

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Wednesday 10th November, 1937.*

The Council met at 10.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. E. J. WADDINGTON, C.M.G., O.B.E., President, in the Chair.

## PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, (Acting) (Major W. Bain Gray, C.B.E.).

The Hon. the Attorney-General, (Mr. J. H. B. Nihill, M.C.).

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

The Hon. J. S. Dash, Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. E. G. Woolford, K.C. (New Amsterdam).

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

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Georgetown North).

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, Comptroller of Customs.

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

The Hon. M. B. Laing, District Commissioner, East Demerara.

The Hon. G. O. Case, Director of Public Works and Sea Defences.

The Hon. B. N. V. Wase-Bailey, Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. L. G. Crease, Director of Education (Acting).

The Hon. H. P. Christiani, M.B.E., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. E. M. Walcott (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys (Eastern Demerara).

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

The Hon. A. G. King (Demerara River).

The Hon. S. H. Seymour (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. J. W. Jackson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. H. G. Seaford, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

## MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 9th November, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

## PETITIONS.

Mr. JACOB laid on the table a petition from the Church Wayside Army Incorporated, on behalf of the inhabitants of the Colony of British Guiana, praying that Captain J. P. Coghlan, formerly Stipendiary Magistrate of this Colony, be recommended for the post of the Commissioner of Labour.

Mr. WALCOTT laid on the table a petition from certain ratepayers and property owners of Kitty and Alexander-ville, East Coast, Demerara, praying that the expenditure of the district for the past three years be enquired into and a comparison made with expenditure of other villages of the Colony, and also that the status of the district be raised to that of a Village.

## ORDER OF THE DAY.

## ESTIMATES, 1938.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

## AGRICULTURE.

Mr. JACOB: When the Council adjourned yesterday afternoon I was dealing with the rice industry, and I stated that it was built up under most distressing circumstances. I do not propose to say very much on that score, except to refer to a passage in the report of the Pillai-Tivary deputation which visited this Colony in 1922. Paragraph 26 of the report states:—

“The path of a rice-farmer in British Guiana has been beset with many obstacles, and he has had to contend against heavy odds, natural and otherwise. Not only has he had to face drought or floods for want of facilities for irrigation or drainage, but he has also had to live down the narrow prejudices of the conservative planters and the short-sighted attitude of the Government. As regards the prejudices of the planters, reference may be made to the evidence of certain witnesses before the Sanderson Committee, 1910, and the action taken by the Hon. Mr. Duncan in 1907 when he tried to get the Combined Court to prevent rice-growers from growing more than one crop of rice per year. So far as the attitude of the Government is concerned, East Indians complained to us not only about its indifference towards questions of irrigation and drainage, but also about the executive action taken in 1919-20 which placed an embargo on the export of rice, and practically led to the throttling of the industry. When Major Wood, then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, visited British Guiana in the beginning of 1922, the elected members of the Combined Court presented an address to him. In that address they made reference to the condition of the rice industry and said:— ‘When it has not suffered from floods or drought it has languished under legislation or Government restrictions, not always in its best interests.’ “And they added ‘It has risen from small beginnings, unaided by capital or Government directions, and has hitherto been maintained under most distressing conditions.’ It speaks volumes, in the words of that address, ‘for the perseverance and industry of the persons engaged in it that it should have survived in its present dimensions.’ “And it is gratifying to note that it is mainly the East Indians who have succeeded in building up this industry under such discouraging circumstances.”

I am sorry to say that the same thing appears again to-day—the industry is being throttled. The report of the Director of Agriculture shows that during the last three years the exports of rice have been just about half of what they were during the three previous years when there was no market.

According to the report of the Director of Agriculture all of our agricultural industries, except sugar, are declining. I propose to refer to them as I go along this

morning. Promises have been made over and over again that something would be done to create new industries. I am not so much concerned about the creation of new industries; I am more concerned about carrying on the industries that exist. The position of the people of the country, particularly those of the labouring classes, is getting worse day by day. It is not at all encouraging, and it is a painful duty to me to be constantly referring to the matter, but I can see no other course open to me than to refer to it over and over again until some notice is taken. I remember when the rice industry was being built up by East Indians who came to the Colony under a system to which I would not like to refer, and when they found conditions were not encouraging they resorted to the rivers and creeks, evading the indenture laws. When they were sick they were prosecuted as habitual idlers, and I have had the displeasure of seeing them taken into court from hospital and sent to the gaol where some of them died. That is how the rice industry has been built up during the past 30 years, and it is distressing to see how it is being throttled. Every device is being resorted to, some enforced, some to be manipulated later on to control the export of a commodity when its production is not being helped at all. Government is not encouraging the production of rice, but it is holding on to the export end of it and manipulating it in such a way as to put money into the pockets of some people who have enough and to spare. Paragraph 71 of the report of the Director of Agriculture for 1936 reads thus:—

“From a study of Table XI it will be seen that there has been a reduction in total acreage devoted to agricultural pursuits, rice being the principal crop involved. This reduction is attributed largely to the comparatively low prices for export rice and to the fact that a considerable area of the autumn crop plantings were lost. Not only did these low prices serve to discourage planting to maintain the rice acreages of the previous years, but they encouraged middlemen to keep larger stocks for the domestic trade and farmers in suitable areas to concentrate on cane-farming. With larger quantities of rice available for local consumption, smaller areas than normal were planted to other food crops.”

I have read nearly every page of the report which teems with inaccuracies and misstatements. The reports of the Department have always contained mis-

statements and inaccuracies. They are termed in some cases "approximations." It is time we got down to realities and facts. I gave figures yesterday which showed that the export value of rice had not decreased a single cent during the last three years as compared with the previous three years, yet I see here a concise statement that the reduction of the rice crop is due partly to export prices being low. That statement is untrue, absolutely untrue, and it is made with some object in view—to throttle and keep the industry down. Paragraph 71 of the report also states :—

"It has been suggested also that rice marketing control, as relating to the export trade, may exercise some unfavourable psychological influence on the rice planter."

I do not know what that means. I know that the Director of Agriculture is a member of the Rice Marketing Board and there are other Government advisers on the Board. After studying the work of the Board for nearly five years the Director says that it has been suggested that the control of the export trade may exercise some unfavourable psychological influence on the rice planter. I do not know that the Director will be able to say what is the exact influence exercised on the rice-farmer. I maintain that, particularly in the County of Essequibo, it could be nothing other than this restrictive control that is responsible for the reduction of the acreage under rice. The election in that division, which was fought on the question whether there should be legislative control, was won by a margin of two to one. I cannot imagine what other indication Government wants, but the agony is being prolonged. It does not matter how many people become bankrupts, or how many are in a state of slavery and being exploited. All that matters is that the rice industry must not rival any other industry in this Colony; it must not even attempt to do so; it must not even have a chance to thrive. In fact it must be helped downwards. I prefer to say very little about the Anna Regina estates. I will take the matter up when it is more convenient, and probably in another place. The Imperial Government gave this Colony a demonstration mill to show the people of this country how to grow and mill rice, but the demonstration has failed absolutely. That is another indication that Government

should leave the industry alone. It is not a capitalist industry. Capitalists have been exploiting it all these years and will continue to exploit it although there is legislation.

I do not wish to say all I have to say about the Rice Marketing Board. There is a motion before the Council asking for the appointment of a Judicial Committee, and I hope every member of the Council will support it. Statements will be made on oath, and there we will have some revelations; sordid things will come out, sir. I have a fear that this Government will not permit it. This Government can stop anything, but I wish, and I am going to plead, that everything be put on the table. Let a Judicial Committee go into the whole matter and let the whole question be fully investigated, and we will hear of the sordid things that have been done there. I am saying nothing more about rice at the present time, except to make one other statement on the question of pure line seed and things of that kind. There may be a great mixture of all the seeds together, but there is no pure line seed in this Colony at all, except to the extent of about 5 or 10 per cent.

The Department of Agriculture is in a mess. Every agricultural industry, except the sugar industry, is in a state of chaos. The Report of the Director of Agriculture reveals that quite conclusively. It is not a matter of making statements that may be considered incorrect; those are facts and figures which have been presented. My object is to attack these unsatisfactory things so that some hope could be seen for improvement in the future.

With regard to the sugar industry statements were made here on the last occasion that my figures were incorrect. The statement was made that they were all wrong. I had not an opportunity then to reply, but I shall take the opportunity now to make a few observations on those statements. I made it perfectly clear that the freight rate on sugar to Canada was 17 cents per 100 lbs., a precise and definite statement, and that the freight rate on rice to Canada was 30 cents per 100 lbs.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I rise to a point of order. What has the question of

freight rates to do with the Department of Agriculture?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is in order.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. member is so uneasy when I am on my legs.

Mr. SEAFORD: You are wasting the time of the Council.

Mr. JACOB: The freight rate on rice is 30 cents per 100 lbs., and the freight rate on coffee is 60 cents per 100 lbs. My hon. friend, the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Seaford, who represents the whole Colony (I only represent the North West District) referred to gold. I wonder if gold is put into a ship's hold together with rice, coffee and sugar. I was comparing three agricultural commodities in practically the same class, and handled in the same way between Georgetown and Canada. My friend started off by expressing sorrow. I wish he had used the word "sordid." I was accused of making misstatements, and it was said that my information was not correct. What does the Hon. Mr. Seaford state? He said that the freight rate on coffee was about 60/- per ton, on sugar about 25/-, and gold £2,000 per ton. He was precise about gold, but not precise about sugar and coffee. I want to ask the public and this Council in all seriousness: Can Mr. Seaford tell us conscientiously that he did not know or he does not know what is the freight rate on sugar?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine his remarks to the debate on the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. JACOB: I submit that I am dealing with freight rates on commodities which are largely shown on this estimate.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can say anything he likes in regard to that, but he must not refer to other hon. members of this Council and ask for explanations on something that does not concern this debate.

Mr. JACOB: I shall vary my remarks to suit, sir. The hon. member referred to the approximate amount of the freight rate on sugar, and I am submitting that it is within the knowledge of that member,

and of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce which was referred to.

Mr. H. G. SEAFORD: May I shorten the debate by saying that I do not know the freight rate on sugar?

Mr. JACOB: I accept that statement; it is for us to judge whether it can be accepted whole-heartedly or not. I want to make this point, however, that when the matter was referred to the Chamber of Commerce another hon. member promised to supply the correct information, and correct information was supplied. While I am accused of making misstatements here and statements that are not true, I am afraid that some other of my hon. friends are doing more than what they are accusing me of doing, but if their accusations are correct I would withdraw all the statements I have made.

I maintain that the coffee industry should be helped in various ways. It was on account of my persistent requests in this Council, and at the Chamber of Commerce, that that body submitted certain recommendations, but I am told that the report goes nowhere, it does not state definitely what should be done. I am appealing to Government that some definite and precise steps be taken as soon as possible so that the industry might not be allowed to go to ruin. It has practically gone to ruin, and while Government is endeavouring to find other agricultural industries I think it is the duty of Government to preserve existing industries. I gave figures the other day, but for the purpose of this debate I will give them again. The value of the exports of coffee declined from \$137,933 in 1928 to \$15,626 in 1936. The coffee industry is or was the mainstay of the North West District, the Pomeroon and the Canals Polder, but it has been allowed to go to ruin for the want of some small aid of about \$20,000 which would have put it on a proper footing for some years to come. I hear the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) saying "No"—the industry should not be subsidised. It is heart-breaking when a member makes an appeal, which is supported by other members, that another member should say that no help should be given to the industry. May I remind that member that when the sugar industry was in a bad way the

Imperial Government contributed £40,000 to aid it? May I also remind him that in Trinidad the cocoa industry has been subsidised by one cent. per lb. for several years? I cannot understand the method of reasoning here.

I will now take up another subject that may be somewhat more attractive to my hon. friend, the member for Berbice River. I refer now to the coconut industry. I am making reference to these agricultural industries to show that the minor industries are not being attended to as they should, and the export figures prove that conclusively. On page 8 of the Report of the Director of Agriculture it will be seen that except in a few cases where there is some slight increase, there has been a steady decline during the last few years. What is responsible for that? The Department of Agriculture has been given all the money it wanted—\$30,000 more than what was spent 10 years ago is being spent, but what do we find? Every line of agricultural activity is going down. It is true that the coconut industry has been helped to some extent, and while I am not prepared to go into details I would like to say that that help was not what was required. With an increasing population, no work, and the sugar industry practically at a standstill, the outlook of the future is very discouraging. I see an attempt being made to help the plantain industry. That is all right in its way, but I am not going to allow any small help to the plantain industry, which may bring a few thousand dollars in, to blind my outlook and white-wash the whole thing. While it is desirable in some way, that is not what is required in this Colony. We want a bold, progressive agricultural policy which would in four or five years bring this country back to prosperity and give us a surplus instead of a deficit, and make us independent of loan-grants-in-aid.

I have criticised the Department of Agriculture. I want to make some constructive criticism now. (laughter). Sir Wilfrid Jackson is coming to us from Mauritius, where there has been established an agricultural mortgage bank, and I hope some such bank will be established in this Colony with as little delay as possible. I cannot believe that something which was carried in this Council almost

unanimously is not being put into operation. A motion for the establishment of an agricultural bank was carried here years ago and confirmed on more than one occasion, yet for some reason or another a bank has not been established, and I do not know when it will be established. What is the reason? While discussing the matter in another place with one of the leading sugar people I suggested that the establishment of a bank would be a boon to several small agriculturists, but he told me he would not be a party to it. I asked him if his opposition was on account of the fact that the establishment of a bank would divert ordinary trade from his concern and prevent it earning the large interest which it earned by lending money. He was cornered and said he would agree to it for a few years. I submit with all confidence that the non-establishment of an agricultural bank is due to various causes, principally the opposition of the leading capitalists here. When you put money on the commercial banks you get 1½ per cent. interest, but when you borrow money from the banks you are charged 6 and 8 per cent. interest. They are commercial concerns, but it is the duty of Government to provide facilities for the aid of agriculturists.

Lack of capital is a serious hindrance to the establishment of any industry here. The rice industry has gone down because of the withdrawal of a large volume of capital by people who are only too willing to help that industry and other agricultural industries, but they are opposed to commercial transactions being hampered by legislation and restrictions. Government should at the earliest possible date establish an agricultural bank where agriculturists might get money to borrow at not more than 4 per cent. interest per annum. It is within the means of Government. When the Colonization Fund was being appropriated I made a plea that at least \$200,000 or \$300,000 of that money should be set aside for the establishment of an agricultural bank, but some of the elected members opposed it. I wonder what is the reason for the opposition? A motion has been tabled suggesting the raising of a loan of £20,000,000. I wish it was for £2,000,000,000. What hinders the progress of the Colony is that there is no united action; we simply quarrel and criticise each other and are not concerned

with the progress and development of the Colony. (Hear, hear). It is very regrettable, and that brings me back to my point that the constitution of the Council is all wrong.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I would like to make a few observations on the remarks made by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) yesterday. In his reference to the Report of the Director of Agriculture he very ingeniously took figures for three years to contradict a statement I had made. I have always said that the fall in rice production was largely due to the decline in prices. My hon. friend took the figures for the years 1931, 1932 and 1933, added them and worked out the average cost per ton for those three years, showing that since the Rice Marketing Board came into existence the average was \$40.74 per ton. It is very clever, but I prefer to face facts. I get my facts from the "Commercial Review" and I will take the Council back to 1925 when this Colony exported 6,918 tons of rice valued at \$73.74 per ton; 1926, 2,914 tons valued at \$74.86 per ton; 1927, 11,000 tons valued at \$63 per ton; 1928, 18,083 tons valued at \$61.61 per ton; 1929, 14,091 tons valued at \$62.12 per ton; 1930, 22,480 tons valued at \$48.51 per ton; 1931, 23,631 tons valued at \$44.87 per ton; 1932, 28,505 tons valued at \$41.60 per ton; 1933, 29,092 tons valued at \$35.79 per ton; 1934, 14,382 tons valued at \$39.69 per ton; 1935, 10,527 tons valued at \$45.37 per ton; 1936, 20,521 tons valued at \$39.35 per ton. Those figures are conclusive proof that the decline in price is a big factor in the drop in the production of rice. I speak from first-hand knowledge. I am not saying that legislation does not handicap sales in many ways, but it is not right to blame the Rice Marketing Board for the decline in the world's prices, and that is what my hon. friend always endeavours to do. I can assure the Council that the Board has played a big part in getting the maximum price for rice against Indian competition.

The statement has been made that certain members of the Council opposed the suggestion of an agricultural bank. I do not think any member would oppose an agricultural bank. The hon. member for North Western District moved here that Government should utilise a portion

of the Colonization Fund for the establishment of an agricultural bank. That would be playing with it. We do not want to use the Colonization Fund for that purpose. If a suggestion was made that an agricultural bank should be financed by the Imperial Government hon. members would support a move in that direction.

Dr. SINGH: I have heard the views of the hon. members who have spoken on this head, and I wish to point out that as the production of sugar in this Colony has been restricted by the quota system, Government should turn its attention to assisting some of the minor industries. Such assistance would not only improve the morale of the people interested in those industries but would also improve the internal affairs of this country. I firmly believe that with its efficient staff the Department of Agriculture would be able to give Government expert advice, and I am hopeful that the Department will yet prove to the public that it is a useful part of the machinery of Government.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: It is not usual when the Council is considering the annual estimates to allow this head to pass unnoticed, and certain of my colleagues, as customary, have taken the opportunity to cover some of the old ground. I have listened with a great deal of interest to the statements made by those members who have spoken, and I must confess that I have not heard anything new. To say that I am a little bit disappointed is to express myself rather mildly, because I had hoped that some of the members—and I refer particularly to the new members—would have been able to make certain suggestions to Government for the improvement of the agricultural position in this Colony. I sincerely hope that when this head comes up for discussion again this Council will be favoured with solutions that are practical to this country. It is within the right and privilege of any member of this Council to criticise constructively and otherwise the administration of any department of Government, but at the same time it seems to me that if members would endeavour at all times to offer advice it would be of assistance. Not only would the work of the Council progress but I am sure members will agree with me that the Colony as a whole would progress.

There can be no doubt that members

are correct in expressing dissatisfaction that within the last 10 years the vote under this head has been increasing. Although it was not stated, I am inclined to think that the criticism regarding the increase is due to the fact that the Colony has not achieved any corresponding benefit from the increased expenditure on the Department. Reference has been made to the fact that so far as our agricultural industries are concerned the only progress that has been recorded is in respect of the sugar industry. It is recognised that so far as the sugar industry is concerned, those who are at the head of it are able to take care of their interests, therefore it would be right to assume that whatever progress has been made so far as sugar is concerned the credit should not only be extended to the Department of Agriculture but to those who are directly concerned in the industry. At the same time I would not like it to be understood that the Department did not lend the assistance required. The various items on the Estimate show the part the Department has played in it. The reports of the Department for the last five or six years also show what assistance it has offered in that direction, but nevertheless it seems to me that those who are at the head of the sugar industry undoubtedly give it all their attention, and quite rightly too. There is a large sum of money invested in sugar in this Colony, and it is definitely in the interest of those interested in it to give it all the attention it deserves.

My complaint against the Department of Agriculture—and I must confess that I am somewhat in sympathy with its Head in view of our peculiar conditions—is that sufficient information is not available in regard to the various agricultural industries of the Colony, and in this remark I am bound to include even the second major industry, rice. As an analogy let us take the position with regard to sugar. One is able, almost to the decimal point, to say exactly what is the production, the export and the local consumption of sugar. But what is the position with regard to rice? In trying to compile statistics for my own guidance I have endeavoured to ascertain, with some degree of accuracy, the production of rice in this Colony over a period of years, but I must confess, and I think the Director of Agriculture will confess, that it is absolutely impossible to say

what is the production of rice in the Colony. So far we have all had to be guided by estimates of the yield in the field. In that connection we will probably find that in some districts the yield of rice is say 20 bags and in others 10 bags. Another factor is that it is almost impossible to find out what is the local consumption of rice. We go on year after year groping in the dark and unable to obtain information which is exceedingly important in respect of each industry. I do not know what steps are being taken by the Department of Agriculture in order to make that information available. I do not know what the Department can do; it is a problem in itself. I hate to make suggestions, especially when the question of expenditure is involved, but it seems to me that in addition to all the "ologists" we have in this Department we ought to have an economist who would be able to work out these figures as closely as possible in order to supply the information that is desired.

I have only made those remarks about the rice industry; I do not propose to deal any further with that subject, because I have a great deal of regard for the statement you made yesterday, sir, that opportunity will be afforded members to offer any criticism or to make any suggestions regarding the future working of the Rice Marketing Board. Therefore I do not propose to deal with that side of the question, but I would like to assure hon. members that when the opportunity presents itself I hope to be able to add my quota to that subject.

I am exceedingly sorry I was not present this morning when the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) was concluding his remarks, but I have been informed that he made reference again to the delay in sending in the report of the Coffee Committee to Government. I probably would not have referred to the matter again, but from the information that has reached me it appears that the hon. member still has in his mind—and I understood him to express himself in that way—that there was some motive underlying the delay in sending in that report. I wish to assure the hon. member again that that is not so. He knows that is not so. Any delay that took place in sending in those recommendations to Government

was due to various reasons, and not reasons which I venture to suggest are operating in the mind of the hon. member, although I must confess that I am not aware of the reasons he has in mind. It seems to me, however, that he is trying to imply sinister motives. If he is of the opinion that members of the Council will not work with him it seems to me that the hon. member should examine himself and find out the reason why it is not possible for him to obtain the assistance of his colleagues in the Council. I suggest that he should examine himself and his actions.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has made his point. He must continue with the subject under discussion.

Mr. JACOB: I was just going to object, sir. (laughter).

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the hon. member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh) which I believe were made in this Council before. So far as sugar is concerned, we know that at least for the next five years a policy of restriction will be in force. I wish to refer particularly to cane-farming which has developed within recent years by leaps and bounds. There can be no doubt about it that the financial position of those districts in which cane-farming plays a very important part will certainly be retarded to some extent, and it seems me that now that we know that it will not be possible to extend cane-farming for at least five years, the Department of Agriculture ought to make very strenuous efforts to establish other industries in order to assist the position in those areas. I should like to sound a note of warning with regard to the establishment of minor industries. It must not be lost sight of that merely to tell people to plant this or that will not help them. When the time has come for the crops to be reaped it will be found that there are no markets, and apart from the disheartening effect upon those people it means monetary loss to them when they find it impossible to obtain a market at remunerative prices. Therefore, whatever proposals are going to be put forward to Government with respect to the establishment of new industries I would like to add that care should be taken to establish marketing organisations at the same time in order to ensure

the proper handling and distribution of the crops at remunerative prices.

Mr. ELEAZAR: When I was addressing the Council yesterday I said I was leaving the rest to the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob). I will never do that again. (laughter). Further, I think some members must be reminded that there is such a thing as Rule 25 of the Standing Rules of this Council, under which a member can move "that the question be put" after it has been sufficiently debated. I do not like to differ from my elected colleagues. The rule has been that we should keep together as much as possible so as to get something done. For what reason that rule is being broken away from I cannot conceive. There must be a limit. That is only a word to the wise, sir. When I said "No" to the suggestion that Government should subsidise the coffee industry the hon. member said he could not understand the hon. member. How can we ask Government to subsidise an industry indefinitely? We must be able to say for how long, and whether in that period the industry would be able to rehabilitate itself.

Mr. JACOB: That was done.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not interrupt except on a point of order.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Nobody can ask Government to subsidise an industry for an indefinite period. The comparison between sugar and other industries is ill chosen. Sugar is still the major industry of this Colony, and everybody knows that Government is bound to assist the major industry of the country because that is what the masses depend upon. Members come here and only talk about rice. I admit that rice is our second line of defence, and I will have a good deal to say about it when the time comes, and why it should get a large loan, but that is no reason why in and out of season we should hear about rice. We hear not a word about the poor man who is baked in the sun while he is standing in water; we only hear about exporters getting low prices. I thought, sir, when you put the question on items 1 to 6 you indicated that the general question of the Department had been sufficiently debated, but I



find that hon. members have been discussing the whole Department in a general way. I do not think that was what was intended, and it struck me to get that Rule applied. I do not like it myself very much (laughter) because I know I am sometimes a sinner in that respect, but I can speak at 180 words per minute and say what I want to say in 10 minutes.

Mr. LEE: Being a matter of privilege in this Council it is my duty to point out that under Rule 22 "a member may speak on the question before the Council and upon any amendment proposed thereto."

THE CHAIRMAN: I think every member knows that Standing Rule. I do not think it is necessary to discuss it.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I am very difficult to speak on this subject, because I feel I am going to waste the time of members of the Council, for the reason that they all know what I am going to say. I cannot however allow one or two statements made by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) to go abroad, for the very reason that the hon. member knows that they are untrue. I have been puzzling my brain a long time to find out what is his personal animosity against sugar, because surely the hon. member must realise the good sugar does for this Colony. I wonder whether there is some personal grievance behind it.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of order. Has the hon. member the right to refer to me personally?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must speak only on the point under discussion?

Mr. SEAFORD: The hon. member made the remark that the sugar industry is helping the rice industry down, and that the sugar industry considers the rice industry a rival. Can any person with the least bit of sense imagine for a moment that the rice industry can challenge the sugar industry in this Colony? I appeal to the hon. member to think about it. He says that the sugar industry is helping the rice industry down. He knows that statement is not correct. He knows that all over the country to-day the sugar interests are helping rice in every way they possibly can. He knows that in cer-

tain districts of the Colony rice lands are given to the people free by the sugar interests, and that water is also given them free.

Mr. JACOB: I am afraid the hon. member is abusing the privilege of the Council. He has been continually referring to me, and I do not think he is privileged to do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is in order.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am referring to the remarks made by the hon. member for North Western District.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can refer to the statements made, but must not state that the hon. member made untrue statements.

Mr. JACOB: Thank you, sir. I hope the hon. member will realise that fact.

Mr. SEAFORD: The hon. member made the statement that the sugar industry is helping the rice industry down. That is absolutely untrue. I am in a position to say it is incorrect, and I am not going to sit here and let it go out to the world without contradicting it. As I have said, the sugar industry is giving land to people to grow rice; it gives them water and conveniences to bring their rice in. Those facts are known throughout the Colony, and it is not only rice that the sugar industry helps in that way; it helps in other ways too. Hon. members are aware—if they are not I will tell them now—that in Berbice the sugar proprietors have given the people 100 acres of land free of charge for growing plantains or whatever they like. On the East Coast the same thing is being done, and the reason for that is this: that the Department of Agriculture is anxious, if possible, to foster the plantain industry with which we can compete with the Islands. But before that can be done we have to guarantee a supply. Knowing that it cannot rely upon the individual small farmer to supply large quantities, the Department has approached the sugar estates for a guaranteed supply. The sugar planters agreed to help but they said that the moment the industry was started and the small farmers were able to carry on they would be prepared to come out.

As regards rice—it is rather a nasty word to me now—the Department of Agriculture wanted the sugar people to help again by cultivating rice on a mechanised basis. The matter was very carefully considered by the sugar interests whose argument was that they would rather not do so, for the simple reason that they would kill the small man who would not be able to compete, and for that reason the proposal was turned down. If the small man does not mind, the sugar industry would come in and put rice on a proper basis, but we would soon hear that the small man was being crushed. One of the most serious troubles of the rice industry to-day is that the so-called leaders do not care one whit about the producers of rice. It is the man who sells rice and advances money to the producers at exorbitant rates of interest who is at the bottom of the whole trouble, and the sooner Government can get rid of that man the better. We all know that rice is essential to this Colony. We want it because it is only right that everyone should have some industry to spend his time on. No one is against rice, but it is absolutely absurd to consider that rice can ever be a major industry anywhere. Sugar will always be the mainstay of this country—there is no getting away from that—but any industry that can be fostered in this Colony will, I can assure the members of this Council, always receive the help of the sugar industry to the fullest possible extent.

I entirely agree with the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) when he says there is no good Government subsidising an industry unless it can see a future in it. Government cannot subsidise an industry forever, and no scheme has been put forward which shows that the coffee industry can live and stand on its own legs. If such a scheme is produced, and it is considered feasible, I am sure there is no member who will not be willing to vote a sum of money to help the industry. It is no good our living in the air; we must have facts before us. We have seen too much money thrown away here. I think I have said enough.

Mr. WALCOTT: I cannot let this opportunity pass without saying a few words about the remarks and comparisons made by the hon. member for North

Western District (Mr. Jacob). We have had remarks made by the hon. member this morning which, had they been made by any other member, I would have considered fallacious, but in the circumstances I can only consider them mischievous. The hon. member was most unfortunate in making comparisons between different industries. If he really wishes to see this Colony go forward the sooner he ceases to make those comparisons, which he obviously knows are not correct, the better.

Mr. JACOB: My honesty is being questioned by the hon. member, sir.

Mr. WALCOTT: My honesty has been questioned by the hon. member on more than one occasion.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not make personal remarks.

Mr. WALCOTT: I only want to say that in connection with the rice industry the hon. member gave figures which the hon. member for Western Essequibo (Mr. Seymour) was able to refute. I am quite certain that the Rice Marketing Board has not been responsible for the decline in the production of rice. I know that it is a question of world prices. If the price of rice went up to \$120 per ton we would find the production going up threefold in a very short time, but as the price has gone down, and has been steadily going down until the last few months, we must naturally expect the people to turn their attention to some other industry which would pay them better. Fortunately, in the last few years they have found employment in the canefields because the cane industry has gone ahead. Notwithstanding anything that may be said to the contrary, the fact remains that the output of sugar has been nearly doubled in the last 20 years. Unfortunately, the output of sugar will now be limited, and I agree with the member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) that the time has come when, by a very forceful policy on the part of the Department of Agriculture, we have to try to create some other minor industry to absorb any labour which it may not be possible for the sugar estates to employ. I sincerely hope that Government will make an effort in that direction. The Department of Agriculture has undoubtedly tried to improve the conditions of some of those industries. Unfor-

unately, conditions have been against them, but the greatest drawback the Department has had to meet have been the derogatory remarks made by some members of this Council who belittle the Department on every possible occasion. How can those members expect their constituents to take advantage of the advice given by the Department of Agriculture? More often than not its advice is very sound. I would ask those members to try to think along different lines.

I know that everybody makes mistakes. I have no doubt that young officers who come to this Colony do not know the difference between rice and grass, but there are some members of this Council who would not know it also, although they have been here many years. They would not know the difference between crab grass and rice. I am sure the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) does not mean to belittle the Department, and I ask him not to make so much of it in the future as he has done in the past.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to correct one or two misstatements, especially those made by my hon. friend on my right (Mr. Seymour). If the figures of the Director of Agriculture are not to be accepted in this Council I respectfully submit that no other figures can be accepted. My hon. friend referred to figures obtained from the Chamber of Commerce. I extracted my figures from the Report of the Director of Agriculture, pointed out what the exports were before the Rice Marketing Board came into operation, and drew comparisons. I respectfully submit that those figures I have quoted should be accepted in preference to those from the "Commercial Review." I do not wish any acrimonious discussion. I have always expressed my free, unbiased and conscientious opinions on all matters. Whatever my hon. friends think I am not concerned about. I am concerned with the progress and development of this country and nothing more. I am not here to please my friends.

THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member confine his remarks to the subject.

Mr. JACOB: I am finished, sir.

Professor DASH (Director of Agricul-

ture): I do not propose to reply at any great length to the lengthy, and on some points interesting, debate we have listened to during the last two days. The whole subject is so old that I think we are all tired of it by now. As my friend on my left (Mr. F. J. Seaford) has stated, even the jokes of the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) are a bit stale; we got no new ones this time.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I gave a new one this time. (laughter).

Professor DASH: In view of the hon. member's advocacy of tobacco-growing, I expected to see him with a cigarette or a pipeful of local tobacco. (laughter). I have repeatedly urged on members of this Council that before participating in a debate of this nature it is well that they should arm themselves with facts. Facts are the only things with which thinking people deal, but it does seem to me that very often the tendency is to go away from facts and indulge in verbiage. Only one fact was mentioned from the other side of the table. The hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) stated that the expenditure on the Department in 1928 was roughly \$90,000, while to-day it is \$116,000, roughly an increase of \$26,000. He did not, however, mention the direct revenue which annually amounts to between \$8,000 and \$10,000, nor did he go on to elaborate on what we have got for that comparatively small addition, but branched off in another direction. Last year I think we went very fully and most exhaustively into the activities of the Department. We showed that no hon. member can claim conscientiously that the expenditure on the Department has not been justified by results.

The hon. member on my left (Mr. F. J. Seaford) pointed to the doubling of the sugar output. I would refer again to the position in respect of rice very briefly. In spite of difficulties, handicaps and obstacles put in the way of the development of rice, substantial progress has been made in the last 10 years. Our exports have practically trebled themselves within the last 10 years. Hon. members who wish will remember that in 1926 the exports of rice had practically disappeared. In that year I think we exported 2,000 tons. And what about the quality of the

rice? I maintain that the interest the Department took in rice from the beginning has stimulated further interest in the industry and shown the people of the Colony its tremendous possibilities. Many persons have admitted to me frankly that they did not realise the possibilities of rice until the Department began to take an interest in it, yet members will say that the Department and Government have done nothing. How hon. members can make such a statement I do not know.

The hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) referred to the statistics with regard to rice. There is no doubt that it is extremely difficult to secure accurate statistics in relation to a crop like rice which is somewhat ephemeral in some cases. People grow patches here and there, and it is almost impossible to get anything but approximations. Nevertheless, last year we were only something like 1,000 tons out, which shows that our system of estimating is as reasonably accurate as can be expected. I know I am only wasting time as far as some hon. members are concerned, but the heading of Mr. Moore's press column "Eyes and no Eyes" would appear to me to be applicable to some members.

We have heard a great deal about sugar and a great deal of abuse of sugar. I have stated that sugar and rice are the big industries of the coastal belt. I see no larger second industry than rice. I would also refer the Council to the report by Mr. F. A. Stockdale, now Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on his visit to British Guiana in 1932. Mr. Stockdale is well known here; he served in the Department of Agriculture, and it would repay the Press to reprint his report on British Guiana just as a reminder. Members will note, if they read it, that the whole tenor of his report is the necessity for reliance on sugar. If the people of this Colony had only realised the importance of sugar instead of abusing it, we should have been far better off to-day. We might have had a quota of 300,000 tons instead of 170,000 tons. Instead of that the tendency has been rather to abuse it. I am not here to stand up for sugar—it has its spokesmen—I am simply here to advise Government and the people to the best of my ability as to the industries

which the country is capable of producing. What a different picture we might have had if sugar had not been so much abused? We should give up all this impractical talk about ground nuts, bananas and those various things and get down to what we know are really practical and possible. The little island of Barbados decided 100 years ago that sugar was the one staple crop that suited her conditions, and to-day she has a quota based on maximum production, which means that there is practically no restriction on her acreage.

It is all very well for commissions, committees and anybody for that matter to suggest that new industries are wanted. It is a totally different matter, however, to find industries with economic possibilities. After all, economic worth is the only criterion. Nevertheless, in spite of all the difficulties we have had and experienced, I claim from my seat in the Council that the Department has tried and is trying every conceivable crop which is grown in the tropics, in order to endeavour to find something adaptable in order to help the situation. There are members of the Board of Agriculture in this Council who will be able to tell you the inner workings of the Department in so far as those minor industries are concerned. We are trying to stimulate development of those minor industries in many ways. We have recently had some recommendations in respect of coffee. We are all very sympathetic with the coffee industry; we know its trials and tribulations. It is not a simple matter to arrive at a decision in regard to assistance to be given to any one industry. I know something about the recommendations that have been put up. On the face they appear reasonable, but there are difficulties and barriers which must be very carefully examined. One of them is that there is a fairly considerable loan outstanding to the Pomeroy farmers which has not yet been repaid. In point of fact any help to be given will have to take that into consideration. While Government is extremely sympathetic in this matter it is anxious to see that the proposition is carefully examined before coming to a definite conclusion as regards the type of assistance or subsidy to be given, and I think Government is willing to submit the matter to a Select Committee of the Legislative Council.

The hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) referred to some conclusions in my last report in respect of the crop figures. In dealing with the position as regards rice he referred to the census returns, but he only extracted those figures which suited his argument and left the rest severely alone. I think paragraph 71 of the report sums up the whole position with regard to the fluctuating returns. Last year there was loss of rice through drought, and then there was temporary employment of an attractive nature as the result of breaches in the sea wall which tended to detract from the cultivation of the soil. There is no fear that there is going to be any permanent decrease in agricultural industries in this Colony, but they will fluctuate. I did not say that rice marketing control exercised unfavourable psychological influence on the rice planter. I said that it had been suggested, and I think more than once, that it might do so.

The hon. member also drew attention to the reduction of the acreage under coconuts. Except in the case of industries that are long and well established, the question of acreage is a very difficult matter, but I will say this with respect to coconuts—and those who know will support me—that many of the coconut areas in this Colony have been established on the wrong soil, and year after year there is a considerable decrease due to loss of trees from one cause or another—disease and physiological troubles. Whether the diminution of the acreage will continue I do not know. It depends on the soils on which the coconut trees are cultivated.

I should like to take this opportunity to express what I feel is only common justice in respect of the assistance which the Department is receiving from the sugar interests with regard to the extension of the cultivation of rice and minor crops. They have given us all the assistance we could possibly hope for, and I am sure they are willing to go even further than that. They have provided their employees with facilities for irrigation, drainage, pure-line seed padi, extension of provision lands for minor crops and things of that sort.

The sugar industry has made extraordinarily rapid strides in recent years, for the reason that it has co-operated whole-

heartedly with the Department of Agriculture. That co-operation is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished in an industry by co-operation, and if other industries would follow that example to the same extent I am sure, in the case of rice cultivation, we would have exactly the same results. At the present time the rice industry is devouring itself. I cannot express it in any other way. Until those people engaged in it realise that co-operation is essential if they are to meet the competition in the export markets, I cannot see that the rice industry will make the advance which we all hope it will make. I wish to state here and now that the rice industry in this Colony has tremendous possibilities. There is no seeing how far we can go with rice if we take it seriously. Hon. members talk about rice in this Council, but I do not think they take more interest in it than the parcels they buy and sell. It is well that they take a Colony outlook and pull their weight in the industry as a whole.

We are working hard on the question of minor industries. Members of the Council who are members of the Board of Agriculture can bear out what I say. There is a large list of small crops with which we are dealing, and which we are trying to encourage. The plant and seed distribution list in the report for last year speaks for itself. In addition to those mentioned in the last report we have had trials with citronella, oil palms, sago palm, derris and haiari for insecticides. I would urge members to read and study the reports of the Department. It is no use coming here and making rambling and inaccurate statements. They do not help; they rather tend to retard the cause we are all trying to foster.

I should like to make passing reference to a few points made by the hon. member for Western Essequibo (Mr. Seymour) before the Estimates were reached. He referred to the La Belle Alliance scheme which we all know was suggested by the Department and supported by the Board of Agriculture and the Livestock Trade Committee, and there is no intention to go back on that scheme. All we have suggested is that some guarantee in respect of drainage should be available before money from the Colonial Development Fund is spent. I have been interested in

the scheme from its inception, and I would like to see it carried through.

With respect to the mechanisation of the rice industry the hon. member might have gone further. He could have told the Council that six months ago I met the Essequibo proprietors and had a long talk with them about mechanisation of the rice industry, and it was my suggestion, adopted by those present, that the hon. member and one or two of his associates should draw up a scheme outlining the whole position so that I might consider it with a view to making representations to Government. It was also suggested that some of the proprietors on the coast might go back on the lighter lands and try out maize after consultation with the merchants in Georgetown and the sugar industry, as to the possibility of the disposal of a certain quantity for mule feed. I have not heard anything further, although it was decided that those recommendations should be put up because they might have led to some development in connection with dryers.

The hon. member referred to cassava starch and the industry generally. I am able to tell the Council that a firm in Georgetown has been working in co-operation with the Department in an endeavour to do something with respect to cassava. We are up against it all the time, not only from the point of view of the cost of labour but also the yield. We do not get the yield in this Colony that we ought to get in order to make it an economic proposition as compared with countries in the East, and British Honduras, and possibly Jamaica. Last year St. Vincent, which is perhaps the largest producer in these parts of cassava starch, had to carry stock over practically the whole year, and in the end had to get rid of it at 2 cents per lb. Where can we produce cassava starch at 2 cents per lb?

With regard to Tonka beans, soon after I came here we went into the question of the coumarin content, a substance used in the perfume industry, which is found in the Tonka bean. We found that the bean normally grown here contains about half the percentage of coumarin required in the trade to make it a commercial proposition. The Venezuelan beans are the best, I think, from that point of view, and a large

portion of the Trinidad exports are produced in Venezuela. I suggested to the Conservator of Forests that he might try Tonka beans in the higher reaches of the Mazaruni, and I believe he has an area under cultivation in that district.

There is nothing that escapes our attention in the matter of minor industries, and if we have not pushed them too hard in many cases it is because on the coastal belt we have to consider soil, climatic conditions and yield. I would ask hon. members to bear in mind what I have said, namely, to study the reports, confer with the members of the Board of Agriculture and those who know something about what is going on, and in that way we can co-operate and save a lot of discussion and heart-burning in several directions.

I am conscious of the agricultural limitations of the coastal belt. We cannot expect the agricultural industries of the Colony to carry more than their fair share. When big schemes are initiated we have to be satisfied that the people for whom they are intended will put their shoulders to the wheel and carry them through. There is a tendency in this Colony to fail to appreciate that continuity of purpose is essential in agriculture. I have seen some very good schemes fail because they have not been followed up. There is an example in the Lodge Allotment Scheme which was started with every good intention, but how much of it is left to-day?

There is another point. I do not know if members are aware of the arrears of debt and unpaid dues of one kind or another that are piling up seriously on Government's hands as a result of fostering development schemes to help employment and production. I think there must be a point at which all this defaulting must cease if we are to have permanent development throughout the Colony. Hon. members have spoken of agricultural banks. They have to remember that banks have to be repaid. I feel that in this Colony there is not sufficient attention paid to the question of repaying overdue loans and dues of one kind or another which the established industries in the long run will have to bear. Those are questions that must be answered before hon. members can come

into the Council and say that Government lacks initiative. I thank you for listening to me. I hope I have not taken up too much of your time. (applause).

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would not like it to go forward to the world that the abuse of sugar by any section of this community is responsible for its parlous state. I say now that it was the freedom of the British market given to German bounty-fed beet sugar that drove our sugar off its feet, and that cannot be contradicted. We do not abuse sugar, but we abuse the policy of the planters towards neighbouring estates. They tried to conserve labour and did everything in their power to get Government to help them in that direction.

The Director of Agriculture has complained that people do not repay Government loans, and that is the reason why his Department should not give us something tangible for the money we are paying. Who could be so foolish as to say that we are getting no benefit from the Department? We are paying too much for what we are getting out of it. Only a fool would deny that the quality of our rice has improved, but what we are contending is that the expenditure is too high for the benefits we get. The Department is not pulling its weight, and if I had my will I would move that the first item under this head be deleted. (laughter).

Mr. JACOB: My friend, the Director of Agriculture, referred to unpaid debts. I think it was a most unhappy subject to choose at the end of his speech. I have no quarrel with him; he must defend his Department, but the plain fact remains that nothing should be prosperous in the Colony except sugar. How can Government expect taxpayers to pay arrears of rates and other debts when they cannot get sufficient money to live on? I would like to remind the Director that our sister Colony of Trinidad had a surplus of over a million dollars last year, due to money having been put into circulation. It is only by a bold agricultural policy that money will be put into circulation here, and we will all be content and pay our debts. I agree with my friend, the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) that our policy is not progressive. We must have a Department of Agriculture, but the money we are paying is too much for the benefits we are receiving.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I appreciated and listened with great interest to what the Director said. My remarks yesterday were made from the angle of constructive criticism. I made, I hope, no reflection on the Department of Agriculture, but endeavoured to get things going, probably with more speed than in the past. I regret that I did not pay him the compliment he deserved with regard to what we discussed in Essequibo. I have done so to the Committee. The scheme for mechanisation was one of the first moves for co-operation, and we sincerely trust we will see the Director down there more often, and that there will be whole-hearted co-operation which, I agree with him, will help us out of the rut. In Essequibo we welcome the Director, and sometimes curse when we do not see him often enough.

Item 7—Cane Agronomist and Plant Breeder (\$2,400 to \$3,360 by \$120), \$3,240.

Mr. ELEAZAR: would like to see this item below the line again. I cannot see any justification for putting it above the line. Because Government has attached more work to the office is no reason why it should be made pensionable. The tendency of Government is to reduce the opportunities for pension in respect of certain officers, and to increase them in respect of others. I have seen suggestions to halve the emoluments of messengers, to give them \$1 as a bicycle allowance, and at the same time to add \$20 per month to the emoluments of other officers who are already receiving large salaries. In other words, Government curtails from the small man to increase the emoluments of the bigger man. I move that the item be replaced below the line.

Mr. LEE: I notice in the explanatory memorandum that the Sugar Producers' Association contributes towards the salary of this post. I have heard privately that the Association pays the whole of the salary. I would like to know whether that is correct.

Professor DASH: The hon. member was so informed in Select Committee.

Mr. LEE: With reference to the estimates of revenue I would like to know whether the income of the Department of

Agriculture is contributed to by the Sugar Producers' Association.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): Item 17 in the Estimates of Revenue has nothing to do with item 26—Sundry Reimbursements; it is not shown. I can assure the hon. member that the full salary paid by Government is reimbursed by the Sugar Experiment Committee to Government, and is paid into Government revenue.

Mr. LEE: Do I understand that they will also pay the officer's pension, he having been put on the Fixed Establishment now? If they will not I do not see why this Colony should be burdened with it.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: This officer has been employed for about eight years and has done very good work indeed. Hon. members will remember the discussion that took place last year on the Plant Breeder. His services were lost and it was regretted after he was gone. It was really against the wishes of the Sugar Producers' Association that this officer was appointed Plant Breeder. They would much prefer to have his whole-time service. He has been used for Government work although the Association is paying his salary, but he is such an exceptionally good man that the Department of Agriculture and Government were anxious to retain his services. As usual the Association was willing to help in every way it could, and agreed to it.

Mr. J I cannot agree with the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) that the item should be put below the line. It is only fair and reasonable that this officer should be given pension rights for the service he is giving, not only to the sugar producers but the Colony in general. I realise that the sugar industry is necessary for the growth of this Colony, and while I do say that our pension list is high, this is not one of the items that ought to be excluded from it. I think it is only right and fair that this gentleman, having served for so many years, should be given security of tenure.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am fully satisfied with the explanation that has been given, but I desire an assurance from Government

that if at any future date it is decided that the posts of Cane Agronomist and Plant Breeder should be separated, i.e., that two officers should be appointed, one of them would be put below the line. We are not dealing with the particular officer, because we know the merits of the case, but Government should give an assurance that if there is separation of the posts in future this will not be regarded as the thin edge of the wedge.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot give an assurance that if there are two posts in future one would be below the line, because if it is decided in the future that there should be two posts it would be for the Legislature to decide what should be done. At present it is one combined post, and any alternative to that arrangement must of course come before the Legislature in the first place.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I must deplore this kind of shilly-shallying. Elected members complain that the pension list is too high. We have officers being put below the line who were previously above the line, and here we have a person who has no right to be there being put on the Fixed Establishment. If that is not political immorality I do not know what is. I protest against it and will ask for a division even if I stand alone.

The Committee divided, and there voted:—

*For*—Messrs. H. G. Seaford, Jackson, Seymour, King, Jacob, Walcott, Peer Bacchus, Christiani, Crease, Case, Laing, De Aguiar, D'Andrade, F. J. Seaford, McDavid, Luckhoo, Dias, Dr. Singh, Dr. Wase-Bailey, Prof. Dash, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—22.

*Against*—Messrs. Lee and Eleazar—2.

Item passed as printed.

The Committee adjourned until 2 p.m. for the luncheon recess.

2 p.m.—

Mr. Woolford, member for New Amsterdam, was present.

Item (13)—2 Agricultural Assistants (1 at \$672 to \$960 by \$48 and 1 at \$570 to \$720 by \$30), \$1,776.



THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Major Bain Gray): I beg to move that this item be increased to \$1,824.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item (17)—Assistant Plant Breeder (\$1,440 to \$1,680 by \$120), \$1,500.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not suppose it is of any use protesting against this item. I do not think we need a Plant Breeder, but I see that the appointment has been recommended by a gentleman in Trinidad. A schoolmaster at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture is teaching us here how to grow rice which he has not seen in his life. We have schoolmasters here.

Mr. JACOB: I am supporting this item (laughter), and I take this opportunity to refer to the increasing list of imports of articles that can be produced locally. The Director of Agriculture said this morning, almost definitely, that nothing else can be grown here except sugar, but towards the end of his speech he said that rice is something that can be grown successfully. I have here a copy of the "Commercial Review" which gives the imports and exports of various products, and I notice a general increase of imports of articles that can be produced locally. I notice that imports of onions increased from 935,000 lbs. to 1,224,000 lbs. for the last half-year. I think onions can be and ought to be produced locally, and that is something for the Plant Breeder to do. Imports of peanuts increased from 249,000 lbs. to 497,000 lbs. for the last half-year. I do not suppose that sweet potatoes can be produced locally at all. I do not think the people of the North West District should take instructions from the Director of Agriculture. The fact remains that this Colony imported 177,000 lbs. of sweet potatoes last half-year and 341,000 lbs. this half-year. Tobacco can be produced here, yet its importation has been increased from 20,000 lbs. to 22,000 lbs. this last half-year. That is how we go along—increasing expenditure and increasing imports.

I am sorry the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) is not present. Maybe it might suit him to say that it is better to import articles, because I gathered from his remarks on a previous

occasion that before we produce articles we must have a market. I think we must produce first and then supply the market. We are not doing first things first in this Colony. I hope that by appointing an assistant Plant Breeder we will stop increasing our imports. Imports of ginger increased from 18,000 lbs. to 28,000 lbs. this half-year. I would like to see this item completely removed from the import list. I think I have produced ginger at some time of my life. (laughter). I see some of my friends laughing. I have produced rice and other things with my own labour; I still produce them indirectly. I may be a bore to some members, but in these things lie the progress and development of the Colony.

Professor DASH: I am very glad that the hon. member has raised that point; it is well worth raising. It is a fact that throughout these Colonies there is a tendency to import a large number of commodities that we would seem to be able to produce ourselves. We have gone into the matter very thoroughly. The whole question is one of competition with the imported articles. In many places where those commodities grow with far greater success and on a larger scale under conditions suitable to them, it is usually true that in the handling of them and the labour involved in reaping them the imported article is able to compete on very favourable terms with the locally grown article. The farmers have been devoting greater attention each year to the production of some of those commodities, but they have not reached the stage where they can come, generally speaking, into the open market. There has been increased consumption of locally produced articles in some of the villages, and those who travel about the country and see the gardens which have been established in recent years will bear testimony to that fact.

We have specially devoted a very considerable amount of time to the growing of onions, but the results have been uneven, due to the fact that the seasons have been uneven. Some years we have been able to reap a very satisfactory crop, and other years we have not been able to do so, either on account of too much rain or lack of water. Those farmers who have persevered are still continuing their efforts, and they find it is better for them to con-

fine their efforts to smaller areas rather than extend their cultivation over large areas with the possible result of failure or having to employ labour to grow and reap the crop. We will never be able to supply our own demands for onions here. The tropical onion will not keep. It will always be a seasonal article. I have seen a considerable quantity of onions on the local market, notably in Berbice. Those who attended the agricultural exhibition in 1935 will recall the very fine exhibits of locally grown onions. There is a tremendous amount of wastage, whereas the importers have considerable areas from which to draw their supplies of onions throughout the year. The type of onion we grow here is the Bermuda type, a very mild onion in flavour.

Another big item is peas and beans. The Plant Breeder is helping us well in the selection of various types. We have distributed quite a lot of seed—2,591 lbs. from 1928 to 1936. We have imported these beans from all parts of the tropical world in an endeavour to find varieties that do best under our conditions. The Plant Breeder has certainly been most helpful. For instance, we have been trying to raise seed from a strain of Indian onion. We have distributed a small quantity of seed on trial from this Indian type of onion, and we hope some satisfactory results will be obtained in that way.

The hon. member has raised a good point, and I should like to emphasise that it is often difficult in marketing these things to compete with the imported article on account of the varying conditions of labour and so on.

Mr. JACOB: I must accept the Director's explanation, but to say that I am satisfied would not be expressing my own conviction. What is wanted here is irrigation and drainage. Agricultural difficulties in this Colony exist throughout the world, but it appears to me that here we allow Nature to carry us away, except in very exceptional circumstances. The plain fact remains that for the last 10 years we have been experimenting and have not reached the stage where we can put the results of those experiments to practical purposes.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item (18)—8 Technical Assistants, \$6,228.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that this item be increased to \$6,360.

Mr. LEE: Yesterday in my remarks I accused the Director of Agriculture of deception. In the 1937 Estimates under Rice Grading Section provision was made for two Examiners at \$480 to \$624 by \$48—\$1,200. We all know that the Rice Marketing Board is now the subject of investigation by a Committee. If you total the expenditure with respect to the two Examiners, now that they are being included among the Technical Assistants, you will find that there is a deficit of \$1,672 in respect of the Rice Grading Section. If on the arrival of the new Governor it is found that the Rice Marketing Board is not serving a useful purpose to this community and to the industry, will the two Examiners, whose work is devoted entirely to the Rice Grading Section, be employed in some other sphere of agricultural activity, or will they have to vacate their posts on account of the Rice Marketing Board and the Rice Grading Section being abolished by Government? I must charge Government with deception in this matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LEE: In the 1937 Estimates there was provision for two Examiners under the Rice Grading Section. In the 1938 Estimates we find that the two Examiners are included among eight Technical Assistants. If the Rice Grading Section is abolished those two men will still be in the Department of Agriculture. If the Director desired those men to be agricultural instructors or their assistants there should have been a note to that effect.

Professor DASH: I do not think any hon. member, except the last member who has spoken, has ever accused me of playing hanky-panky with the estimates. At any rate the hon. member is confusing the Rice Marketing Board with the Rice Grading Section, and if he would look at the Bain Gray Report he would find the whole position set out very clearly as to how those Technical Assistants are made up. It is true that two of these men are

really Rice Grading Inspectors, but that does not mean that if rice grading was ever abolished those two men would be employed as other Rice Inspectors. The Rice Grading Section is under the control of the Department of Agriculture, and that is what hon. members must bear in mind. What is stated in this estimate has nothing to do with the Rice Marketing Board at all. The only thing is that the Rice Grading Officer has been allowed to carry on the duties of Secretary to the Rice Marketing Board.

Mr. JACOB: I think I can explain what my hon. friend is contending—that expenditure in connection with rice grading should not be mixed up with other expenditure. We would prefer to see it kept separate. In the 1937 Estimates it was, but in the 1938 Estimates it has been disguised in another form. They may be termed Technical Assistants, but they should be put under the Rice Grading Section. Later on there will occur differences of opinion as to whether the Rice Grading Section should be continued, apart from the Rice Marketing Board. There is one school of thought which thinks that rice grading should be abolished altogether.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is shown quite clearly in the note on the right hand side of the page that the two Rice Examiners form part of the eight Technical Assistants.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item (19)—4 Probationers (\$360 to \$432 by \$24), \$1,728.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that this item be reduced to \$1,638.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item (24)—House Allowances to Agricultural Instructors in charge of Berbice and the East Coast, Demerara, and Agricultural Superintendent, West Demerara, \$672.

Mr. LEE: Perhaps I did not make myself clear yesterday when I spoke about these house allowances. In the Civil Service List there is an Agricultural Superintendent for West Demerara whose salary is £525 without any reference

whatever to a house allowance. I understand that the previous holder of the post got a free house under his contract. According to the Civil Service List the present holder of the office gets no house allowance, although in the 1937 Estimates a house allowance was passed by this Council. If the post does not carry a house allowance I will move that a house allowance be struck out. I would like to know how much is allowed as a house allowance, and I ask that the amount be stated in the Estimate.

Mr. JACKSON: The hon. member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) lays great stress on the Civil Service List, and apparently places it above the Estimates. He asserts that as the Civil Service List does not mention any house allowance for the Agricultural Superintendent of West Demerara he should not have it. If on the Estimate it is proposed to give a house allowance to that officer I do not see where the Civil Service List comes in. In my opinion the house allowance is attached to the post, and if the former holder of the office was given a house allowance I do not see why the present holder of the office should not have it. There is every reason to believe that Government knows what it is about, and I support the item.

Mr. LEE: I would like to be informed what is the amount of the house allowance.

Professor DASH: I think it is \$25 per month, speaking off-hand. The officer does not draw that sum; it is paid for the house. The question of house allowances is engaging the attention of Government, because Government realises that in the past some officers have been appointed with house allowances and others without. The whole object is to put the question of house allowances on an equitable basis in future. The point the hon. member has made will receive attention.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I understand that Government has given us a guarantee that it will go into the whole question of house allowances. There is therefore no reason to go into each case on the Estimates. I accept Government's guarantee.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In reply to an enquiry in Select Committee I stated that Government was considering

the question of house allowances. Every time a post to which a house allowance is attached becomes vacant the matter is re-examined whether a house allowance or a free house is really necessary, and the general policy is that a house allowance is granted only to officers whose duties require them to live at particular places. It will assist hon. members if I lay over a list of all officers receiving house allowances or free houses.

Mr. LEE: The previous holder of the post got a free house. Now it is not so stated.

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps it would help the hon. member if I state that officers are not appointed to posts as Agricultural Instructors in a district. They are appointed as Agricultural Instructors and thereafter are posted to districts. There is no such thing as a house allowance attached to the Agricultural Instructor of a certain district.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item (25)—Grading Inspector (\$1,440 to \$1,920 by \$120), \$1,816.

Mr. JACOB: This morning when I made certain statements here the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) challenged them and said they could not be true. I should therefore like to narrate a few facts and figures taken from the report of the Director of Agriculture, and when my friend studies those figures he will then vary his opinion. I would also like to tell those hon. members who think like him that I know what I am talking about. In 1903 the area under sugar cane cultivation was 78,000 acres.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member dealing with the item—Rice Grading Inspector?

Mr. JACOB: I am dealing with rice, sir. The acreage under rice—

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to do so under this item. He must choose some more suitable item.

Mr. JACOB: This item deals with rice.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow it under this item.

Mr. JACOB: If Your Excellency rules I will have to submit to your ruling, but I do protest.

Mr. LEE: I am asking you, sir, to defer consideration of this item until this Council has received the report of the Rice Committee. I formerly move that the debate on the item be deferred.

Motion for the adjournment of the debate not carried.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 4—Scientific Apparatus and Equipment, \$1,870.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Have we not got scientific apparatus and equipment? I observe that the same amount was voted for 1937.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Many years ago in reply to a similar question I remember altering the item to "Provision and maintenance of scientific apparatus and equipment," in order to emphasise the fact that new apparatus and a certain amount of maintenance had to be provided every year. I believe the description of the item was altered again. It includes initial charges as well as maintenance charges.

Mr. ELEAZAR: If that explanation is correct the cost of the apparatus should be deleted and only maintenance provided, unless new apparatus has to be purchased every year.

Professor DASH: I think it is obvious that if you have scientists they must have working materials, and when you bear in mind all that is being done in the laboratories this vote is quite a small one. It has to be borne in mind that chemicals, for example, have to be renewed every year; fresh supplies have to be bought. It is true that certain pieces of apparatus are not broken or disposed of every year, but there is a lot of glass-ware and test tubes which call for renewal. This vote covers a considerable amount of activity.

Mr. ELEAZAR: It covers a multitude of sins which have not been explained. Do you want the same amount every year as that with which you commenced? It is not only the Department of Agriculture

that knows about science; everybody knows about it in these days.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 8—Experimental Stations, \$12,761.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to know what experiments are being carried on at the Experimental Stations in Demerara, Essequibo, Berbice and the North West District.

Professor DASH: I would refer my hon. friend to the report for 1936.

Mr. JACOB: I do not think that is a satisfactory answer, but I submit that everything contained in the report is experimented on at those stations. If that assumption is correct I will proceed to give a few figures with regard to the acreage of certain products. In 1903—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order. He must refer to Experimental Stations if he wishes to speak.

Mr. JACOB: I am going to refer to Experimental Stations.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, certainly.

Mr. JACOB: We have heard about experiments with rice and new varieties. We have heard also of an Assistant Plant Breeder, and I take it that part of this vote is devoted to new varieties of sugar cane, rice, bananas and other things.

Professor DASH: Not sugar cane.

Mr. JACOB: I take it that rice is included. I would like to refer to certain acreages to show that some of the experiments have not proved successful. In 1903 the acreage under rice was 17,000 acres. In 1918 it went up to 60,000 acres, then it dropped in 1923 to 38,000 acres. That shows there has been something seriously wrong with the type of rice and the varieties being experimented with. Then, for some reason or another, it went up to 87,000 acres in 1932, and to-day it has dropped again to 62,856 acres. I am submitting that the time has arrived for a new strain of rice to be experimented on and a good variety found as soon as possible in order to cope with the present market conditions in competition with Eastern rice. There is no doubt that we

cannot compete in some cases with rice from the East, and as I take it that rice is largely experimented on at these Experimental Stations, this amount of money which is spent from year to year is not being properly spent. I think last year the then President told the Council that an investigation was being made into the matter, and that it might be better to have those Experimental Stations in one centre instead of being scattered about the districts. I am strongly of the opinion that it would be best to centralise those Stations, and if we must have—and I think we ought to have—experiments carried on in the various country districts the farmers or proprietors should be given a sum of money to carry on those Stations under the supervision of the Director of Agriculture and his assistants. In the case of rice it is necessary to have staff throughout the year. The majority opinion is that it would be better for the proprietors or rice mill owners to do the experiments in rice.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I would like to ask the hon. member when last has he visited the Experimental Station in Georgetown, or whether he has ever set foot there? It is only by visiting these Stations that we can appreciate the work being done there

Mr. JACOB: I have been there quite recently, but I do not think it is a fair question to ask.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I pay frequent visits to Georgetown and have a look at those Stations wherever I go. Perhaps the proprietors can do the job better up to a certain point. When we had the discussion with the Director of Agriculture he agreed that the proprietors could do the work but not in its entirety. We have not the time to devote to the work. Therefore we agreed with the Director that it was best left alone where it was in Essequibo. Very interesting data is obtained from those Experimental Stations. They also provide employment for a certain number of people, and it is not money wasted. As long as we produce rice we must carry on these experiments. We have to grow rice that will not fall down. We have not discovered that yet. We have cataclysms of Nature; we have no seasons here. It is only by experimentation and development that we can achieve

stabilisation. I advise hon. members that before they speak on this subject they should go up with me to the Stations.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 10—Livestock, \$6,000.

Mr. JACOB: I have in my hand a copy of the "Commercial Review" of June 30, and I am going to refer to certain articles connected with livestock. I will begin with beef. The imports of beef during the first half of this year were 2,290 barrels as against 1,400 barrels during the previous half-year. Imports of bran and feed for cattle last half-year amounted to 113,000 lbs. as against 193,000 lbs. last year. Imports of butter were 247,000 lbs. last half-year as against 175,000 lbs. last year. As regards cheese there was a slight decrease last half-year when 129,000 lbs. were imported as against 145,000 lbs. last year. Imports of margarine were 2,101 cases last half-year as against 3,017 cases last year. Imports of condensed milk were 11,000 cases last half-year as against 5,400 cases the previous half-year.

The cattle industry, which can and ought to have been put on a very much better footing to-day, is lagging. The state of the industry is a great slur on Government and the Department of Agriculture. I have had experience of cattle farming on the Essequibo Coast for about 15 years. The proprietors of the Perth Cattle Ranch, Ltd. spent \$40,000 there, and I do not think they would get \$4,000 to-day. I do not think everything has been done that ought to have been done for the cattle industry. I know I will be told in reply that we are still experimenting. The Department of Agriculture is importing three or four bulls; we ought to have 300 or 400. The Government Veterinary Surgeon should be looking after thousands of head of cattle. Can't Government put aside a little money and endeavour to develop the industry so as to stop the importation of articles that can be produced and ought to be produced here, profitably to the small man? There again I say the Department has failed completely to do the things that are necessary in the interest of the small man.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I should certainly like

to know how we are spending this money. I do not like to see the same amount asked for each year. We should either see an increase, which would show that we are progressing, or a decrease. I think it might save a lot of criticism from members who seem to think that everything imported here should not be imported. We cannot do things here so as to prevent the importation of beef and things of that kind. It cannot be expected, because we are only in the experimental stage. If later on we can develop the Rupununi and improve our cattle all will be well. It is not fair to say that this or that article is being imported when we can produce it here. In most of those cases the Department of Agriculture is not to be blamed. For instance, we can grow sweet potatoes here, but there is always a glut, and in consequence the people turn their attention to other things and buy sweet potatoes from Barbados. The same thing applies to corn which is a perishable article. The reason why certain articles are imported which can be grown here is because we cannot compete against the outside world with those things.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 12—Rice Grading Expenses, \$2,116.

Mr. LEE: In November last year Government accepted a motion by the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) for the appointment of a Committee to enquire into the rice industry. If that Committee is going to recommend certain solutions with regard to the industry it is necessary that we should await its report before voting any expenditure. I do not think we should pass items that may not be required.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member moving that consideration of this item be deferred?

Mr. LEE: Yes, that is what I am asking Government.

Motion that consideration of the item be deferred not carried.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 13—Agricultural Apprentices, \$1,514.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that the item be amended to read "Training of Apprentices, \$1,514."

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 17—School Gardens, \$1,000.

Mr. ELEAZAR: These school gardens are of doubtful utility. In nearly every case the site seems to have been ill chosen. I do not know who suggested that a sand reef is the best site for a garden. Government is tinkering with this money. The children who are being taught to do these things can do them better than their teachers.

Mr. JACOB: It is really refreshing to hear certain members speak. Last year I pointed out to Government that while the scheme was a good one it was not properly planned, and that it would end in failure. It has not actually failed yet, but judging from what is on the Estimate it will fail completely next year, and I think the item will disappear from the Estimate. That might probably suit some members, but I would certainly like to see a very large sum of money provided and proper co-operation between the Department of Agriculture and the Education Department. It is absolutely necessary to have these gardens; they are far better than experimental stations. Children of agricultural parentage are yearning to go on the land. To spend a few dollars each year is certainly a waste of money. I would urge Government to go into the whole question again and put a respectable sum on the Estimates for the purpose of carrying on this work. That would give real practical results and enable us to provide employment for the young men and women who will grow up in the next five or ten years. It may not be the best thing to increase the amount now, but I urge that on the next supplementary estimate a respectable sum be provided.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The aspect of the matter which the last speaker has put forward has been before Government. The hon. member mentioned it in Select Committee and it has been engaging the attention of Government since then. There is much to be said for his point of view, that much larger expenditure is required to put those gardens on a satisfactory basis.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 19—Experimental Farm Settlements, \$800.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I would like to hear from the Director of Agriculture what progress has been made at these Experimental Farm Settlements. I have not had an opportunity to visit the one at No. 2 Canal.

Professor DASH: Hon. members will recall that last year a scheme was put before Council for the starting of a demonstration farm unit to serve not only as a demonstration but also to enable us to secure data regarding crop rotations, labour units and economics generally in operating a small holder's farm. That unit, as hon. members are aware, is located in the Canals Polder through the courtesy of the hon. member for Demerara River (Mr. King). It has been laid out according to plan, prepared and drained and a certain number of crops planted, with a lay-out for permanent crops as well. The progress made has been as satisfactory as one could wish, and the costs under each heading are being kept separately—labour units, crop units and other figures—so that they may be of use to peasant holders and to Government in connection with the lay-out of peasant holdings.

I think perhaps the best way to find out exactly what progress has been made in any of these types of schemes would be to visit the spot and see how the work is being carried out. I should welcome that, and I think hon. members who pay a visit there will appreciate the progress that is being made to-day. It is not a one-year or two-year business; it is a programme which calls for a definite line of action over a period of years. The scheme as laid down now calls for \$1,000 for the first year and in the remaining years about \$800 each. Naturally, progress in these efforts cannot be rapid; it takes time, and I should not like to report on a scheme of this nature until we have had five years' work on it. During that time we should be able to get some idea as to the cost of production and the amount of labour required in relation to a small family operating a unit of that nature. Associated with this demonstration and experimental unit is the question of economic surveys which, as hon. members are aware, will be brought up in another item.

Mr. SEYMOUR: Do I understand that a house has been built and a family installed, or has it been done by the Department?

Professor DASH: No cottage has been built yet. The work done has been largely clearing and preparatory work, but it is our intention that a cottage should be erected on the property, and the work will, as far as possible, be carried out under the guidance of the Department of Agriculture. At the moment I do not think it is necessary to establish a farmer and his family on the spot, but some time next year we may perhaps reach that stage. I do not recall having made such a promise.

Mr. JACOB: Do I understand that the land has only been cleared and no practical crops have been planted? If the scheme is only for five years is it advisable to erect a house at Government expense? I should like some information on that point. I am not opposed to the principle, but I do urge that when these things are started they should be done on proper and practical lines.

Professor DASH: We have already actually sold catch crops. We have sold a crop of corn and black eye peas, and are preparing for planting citrus and coconuts, while a small livestock area is being developed for grazing.

Mr. JACOB: If there is going to be a stock farm and permanent crops I suggest that other arrangements should be made.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I wonder whether this experiment is already courting failure, or is really an experiment with a view to establishing farms in the Colony? Why go to the Canals to experiment when every morning I see in the newspapers reports of floods in that district? Why wasn't a patch selected on the East Coast where travelling is convenient? I think when experiments are being made they should be made under favourable conditions.

Item 21—Experimental Banana Cultivations, \$500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that this item be increased to \$750.

Mr. ELEAZAR: May I ask where are these cultivations?

Professor DASH: At Middlesex, Canals Polder, and Supply, East Bank.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Middlesex has ruined two lawyers already. (laughter). Government could not have found a worse site. It has ruined two of my best friends.

Mr. JACOB: I understand that this money is for the purpose of deciding finally whether bananas can be grown here successfully or not. I understood in Select Committee that the cultivation has actually failed, and Government wants to spend a further \$750 to see that it has completely failed, so that the question of banana cultivation in future will be dead and dead forever. My friend the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) did not attend those meetings or he would have heard some more refreshing stories. I think a district which was not so regularly flooded as the Canals Polder should have been selected for the experiment. It has been suggested that the worst place was selected with the object that the banana cultivation should fail. Whether that is correct or not I do not know.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I have visited the spot in question. It would be well if other members of the Council would visit these places where experiments are being conducted. When I was there the soil was typical of the surrounding areas. The plot selected is a very fair average soil in that part of the Colony. The drainage is perfect and the land reasonably high above the level of the drainage, which is about 6 or 7 ft. below the level of the land. Whether it is going to prove a success or not time will tell. It is despicable to make the statement that the spot was selected so that there would be no banana cultivation in the Colony. If I were the Director of Agriculture a statement of that kind would get my back up, and I would probably go there with a cutlass and cut everything down. (laughter). If the experiment fails it will not be the fault of the Department of Agriculture. There is no reason to hit below the belt.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: This question came before the Board of Agriculture and it was carried. I think the Department of Agriculture was not very keen on it, because it did not consider that the experi-



ment stood any great chance of success. At the same time the Board was anxious to give it every possible chance. There was also another patch of land on the East Bank that was tried, and the reason why the banks of the river were selected was that where it was necessary to have drainage by means of pumps no banana cultivation could stand such high charges. Another reason was that a considerable amount of money is being spent to put the Canals Polder in proper order, and to secure good drainage. It is well known that there is as good land in the Canals Polder as there is anywhere in the Colony.

I wish to endorse what has been said by the hon. member for Western Essequibo (Mr. Seymour), that it is absolutely unfair to attack the Department of Agriculture on a matter of this kind and suggest that it is not doing its utmost. It is also an attack on the Board, but members of the Board know fully well that they can ignore remarks that come from certain quarters. It is unfair that they should have remarks of that kind thrown at their heads, and I deprecate them. I think we are going from bad to worse here.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am going to say whatever I wish to say when I choose to say it. When experiments are being made they should be made under the most favourable conditions. If the members of the Board of Agriculture and the Director do not know the parts of the Colony that are more often than not under flood they ought to know. They have gone to the Canals Polder and made experiments, and if they fail they must take the blame. I hate nobody. I believe that the Director felt he was doing his best, but he should have enquired why Middlesex is abandoned as it is to-day. I do not go in for any personalities at all. When I speak I speak with an unbiased mind. Nobody has ever injured me in this Council or attempted to be personal to me. I criticised the Department and I certainly protest against the hon. member's remarks.

Mr. SEAFORD: If the hon. member thinks anything I have said casts any reflection on him I would like to assure him I had nothing of that kind in my mind. I am absolutely sure that the hon. member has always been honest in his

views and convictions, and I do not wish him to take anything I have said in any offensive manner. It is not that the bananas have not grown, but unfortunately they developed that disease which it was expected they would.

Mr. JACOB: I do not know whether the remarks of the hon. member referred to me. I have taken a keen interest in all matters of agricultural development, and I discussed the matter fully at the Select Committee where I expressed the view that money should be spent to come to a final decision, but since then it has been told to me by responsible people, and I merely said what I said just now so that it might be recorded and be of some advantage to those concerned. If I had to advise on it I would not have recommended the Canals Polder, because that district is continually being flooded. Some of the criticisms are justifiable; they are not my criticisms. I simply conveyed what was told to me.

Mr. JACKSON: I know Middlesex and I have visited the experimental banana plot there on more than one occasion. I can say definitely that the site was well chosen, well prepared and exceedingly well drained. The unfortunate thing is, as mentioned by the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford), that the bananas have caught the disease, but they were very well grown and beautiful to look at. There has been no flooding since the spot was selected. I have visited the plot in dry weather as well as in wet weather, and anyone who desires to get a lesson on effective drainage should visit Middlesex.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I think it is regrettable that the Canals Polder was chosen. As a member of the Board of Agriculture I was satisfied that that was not the right spot to be chosen for banana experiments. I have expressed that regret also as a member of the Board, but I must say in fairness to the Department of Agriculture that its officers have done everything possible to make the cultivation a success, but unfortunately the Panama disease intervened.

Mr. SEYMOUR: Before we pass on to item 22 I would like to introduce an item if I am in order.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I am afraid the hon. member would not be in order in moving the insertion of an item.

**Mr. SEYMOUR:** I must get it in somehow. (laughter).

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 23—Archimedes Engine 7 h.p., \$245.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I move that this item be amended to read 'Motor Boat engine, \$245.'

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

**Mr. SEYMOUR:** Would I be in order if I suggested the insertion of an item?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member would be in order in suggesting an item.

**Mr. SEYMOUR:** I suggest the insertion of an item of \$10,000 for the provision of proper facilities for drying padi and rice.

**Mr. JACOB:** I think the hon. member is out of order, sir. (laughter).

**Mr. SEYMOUR:** I think I will leave that to the Chair. (Hear, hear). I think it is essential that we should get the right type of dryer for the purpose of drying padi and rice. It means quite a lot to the industry as a whole, whether we hold or lose the markets we have.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I beg to move the insertion of a new item "24—Reconditioning by-roads in the Botanic Gardens, \$1,000."

Item put, and agreed to.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I beg to move the insertion of another new item "25—Agricultural Economic Survey, \$1,600."

**Mr. ELEAZAR:** When items are put in this way one would like to get some idea of what they involve. There is no explanation at all.

**Professor DASH:** I am sorry that this item has to be moved in this way. We did not have all the information necessary before the Estimates were printed. It

will be remembered that in 1932 an officer of this Department was granted leave to undertake training in economics. That training was successfully undergone and he duly returned to the Colony and began to pick up the threads of economic work such as is understood under the head of Agricultural Economics. We have had no special funds for it, nevertheless a considerable amount of information has been published under the head of Agricultural Economics. We have had information, for example, on the question of credit to small farmers, price movements of all commodities in British Guiana from pre-war days to the present day. Hon. members will recall that that information was of very great use to the Commission which investigated labour conditions in 1935, of which the late Attorney-General was Chairman.

We have published quite recently "An Economic Survey of Farming in East Demerara," a very valuable contribution to our knowledge of small farming conditions. It shows the conditions under which the farmer lives, how his income is derived, cane-farming, labour conditions, minor crops, livestock and so on. I think all members have had copies of the publication. That sort of work is very essential here if we are going to help the peasant as he should be helped in establishing himself under conditions such as we have in this Colony. The Secretary of State has approved of this work and is very anxious that further study should be done. In December, 1936, I put up some recommendations to Government outlining the position in respect of economic studies, and a 3-year programme for economic surveys in connection with rice, cane and coffee farming was submitted. While I was on leave in England early this year I had an opportunity of discussing the programme which was very favourably received. That programme called for an expenditure of \$5,000 for a period of three years. The Economics Division is very much handicapped at the moment; it is without the special equipment necessary, and funds have to be provided to pay enumerators and so on.

This survey which has been carried out on the East Coast, Demerara, was made possible because we were able to get some help from the Colonial Development Fund for

sugar. During the last few months matters have moved very rapidly in connection with work of this nature throughout the Caribbean. The Secretary of State has proposed that economic surveys of this character be undertaken throughout the Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad and Barbados, and it is hoped eventually to link up all these surveys in order to get a general picture of the position of the small cultivator in these parts. It is possible that the Professor of Agricultural Economics from the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, may visit us in the near future to discuss some of this survey work. In the meantime the Secretary of State has approved of the programme which I drew up, and which calls for the insertion in the estimates for next year of this \$1,600. That is the position as it stands.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am asking that the item be allowed to remain over. We can return to it later. In view of the fact that the item required all that explanation, it is certainly not sufficient just to move its insertion. What the Director has said does not convince me.

Mr. JACOB: I have listened attentively to what the Director of Agriculture had to say on this matter and I observe that it is to be a survey in connection with the rice industry, the sugar industry and the coffee industry. At an earlier stage when I attempted to give certain acreages in connection with the sugar industry you ruled me out of order, sir. I take it that I can refer to them under this item, and I shall be glad to be informed to whom this money will be paid, whether to ordinary labourers or to an officer of the Department who is already in receipt of a salary. I do not think it is quite right, and I do agree with my friend, the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), that an item like this should not be rushed into the Estimates and carried so rapidly. Here is an opportunity for us to delay this head for quite a long time and to speak on it for quite a long time. I think opportunity should be given to members to speak on matters of vital importance. I think it was rather harsh treatment to rule me out of order when I attempted to speak on acreages. I am sorry the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) is not present so that I may be

able to reply. The statement has been made, and the public is aware of the fact, that various things are being done to keep the rice industry down for the benefit of sugar. It is only right and proper that these things be ventilated and explanations received about them.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to speak on that subject. He can give figures with regard to acreages, but he cannot speak on the general subject.

Mr. JACOB: I wish to refer to certain acreages which I have taken from the Report of the Director of Agriculture, and I would like to have them put on record. My point is that while the production of sugar has increased the acreages have been reduced, but in the case of rice production has not only decreased considerably but the acreage has also decreased. Much credit is due to the sugar planters for intensive cultivation and the adoption of mechanical methods. Therefore it is only right that if we are attempting—as I am—to convince Government that every help should be given to the rice industry, particularly by mechanical means, every opportunity should be afforded me—and it is my privilege—to be able to discuss and bring these matters out as the opportunity offers. I have selected a convenient opportunity, and I take it that I can proceed to give those acreages now.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member says that the figures given were incorrect he can quote the correct figures.

Mr. JACOB: The figures are these. In 1903 the area under sugar cane cultivation was 78,000 acres as compared with 17,000 acres under rice cultivation. In 1908 the acreage under sugar was 74,000; rice 39,000. In 1918 the acreage under rice went up to 60,000 while that under sugar remained at 73,000 acres. Then as the result of executive action taken by the late Sir Wilfred Collet the area under rice was reduced to 38,000 acres, and sugar came down to 57,000 acres. Then rice began to get on its legs again and went up to 79,000 acres, as against 61,000 acres under sugar. The Rice Marketing Board came into existence in 1932 when the area under rice was 87,941 acres as compared with 61,000 acres under sugar. To-day the

area under rice cultivation is 62,000 acres while that under sugar is 63,000 acres.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I cannot allow the hon. member to carry on. He must confine his remarks to the economic survey.

**Mr. JACOB:** I am satisfied that I have got those figures on record. As regards coffee, I was hoping to hear some announcement that something would be done. In fact I gathered from what the Director said this morning that nothing can be done for the coffee industry, but I would like to assure the Council that practical suggestions were submitted to Government for the help of that industry. As complete a scheme as possible was submitted. Whether Government received it or not I am not in a position to say, but I certainly ask that some action be taken by Government to appoint a small but competent Committee from members of this Council so that the question might be gone into. It would not take more than a few days to suggest something which I feel sure will meet with the approval of Government and be of benefit to the coffee producers for several years to come.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** As the Director

said this morning, Government will be prepared to agree to the appointment of a Committee, and information on that subject will be given during the discussion in Committee to-morrow. I do feel some surprise that hon. members find difficulty in understanding that an economic survey with a view to assisting the small farmer is a matter which this Government should undertake and should carry out on as wide an area as possible. It seems to me that in order to assist the small farmer the first things we must know are the facts and economics of the case, and an expression of opinion from unofficial members that money should not be spent on an economic survey in order to ascertain in what way and on what crops the small peasant farmer can make a living surprises me considerably. It is true that the matter was mentioned in Select Committee, but an explanation was not given at once as it should. The Director has now given a full explanation and the reasons for the item. I shall therefore put it to the Committee.

Item put, and agreed to.

The Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at 11 o'clock.