only going to benefit the landlord-miller then I think we should leave the situation where it is. Unless the landlord-miller is going to pass down the increase to

the farmer then I say, unhesitatingly, we should leave the situation where it is.

I am sure that if the hon. Mover analyses the motion in that light he would see that very much more needs to be done than advocating the increase and saying glibly that we should support the motion. It is no use speaking about an increased price for rice in the face of the procedure that is being adopted in Essequibo, because it is not known how the padi growers will come in. Is the hon. Member saying that the producer is the land-owner-miller proprietor? Does he not mean that the producer is the man who toils — who has to plant his rice in water and then reap his padi at the expense of much labour? Is he not the same person mentioned as the padi grower here? If this motion was so worded that the farmer would get an increase in the price of padi and this Council would see that that increase is really given, I would have had no hesitation in saying that the increase should be granted and I think the Rice Marketing Board should consider that aspect of the matter.

I think the Board should also investigate the situation and find out how is it that these landlords, who make economic slaves of the growers, are not trapped and driven against the wall. I do not know whether the hon. Mover of the motion has not touched upon that mainly because of the electioneering period that is approaching with respect to the general elections. I take it, however, that he would like to see an increase in the price of rice introduced before the end of the present crop in Essequibo which would be about the end of October. Does he not know that when the Rice Marketing Board increased the price of rice some time ago the only person who benefited on the Essequibo Coast was the landlord-proprietor? The poor farmers had already sold their padi and did not get the benefit of the increased price. If he is anxious for this increase to go through now, I can assure him, the farmers would not get it. The landlord-proprietor would not go to the farmers and say: "You sold me padi at \$1.20 per bag; here is the increase which has been granted by the Board".

I am glad to hear the hon. Member say that we should not encroach on the reserve of the Board. It is a pity, however, that when he says that here he will not repeat it outside. It is a pity that in circulars elsewhere he does not say what he says now:—that the reserve of the Board should be kept to stimulate prices when bad times struck, so as to assist the industry. I voted against a suggestion to the contrary, and I still think the reserve should be kept for that purpose. How the Board will give a farmer in Essequibo an increase on the price of his padi I do not know. Does the hon. Mover expect the miller to say to the farmer "I have made so much profit during the last two or three years and you, the producer, should take it back"?

I am a strong adherent to the belief that we should export as much produce as we can. We want money in this Colony and we should have the best prices available for the producer, particularly if we are going to negotiate abroad for markets, and then—after hon. Members have accepted those negotiations — on the eve of the general elections we get statements, which cannot hold water, giving a corrupt version of the situation. Are we to accept the statement then that this motion will benefit the farmers and not the landlords and the millers? I heard the hon. Member say in this very Council Chamber some time ago that his interest in the farmer-producer is as great as mine. He paid me the compliment of saying that I take as great an interest in the farmer-producer as he does but—I hope and think I am true to my conscience—I cannot say to him that this motion which he has tabled, worded as it is, will really be in the interest of the producer of rice in this country.

All I can say is that if we accept even the resolution to increase the price of all grades of rice by 2 cents per lb., nobody in Essequibo would benefit from it except the landowners and the millers. I think the Board can go into the question, however, and drop the margin between the price of padi and the price of rice; in other words, reduce the profit made by the merchant. Then, perhaps, we would get better results from the producers. May I recommend to the Board also to see that the

Regulations they have in force are adhered to and then, perhaps, this Colony would see an upward trend in the production of rice. I am going to watch this present crop carefully and see that the farmer receives his full due instead of being made an economic slave. Then, perhaps, we would consider whether the price of padi should be increased. Unless the increased prices goes to the farmer there should be no increase.

Mr. JACOB : Fortunately for me, not a blade of rice is being grown in my constituency. Whose fault it is, I do not know. I am not going to make an electioneering speech today, but I must confess that I have not been able to follow the views expressed by the hon. Member who seconded the motion, neither can I follow the last speaker. I think that if the hon. Member for Western Essequibo reads this motion he would see it is quite clear that the Board should purchase rice from the growers at 1½ cents per lb. more and resell it at 2 cents per lb. more. Therefore, the Board will have the benefit of the half cent per lb. for the loss suffered in selling to the consumer at a fixed price. I am afraid the hon. Member for Western Essequibo cannot see that at all. It appears to me that he is so much afraid of these landlord-millers—I believe two of them are contesting the seat in his constituency—that he cannot refrain from calling their names.

Mr. WIGHT : I take exception to those remarks. I think the scared person is the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun. I have said it before that the real trouble is the landlord-proprietor in Essequibo.

Mr. JACOB : I am not interested in the landlord proprietor at all; I am interested in the principles of the Labour Party, so I cannot be accused of taking sides. If a grower chooses to take his padi to a miller who would fleece him that would be his business, but he can do otherwise. Perhaps the hon. Member for Western Essequibo cannot see the point and perhaps I am too dense. My views as regards the rice industry are well known. I have always maintained that the Rice Marketing Board is not properly constituted and that the rice growers and millers themselves should look after their affairs—as is done by the

sugar industry. I think I have made the point here on a few occasions and, perhaps, I did not put it quite well; but I have mentioned it to certain persons including the hon. Member for Western Berbice.

The quandary in which the Board has found itself is due to the fact that it went and made forward contracts for such large quantities of rice. Rice is being sold to the West Indies at around 5 cents per pint, but today's world price for rice is far above that. When I returned from Canada last year it was 10 cents per lb. wholesale and 12 cents retail there, so that the Rice Marketing Board is throwing away the labour of the poor producer, iniquitously. There is nothing clearer than that. Are we getting flour from Canada at a price through which the growers and millers of wheat are suffering? I do not think so. If this Government wanted to adopt a statesmanlike attitude and to be fair to the growers in this Colony, it could have agreed to sell rice at a far better price to the West Indies. What is more, the Empire is now suffering from this dollar crisis and we can sell our rice and sugar and get Canadian dollars to tide over the difficulty. The statesmanship exhibited in this Colony as well as that exhibited in England is a curse to this Colony, especially to the rice and sugar industries but the rice industry moreso. That is what I say in most emphatic terms. It is not well to be wise after the event.

Mr. de AGUIAR : To a point of information! Am I to understand the hon. Member is condemning the Socialist Government, being a Socialist himself?

The COLONIAL TREASURER : As regards the point about selling rice in the Caribbean area for \$4.00, does the hon. Member infer that the dollar must be used by a bank? I just want to know where he is taking us.

Mr. JACOB : I am not going to be drawn into any argument with the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. I am saying, if no contract was made we could have sold our rice to Venezuela and Brazil—places we want to be federated with. We can sell rice to the United States of America and get American dollars; we can sell to Canada and get Canadian dollars, and so get imports. It is so elementary. If the hon. the

Colonial Treasurer does not understand these things it is his misfortune.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I understand too well. Has the selling area to find more dollars to provide rice to feed the people of the West Indies ?

Mr. JACOB : I go on with my contribution to this motion. I have always stated here, and as I say now, I am so dense and ignorant in these matters. I think Your Excellency made a slip when you spoke on the cattle motion not a few hours ago and said our rice industry has expanded. Bear with me please, Sir. The rice industry has not expanded actually. It has expanded by inflation of the figures but not in actual facts. I know what I am talking about. I have been born and bred in the rice industry; I have invested money in it; I have marketed it and I have done it very successfully, but I have given it up altogether except to eat it during the last four or five years. My knowledge of the industry is second to none. I know what I am talking about. I referred, when I spoke to the motion on the cattle industry today, to a note I made on the Ten-Year Development Plan in respect of agriculture, and as I have that paper here I am going to read just a few figures taken from the Department's reports.

The PRESIDENT : Rice ?

Mr. JACOB : It is about rice. I take five year periods. The acres reaped in 1929 to 1933 amounted to 77,776 and from 1941 to 1945 it was 96,538. The figures are noted in the report as estimated. The production was 43,577 tons for the 77,000 acres and 55,485 for the 96,000 acres. Those figures are estimated but the actual figures are here too and they are exports. The quantity exported for the first five year period was 23,573 tons and for the second period 19,700 tons. So it shows clearly that during the 1929-33 period the local consumption was estimated at 20,000 tons, but in the 1941-45 period the local consumption was estimated at 35,375 tons — that is to deduct exports from production, and so it is quite convincing to me that while consumption has gone up to some extent, the acreage has been inflated to show that we are making progress, expanding the rice industry. But I am not going to deceive

myself in this Council at all. Whoever wishes to do so I will give him every opportunity to deceive himself.

My point is, we have to increase the production of rice by placing increased areas under cultivation, but we cannot do that unless we pay the padi-growers a fair price so as to afford them to live comfortably. The hon. Member for Western Essequibo, the Representative whose interest it is, I believe, and whose duty it is, sees that the rice producers get a reasonable price for their padi or rice. I say, the rice industry has very few supporters in this Council as the second major industry of this Colony, and it is time that those interested in the industry, the actual producers, take note. The Government is perfectly satisfied. I do not know whether the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, who has given up some control over this thing, is satisfied now. It cannot be disputed that the production of rice is not increasing. I have here the figures up to 1945. They are authentic and have been got from the Department of Agriculture. I have the report of exports given by the Chamber of Commerce up to August, 1945. What does that reveal ?—Exports for 1947 — 14,022 tons and for 1946—14,374 tons. That shows a couple hundred tons less in 1947 than in 1946.

Mr. de AGUIAR : To a point of information ! Would the hon. Member say whether the quoted period was part of a year or the whole year ? I am rather inclined to think the wrong interpretation is being put.

Mr. JACOB : The hon. Member must know what I mean.

Mr. de AGUIAR : I do not know. I think the hon. Member called a particular month.

Mr. JACOB : I said up to August.

Mr. de AGUIAR : Why I ask, is because his figures do not agree with mine, as they never do.

Mr. JACOB : My figures never agree with his. I do not manufacture them. I produce them from documents. I said these figures were up to August as compared with last year's up to August. The exports for this year up to August taken from the Commercial Review total 14,022-

11/20 tons as against 14,374 tons up to August, 1946. That is the corresponding period of both years, and taking these figures as the basis, the exports this year will not be greater than last year's; if anything, the exports this year will be less, especially when it is borne in mind that there is always a scarcity of rice for local consumption, and my hon. Friend, who knows the figures as well as I do, as Chairman of that Board, is deliberately endeavouring to maintain exports for 1947 as they were for 1946 by cheating the local consumers of rice. That is definitely and properly recorded here. But all those subterfuges will not help us. We are deceiving ourselves. The fact is, the rice is not there, it is not being produced; and what may be done is this: The crop is on and the millers will be rushed to mill a quantity so as to get a figure to compare well with that of last year. These things are not going to help us, and it is well that we are having a general election. It is time that the people realize who their friends are, particularly the rice producers, the sugar producers and all other producers in this Colony.

I think, I can properly make comparison as regards the sale prices of sugar. Why should we sell all our sugar to the Ministry of Food and at such a low price, just as we have sold rice to the West Indies at such a low price? Sugar and rice are complementary industries. I think, on nearly every sugar estate in this Colony the acreage under rice has not increased. If a careful check is made the acreage of rice will be found to have decreased on nearly every sugar plantation. It is time the Government take note of that fact. I speak subject to correction. Those figures are never available and will never be available, and it is time that the Departments do not put forward these vague figures, inflated figures, and get down to their job and put up the right figures—

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am sorry I have to rise again to a point of order! The hon. Member repeatedly challenges figures submitted by responsible Heads of Departments. He does that every time, and accuses them of some motive. I appeal to the hon. Member's decency to be careful in

the language he uses when addressing this Council.

Mr. JACOB: I want to be decent and truthful. I do not want to be indecent and untruthful. I am saying I have the figures here. Perhaps the hon. Member does not know that I have the Report of the Agricultural and Fisheries Sub-Committee here, and if the hon. Member wants to take a note of these figures he can do so. I have my notes that I made on it. The figures are as authentic as any expert can produce. The conclusion I have drawn from them is that they are better than the experts' to whom we are paying handsome salaries. When it comes to the Department of Agriculture, that Department has done practically nothing to improve the rice industry, except possibly improving the grades and at what price? So it brings me back to this point. We have to pay these producers of rice something more. Whether you want to pay the padi grower more and to amend the motion to meet that, I do not know, but I place the responsibility on this Government for allowing these people to go half-starved and naked. That is what it amounts to. You have done that by legislation, and you are beginning to think of bringing in legislation for cattle. You are crippling and reducing the natives of this Colony by not paying them a living wage. Government pays the worker 2/- and 3/- a day and the rice farmer cannot pay more than that because that is Government's standard of wage and the sugar producers' standard of wage. Rice being complementary to sugar should not pay more than that. How then can the people afford to put in increased production? Yet hon. Members sit here and do nothing. The hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar), I wish, will not sit here after a few more months unless perhaps he is given a Nominated seat, as he has been an enemy to these rice producers. It is time he is told very clearly what is thought of him. He sits here and challenges correct figures and is never able to produce any himself. Let us be straightforward in this matter.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I must rise to a point of order! I desire to call hon. Members' attention to the fact that the hon. Member is attacking the hon. Member for Central Demerara because his son is also a candidate at the election for that constituency.

Mr. JACOB : That is so, and what about it ? What is more, in the hon. Member's constituency at least sixteen rice mills have been dismantled within the last ten years between Kitty and Buxton.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : That is probably a very good thing.

Mr. JACOB : It is, of course, and I know you will say that. That is why we have increased production in figures but not on facts. My hon. Friend cannot dispute the fact that the acreage in rice in his constituency has been reduced. Within a distance of eight miles sixteen small mills have been removed. I do not know if there are four mills there now. That is the kind of progress we have made, and the hon. Member gets up here and accuses everybody of saying wrong things. He does not know the difference between right and wrong. When I took up this attack, I knew perfectly well that he would poke fun at me. This Government has to get down to brass tacks and look after the primary producers. I am not at all satisfied with the wording of the motion, but I am supporting it in principle, and it is for the Government with the ingenuity of the Rice Marketing Board to see how to overcome the blunders made in selling such huge quantities of rice at such a low price and not making any attempt to produce more rice. No prudent businessman—the hon. Member for Central Demerara in his own business—will do that. I give him that credit. It has been done because the people concerned are poor unfortunate growers. Rather than admit that he has made a mistake, the hon. Member would try to bolster up the position with ingenious argument. The time has come, whether the motion is accepted or not, for the Government to review the whole matter. Probably this is the last speech I may make here on this subject, and it will be the best thing because I cannot go on appealing to Government. I have had twelve years of it and I am thoroughly fed up, unless there is a complete change. This Government cannot continue and this country will not prosper under this system.

Mr. LEE : I will be brief but I would like you, Sir, to take note of these facts. The constituency that I have the honour and privilege to represent in this Council

was a distressed area when I was elected to this Council. At that time rice was being sold at \$2.40 and \$3.00 per bag, and the manner in which the producers tried to escape their liability and debt incurred in producing rice led me to come forward and fight the cause of the rice producers. I desire to impress upon Your Excellency that if the advisers of Government on the rice industry were careful in their calculations and in their obligations to the producers they would never have put this Government in such a false position that it finds itself in today. Indictment is a small term to use, but it is a hard term, when you consider that the time has come when the producers should receive more for the rice they produce. Your Excellency, the hon. Member for Western Essequibo and I had to influence this Government, as the result of the many things that had occurred to the rice producers in their milling, in their rental and loan interest charges and their fear of dispossession, to appoint a Committee of which the hon. the Acting Attorney-General was Chairman. We went over the whole Colony examining the situation and a report was made to Government, I would ask Your Excellency to read that report.

It shows that at that time the landlords and millers were making all the money and the producers got none. The Government then introduced after careful consideration an Ordinance to protect the producers. In their humble way they tried to produce as much rice as possible, encouraged by members of the District Committee. There can be no doubt—and no Member of this Council can deny the fact—that since the introduction of that Ordinance the Essequibo Coast and the Islands of Leguan and Wakenaam have increased their production, and as a result the producers have earned a little more and in a way secured a comfortable living. But the fear that on account of the high cost of living, the cost of labour, their production will not afford them the benefit of the protection which Government has given them, and I am now saying that had the members of the Board taken the precaution to advise Government in the proper manner this situation would not have been. The members of the Board know fully well that the rice crop starts always in March and the

planting season lasts to July and, therefore, they should have known that the price was going to be increased and advised Government as to the proper time wherein the farmers should prepare the new lands so that they would obtain the benefit of a better price. But what do we find? Those farmers on account of the increase of the price have sold all their padi to the miller in order to meet the demands of the Rice Marketing Board that all padi must be in the mills to be milled. As a result they could not even obtain rice for their own consumption. That is the indictment I want to place on Government.

Is it fair to the rice producers that that should occur to them? They could have kept their padi and got a good price for their padi. They do not get rice for their padi and when they do they have to pay an increased price rather than the price at which they sold their padi. Your Excellency, as I have said somewhere, the advisers to the Board are not acting in the interest of the producers. In Jamaica the price of rice quoted from U.S.A. is 20 cents per lb., and I have heard other Labour Delegates say that in their places they pay 14 cents to 18 cents per lb. Compare that with the price the producers here are receiving! I do ask Your Excellency to enquire into this matter and see whether the Government or the Rice Marketing Board is dealing fairly with the producers of rice. I emphatically say they are not. Let us look at the other side of it. If they had been dealing fairly with the producers of rice would there have been a shortage at any time in the supply for local consumption? Would there have been repeated requests from every part of the Colony for rice for local consumption?

A little more than a year ago Government deemed it advisable to place the rice industry under an Ordinance which will give a democratic form of representation from the Rice Producers' Association to the Rice Committee and then to the Rice Marketing Board, so that the producers can put forward their views. But what do we find? Since the inception of that Ordinance the

Rice Producers' Association has not been formed in the several districts. Although I personally went into my constituency, gathered the principal producers, millers and landlords together and asked them to form an association, up to now—and that was more than a year ago—nothing has been done save and except that the Secretary of the Board has been there twice and has appointed local Secretaries who do not understand the rice situation. In the Island of Leguan they have appointed a man, who has now started to plant rice, as one of the district secretaries. It is not fair, and I do appeal to you, Sir, in this matter.

We have all agreed that a single-seller is the best policy for the industry. There is no denying of the fact, but we say the administration of it is not being conducted in the proper manner. Year after year I have been asking Government to enquire into it, and yet it has remained the same way. As a matter of fact it has become worse, and that is why complaints are being made. Your Excellency, in fairness to these producers let them have a fair deal so that they can earn a little more to meet their cost of living. They have to pay more to the labourers who have to plant and reap the rice. I ask you, Sir, in all seriousness not to let these producers down, because there may come a time when they may feel they cannot stand the cost of living and instead of increasing production they may decrease production and find themselves back in the same distressed condition as when they had to play hide and seek with their creditors and do all tricks in order to get a few dollars into their pockets. Let the industry be reviewed in the light of what I have said. The administration is not being conducted, as enacted in the Ordinance and as should be done. I feel that if you review the industry you would also find that the contracts made abroad by the Board at the time were in the best interest, but now we can get more for our rice throughout the West Indies, and I appeal to you, Sir, in the matter.

At this stage the Council adjourned to 2 p.m. on Thursday, 9th October, 1947.