

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Wednesday, 23rd November, 1932.*

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Governor, SIR EDWARD DENHAM, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., President, in the Chair.

### PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

The Hon. T. Millard, C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer.

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B. Litt. (Oxon.), Director of Education.

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

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B. (Essequibo River).

Major the Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, M.A., Dip. For. (Cantab.), Conservator of Forests.

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

The Hon. Q. B. De Freitas, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

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

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North).

The Hon. A. V. Crane, LL.B. (Lond.) (Demerara River).

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

The Hon. A. E. Seeram (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. V. A. Pires (North Western District).

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

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

The Hon. G. E. Anderson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

### MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd November, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

### PAPER LAID.

The following document was laid on the table:—

Report of the Director of Education for the year 1931 (*Major Bain Gray*).

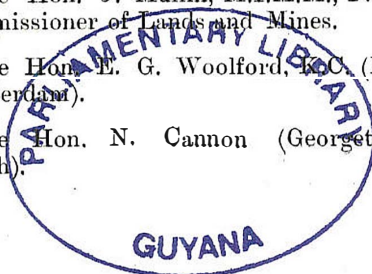
### UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

#### CHANGE OF VENUE.

Mr. FREDERICKS gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS occasionally there are persons in the Mazaruni who find it necessary to have the aid of counsel or solicitor but are hampered to secure such help by reason of distance and expense:

And whereas Bartica has a monthly Court which is in the same Judicial District as the Court in the Mazaruni:



*Be it Resolved*,—That legislation be provided by this Council whereby a person under process to appear in the Court at Mazaroni who can *bona fide* inform the Court that he desires to or has secured legal help in his case be allowed to have his matter transferred for hearing at Bartica.

#### THE RICE INDUSTRY.

Mr. SEERAM gave notice of the following motion :—

WHEREAS the rice industry of the Colony is in a very parlous condition ;

And whereas there is much room for improvement in the planting, threshing and milling of padi ;

And whereas it is necessary in the best interest of the industry to regulate rice mills ;

And whereas many rice-farmers who are tenants have no security of tenure in respect to rice lands they have prepared at considerable expense :

*Be it Resolved*,—That Government be respectfully asked to appoint a Committee to investigate all important matters affecting the industry with the view of reporting to Government the best measures that should be adopted to assist, improve and develop the industry.

#### MAHAICONY MEDICAL OFFICER.

Mr. SEERAM gave notice of the following questions :—

1. What are the terms of the employment of the Medical Officer of the Mahaicony District? If in writing will the Government lay on the table a copy of such terms?

2. Give a copy of the scale of fees charged—

(a) By the past Medical Officers of the district.

(b) The present officer, and

(c) That charged by Medical Officers of other districts in the Colony.

3. What travelling allowance, if any, is paid to the present Medical Officer of the Mahaicony District? How much was paid to his predecessor? What amount is paid to Medical Officers of other districts?

4. How many times in a week is the present Medical Officer of the Mahaicony District required to visit his district? How many times his predecessor visited same? How many times other Medical Officers of other districts visit their district?

5. Is the present Medical Officer of the Mahaicony District required to visit the Mahaicony Creek? Was his predecessor at any time required to visit the Creek? If so how much travelling allowance was given to him?

6. How much saving has been effected in this district by subsidising the present Medical Officer of the district?

7. Is Government satisfied that the scheme is a success?

#### BRITISH GUIANA SCHOLARSHIP.

1 On what basis is the British Guiana Scholarship awarded? Is it on the basis of the

highest average percentage of marks of all the subjects taken or is it on the basis of the highest total number of marks of all the subjects taken?

2. Is there a minimum and a maximum number of subjects that a candidate can take to qualify for the scholarship?

3. If so what are the numbers?

4. Was the award last year made on the same basis as that made this year?

5. Give a list showing—

(a) The names of the candidates who took the scholarship examination for this year.

(b) The total number of subjects taken by each candidate.

(c) The total number of marks of all subjects taken for each candidate.

(d) The total average percentage of marks of all subjects taken for each candidate.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY.

##### CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

The Council resumed the debate on the second reading of "A Bill further to amend the Customs Duties Ordinance, Chapter 34, with respect to the rates of duty on certain articles."

MR. DEAGUIAR: Lest the remarks I am about to make on this Bill be misunderstood, I desire to say at the beginning that I am body and soul for preferential treatment within the Empire, but the Bill before the House requires a good deal of examination, especially when it has been said on several occasions that so far as we are concerned this Colony is giving more than it is receiving. The Colonial Secretary yesterday was good enough to give us the history of preference within the Empire, but I think he made an error when he did not refer to the experience this Colony has had with the 1925 Canada-West Indies Treaty. One would expect Government, as the result of the experience of that Treaty, not to commit errors of the same kind. Under the Treaty certain preferences were given to Canada which even at the present day it has not been able to enjoy. A specific preference was given on pickled meats, and beef imported from Great Britain has been enjoying that preference, whereas the origin of that beef is the Argentine, a foreign source. There are other items that need examination, but I propose only to deal with the items under discussion. I shall not delay the House on brandy because there is very little brandy coming in from Empire sources, and therefore the preference on that item amounts to very little. With regard to

tobacco the new rates proposed are \$2.10 on cigarettes manufactured in the British Empire entirely from Empire grown tobacco and \$2.47 on cigarettes manufactured from foreign tobacco. That is 37 cents above the present rate paid on tobacco and with the surtax the preference would approximately be 2s. per lb. Trinidad has given a preference of 2s. but has dealt with the matter from an entirely different angle. At the present time 90 per cent. of the tobacco that comes into this country, either in the form of manufactured tobacco or cigarettes, is from foreign sources. The immediate effect of this Bill will therefore be that the price of cigarettes and tobacco will advance 2s. per lb.—a not infinitesimal amount as the Colonial Secretary said yesterday afternoon. In short, the average smoker will not be able to get a cigarette for a cent.

The import duty on cigarettes within recent years has been so advanced that it has now reached a point where any further taxation will materially affect the retail price. This taxation then will increase the price of cigarettes by one cent per packet and manufactured tobacco by three cents per oz. Another Colony also agreed to give a preference of 2s. on Empire grown tobacco, but they also approached it from a different angle. Our duty is \$2.10 per lb. with a surtax of 30 cents. In the Colony referred to the rate was \$2.52 preferential and \$3.12 general with a surtax of 10 per cent. In amending their rates they made tobacco manufactured in the British Empire entirely from foreign grown tobacco 13s. per lb. and gave the preference to tobacco manufactured in the British Empire entirely from Empire sources, both subject to a reduction of a penny per lb. for each 5 per cent. of Empire grown tobacco used in blending. That is an entirely different proposition. That Government instead of compelling people immediately to turn to Empire grown tobacco were encouraging them to smoke it gradually until they became accustomed to Empire grown tobacco and getting the benefit of the duty. I think it will take us many years to use cigarettes manufactured entirely from Empire grown tobacco. Automatically the revenue of this Colony will benefit by \$75,000 if the proposed duties are agreed to. I do not think it is the intention of Government to make people pay more for their tobacco and

cigarettes. It will be said in reply that some cigarettes that come into the Colony at the present time contain a percentage of Empire grown tobacco, but I do not think the officer would be able to say what is the percentage of Empire tobacco in any of the cigarettes now imported. In any event the duty on cigarettes will immediately advance, and failing any pronouncement from Government that this money is required for any purpose whatever, I shall be unable to support this item.

I turn now to wine. Sparkling wine at present pays \$1.80 per gallon under the preferential and \$2.25 under the general tariff; it is now proposed to reduce the duty under the preferential tariff to \$1.32 and to leave the general tariff at \$2.25 per gallon. I do not know where the preference comes in as practically 100 per cent. of the wine comes from foreign sources. My remarks on that item also apply to item (2). Item (3) is where the shoe pinches. Still wine in bulk and containing not more than 30 per cent. of proof spirit it is proposed shall be liable to a duty of 60 per cent. under the preferential and 88 cents under the general tariff. The present rates are 60 and 75 cents respectively. It is proposed to increase the duty on Tarragona wine, which is used by the poor people, from 75 to 88 cents. Very few packages of this wine come from Great Britain, and I should like to trace the origin of some of the wines that come from Great Britain. A certain commodity that was shipped to this and other Colonies with a British certificate of origin as coming from Singapore was proved to be not from Singapore but from foreign sources, and if the question is investigated it would also be found that other wines come from foreign sources. When you increase the duty on still wine by 13 cents per gallon under the general tariff you are not giving a preference but increasing the cost to the consumer. If it is intended to give a preference bring down the preferential rate and not carry up the general rate when it is known that all the stuff comes from foreign sources.

With boots and shoes of rubber and canvas boots and shoes with rubber soles Government finds itself in a difficult position. It has to give a preference of 1s. per pair. This item is now under the *ad valorem* tariff and to give the preference

Government has to remove it to the specific schedule. I am not going to question the morality of that procedure but there seems to me to be something wrong. The proposal is iniquitous and other means should be devised to give the preference. It is a preference of 1s. per pair on shoes shipped to this country from Singapore from which we do not get one penny in return. The consequence is that local workmen are unable to earn a living by half-soling these shoes.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Douglas-Jones): Does that apply to Japanese shoes too?

MR. DE AGUIAR: Yes. Due no doubt to the present abnormal rate of exchange, the price of rubber shoes from Canada are unable to compete with the Japanese shoes. The average price in 1932 for Japanese shoes was round 30 cents per pair and for shoes from Singapore 35 cents. We are going to give 1s. preference on those shoes. Babies' shoes that cost 1s. per pair are going to pay 3d. duty and shoes that cost 8s. or 10s. will also pay 3d. The item rightly belongs to the ad valorem schedule and if the price goes up Government will benefit. I come now to clause 4, which provides that the duties leviable under the provisions of this Bill shall not apply to any shipments which are shown by bill of lading to have been consigned to this Colony on or before the 12th October. This clause is intended to override previous legislation and in effect says that these duties must be levied immediately. It is to meet shipments which were afloat from the East, and very reasonably so, but it also applies to brandy, tobacco, wood and timber. All tobacco in bond shipped after the 12th October will have to pay this increased duty, even stocks taken out of bond last week, for the reason that the bill of lading was dated subsequent to the 12th October. If we make provision for shoes from Singapore we should also make similar provision for tobacco, wines and brandy that arrived this morning from England by the "Inanda." This Bill needs to be sent back whence it came.

MR. SEAFORD: I do not propose at this stage to go into any minute details on the proposed preference but would like rather to deal with the Bill as a whole. There is no doubt that with a Bill such as

this it is quite impossible to keep sentiment out of one's mind. We in this country are members, however small, of a big family of Masons—the British Empire—and from that point of view we must consider the Empire as a whole. This Bill is the outcome of a Conference which was held at Ottawa. That Conference met under the very best auspices. There met there all the big brothers of the Empire with no idea of bickering, or greed or getting more than was just and fair. It was the benefit of the Empire that everyone was considering. At the same time there never has been harder bargaining than took place at this Conference and by some of the most capable men of the Empire. That was only natural because self-preservation is the first instinct of mankind. When we look at this Bill and see what we are asked to give we are bound to ask: What are we going to get in return? We are not doing it from any petty feeling but only want to get fair treatment. I had hoped to hear more from Government on that score. The Bill shows us what is on the debit side but it does not tell us very much of what is on the credit side. I am bound to admit that I do not see very much benefit to the Colony as far as hard cash is concerned. We are asked to give increased benefit. Is that to be in the form of an agreement, and, if so, for how long? We do not know if it is for one, two, five or ten years. We know there will be a preference on tomatoes and citrus fruit, but I am afraid it will not help us much. If the agreement is to be for four or five years I do not think that is long enough to build up an industry.

The next point is that I am not clear whether these preferences are based on the present value of the pound. If they are based on the present value what is going to happen when the pound gets back to par value? Are we going to be asked to increase these preferences so as to make good that difference? If they are based on the par value of the pound then we might hold them over until the pound reaches par. Unfortunately, no one at present can say when that will be. From a business point of view of a hard and fast bargain, I do not think this Colony is justified in giving greater preferences. This Colony has been giving in the past very much more than any of the other Colonies. We have been giving to the

Empire big preferences and have had nothing in return. When we are asked to give more what we have given in the past should have been put in the balances and weighed. I have not the figures of the other Colonies to know what increase they are giving, therefore I cannot tell how our new preferences will compare with their own calculated on the percentage value of the goods. We have to consider what good are these preferences we are asked to give. It is no good increasing prices of goods beyond the purchasing power of the people as not only will the country giving the preference suffer but this Government will lose revenue. That is a point that should be carefully considered. I do not think anything said now can be taken as a lack of patriotism. I believe this Colony is as patriotic as any other and always will be, but we have been giving a lot in the past and I do not think enough has been made of that fact. Our imports of British origin amount to 80 per cent. of the total imports, Trinidad is under 60 per cent., and Barbados is nearly 70 per cent. It shows the degree of preference we have been giving, and with Barbados giving only half the preference we are giving makes one feel that better adjustments should be made in the preferences we are giving.

I do not think the preference on brandy is going to do anyone any good. It seems to be a little window dressing. Tobacco has been dealt with by the hon. Member for Central Demerara and I do not intend to touch on that, except to ask what country is going to benefit by the preference. Is it Rhodesia, or what country? If it is Rhodesia, what is Rhodesia going to give us? Wine has been dealt with. As regards wood and timber, I do not see what benefit is going to accrue by the preference. A builder is not going to give up using pitch-pine. Canadian pine is not to be compared with it. If I can be told that local wood can be compared with pitch-pine I would be in favour of the preference; but I do not think the increased preference will benefit any part of the Empire. We have been promised a preference by Australia on rum. We should know under what conditions we are going to be allowed to export our goods. A preference is of no benefit if there are other difficulties in the way. As regards boots and shoes, as far as I can see, the

only place to benefit is Singapore. Hosiery I have heard described as a luxury. With the proposal in clause 4 I do not agree. I realise that duties are made retrospective where Government desires to increase revenue, but I understand it is not the intention of Government to increase revenue but to benefit the Empire. If the date is altered from October to November or December it can do no harm. I do not think this is the principle in the Mother Country where they gave a preference. In the United Kingdom they said that after a certain date they proposed to levy such and such a duty, and I do not think we can follow a better example. I ask Government therefore to reconsider the question of fixing the date. Putting aside the minor points which I do not like, and considering the matter from a broad and an Empire point of view, I do not think we have any option but to agree to these proposals. If we are to agree to them it is better to do so in a free and large-hearted manner rather than in any carping spirit, but I hope any criticisms or suggestions made will not be taken to mean in any sense that we do not desire to assist the Empire.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I desire to emphasise, where possible, nearly everything that has been said by the last speaker. I want to reiterate the hope that anything said around this table will not carry the imputation that one desires to be in any way disloyal. We are second to none in our loyalty to the British Government, but we are asked to increase preferences in order to benefit other countries than British Guiana. There is nothing on the face of this Bill which it can be truly said will benefit this Colony one half-penny. The idea is that we are in good company and must pay for it. When we are speaking of increasing preferences we cannot blind ourselves to the purchasing power of the community. We are imposing duties which must increase the cost of goods to the consumer in order to benefit Empire countries. If you tax necessities of life there will be very much less to spend on luxuries. I look upon brandy as well as tobacco as a luxury. If you tax them out of existence it does not interfere with me at all, but one must have a word to say in favour of those who use them if you are taxing them merely for the purpose o

helping people better off than themselves. When it comes to rubber shoes I ask Government to consider whether it is not possible to relieve the community of this increased taxation. The majority of the masses wear these shoes not from choice but because they are cheap. We have not benefited at all by our preference to Canada. We might have benefited if we had goods to send to them, but all we get is a preference on our sugar. It would have been a good thing if we had goods to exchange, but we have not got the goods. Until we can have many more exports to other countries we are doing ourselves no good by saying that we are in the Empire and ought to give a preference. It is not justice to ourselves. I thought I would have heard very much more from the merchants. They always speak about the lawyers and complain that the Council is overrun by lawyers. Here is a chance for the merchants to give us their views. I do not think we should increase the price of hosiery. People who use these articles are those who have to keep up a decent appearance.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was shown yesterday as regards artificial silk stockings that they all come from the United Kingdom and will not be affected at all.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am pleased to hear that. What I am endeavouring to point out is that Government should do everything to lower the rates on goods on which higher duties are paid than elsewhere. It has been said that Government has been ordered to put on the 24 cents duty on rubber shoes. If we cannot help ourselves the shilling will have to be put on, but if Government can shift it on some other article one would be pleased. Speaking generally, I hope Government will give the Bill every consideration, because most of us here are not *au fait* with matters commercial to know where the shoe pinches. What we do know is that the increasing of the preferences will be reflected in the prices to the consumer. The preference on wood will not be misplaced if it would have the effect of keeping wood out of our import list and cause people to use more of the local woods. Our forest will develop and the Forest Department will then have something to do. If for no other reason I welcome it.

Mr. CANNON: I do not know why our loyalty has been brought before this Assembly because, I take it, all of us are loyal and hope always to continue to be loyal, but there is no good closing our eyes to facts. There is no doubt that this preferential method of dealing with our affairs has been the curse of this country. It has been the curse and it remains the curse up to the present day. I am satisfied that all the troubles that have come upon us are due to that unfortunate Agreement that was entered into with the Dominion of Canada. I am satisfied that this country has benefited nothing. The planters are quite capable of saying to what extent they have benefited. I would like to know that not only the planters have benefited by the Agreement but the people of the country as a whole. But, alas, that is not the position. I have endeavoured to point out for some considerable time that this Colony is sacrificing its revenues for the purpose of that useless Agreement, and until Government realise the position and take such steps as will prevent a continuance of that method so long shall we be at the mercy of the doles which are showered at us from time to time. I submit that were we to collect what we are entitled to collect as legitimate duties on articles that come to this Colony, and with a modified form of Government, there would be no necessity for us to be a drain on the British taxpayer as we are to-day. If I stand alone my vote will be recorded against this Bill. Time only will prove that there is something in what I am saying, and something that must be attended to to save this country from absolute ruin.

It has been said by Your Excellency and other speakers that we have benefited quite a lot by the grants that have been showered upon us, but every pound we receive puts a pound greater on our existence. It makes it so much more difficult for us to rid ourselves of this enormous burden. This Bill suggests the imposition of a further tax on the unfortunate poor people of this country where their shoes are concerned. To impose a further tax on the particular class of people who make use of these shoes is wicked, and we should pause for fear that it will be realised by those people that they are not being cared for in the way they ought to be. I have heard it said that we must fall into line

and support the Empire. I think it would be better to put our own house in order before we look to support the Empire. If we were helping the Mother Country, who are helping us with their doles, I would have no objection, but we are helping people who are taking all they can from us and giving us nothing in return. There is no sense in increasing the duty on lumber for the simple reason that there are certain building operations in which our local woods cannot take the place of imported pitchpine. That means that the unfortunate people who have to use pitchpine will have to pay more for it. I do not wish to say anything about my good friend the Conservator of Forests. He hopes to provide wood to take the place of imported wood, but I fear that by the time he finishes with his experiments he will be promoted.

Mr. CRANE: I refrained from interposing in this debate until a number of my colleagues had been given a full opportunity of making their own observations. I do not propose to attempt any detailed consideration of this matter with a view of showing how the new proposal is going to work in practice. I propose to leave that to those whose business it is in everyday life to work out those matters. But involved in this question are other very serious questions connected with the representation of this Colony, not only at the Ottawa Conference but at all Empire Conferences which result in changes in our laws, in our tariff system and in our social arrangements. Nor am I going to claim that anything I say should not be regarded as being unpatriotic. That must be taken for granted. Dr. Johnson says it is the last refuge of a scoundrel. I think that if we have met here to discuss the question of tariff arrangement we must discuss it from the business end and drop all sentiment, whether that sentiment is sentiment of loyalty or of patriotism. We must discuss it from the point of view of what we get, what we give, and we must be hard-headed businessmen. The principle involved is a serious one. This Colony was not consulted, as far as this Council is aware, on what were its desires or what it considered its necessities in connection with the Ottawa Conference, as a result of which these legislative changes are being made. If this Colony were consulted then Government kept that information to themselves and never divulged it to this Council,

My complaint is that the Secretary of State, highly placed as he is, was not qualified to represent this Colony at such an important Conference (Hear, hear). It was not a question merely of bare representation. It was a question which involved intimate details and knowledge of the Colony's fiscal condition, its business ramifications, the tendencies of its population, what it buys and sells, and the country with which it could best deal. I say with all due deference to that high official that he was not competent to deal with these intimate matters with the consideration from which we could get a fair deal from that Conference. I will be told that there are permanent officials who accompanied him and carried with them all the information that was required. But do these permanent officials know British Guiana and its needs except from what they gather from scrappy information conveyed to them from time to time? The men who should have represented British Guiana at a Conference of that sort are businessmen of proved ability from this community, and I am sure someone could have been found who has an intimate knowledge of this country.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I remind the hon. Member that Sir Edward Davson was one of the Secretary of State's chief advisers.

Mr. CRANE: Yes. Sir Edward Davson has had a very long connection with the Colony, but Sir Edward has not lived in this community, recently at least, for a sufficient length of time to enable him to grapple with its urgent needs. I make that statement with no intention to cast any aspersion on that gentleman, who has rendered valuable assistance to British Guiana and the West Indies as a whole. That void could have been supplied by Sir Alfred Sherlock who is here every now and then and knows actual conditions in the Colony. But you could have got men from Water Street and elsewhere in the Colony who could have gone as advisers, if nothing else, and it would have been more decent if this Colony had been asked to send advisers, if not representatives, to accompany the Secretary of State to Ottawa in order to represent our needs. If Government want to make out a case that the case of this Colony was fairly put by the Secretary of State let them satisfy

this Council that the Secretary of State made representations at the Conference for a preference on British Guiana rice. I challenge anyone in this House who sets himself the task of defending this unwarranted position to say that such representation was made. Was it represented at Ottawa that British Guiana rice should be given a preference, and a substantial preference? If it were represented what was the result? Despite all that the Colonial Secretary told us yesterday about Empire preference against Free Trade and about Zollvereins and combinations of the kind, it does not carry this matter one step further.

We are concerned in a trade agreement from which each one gets the best consideration for what he gives. What is British Guiana to give? We find a long list of articles on which British Guiana is to give a preference. But what is British Guiana to get? There are only one or two items that British Guiana can export and upon these no substantial or any preference is given. I agree with those Members who say that we are giving a preference to Singapore and other countries which want nothing we have to export. But we must put our population to the expense of paying more for their goods. In the case of war, famine and pestilence all members of the great British Empire exercise the virtue called sentiment, but when it comes to trade which is a matter between individuals and should be interfered with by the State as little as possible—it is business and no Empire consideration should put a country in the position of giving where it gets nothing in return. We may be told that we get a preference on sugar. We would have got that preference from Great Britain whether we had the Ottawa Conference or not. We got that preference from Great Britain before the Ottawa Conference and we got a preference from Canada under the Trade Agreement which is still in force. If the Ottawa Conference had not been held our position would have been unchanged as regards sugar. What other commodities do we export to any Empire source commensurate with the benefit we forego? It is all credit on the one side and debit on the other. Were it not for the benefit that the great Dominions will obtain from the present arrangement, would either one of them have been induced to join this combina-

tion? Does anyone assert that they can be coerced into any arrangement by which they could not benefit? If there is anyone so rash I only ask him to remember the Statute of Westminster, 1931. Great Britain and the Dominions are free autonomous communities in no way subordinate to each other, although bound together by loyalty to the Crown. My complaint is that these Crown Colonies should be told that whether it suits them or not, or whether they gain anything from the arrangement or not, the officials will pass it through the Legislative Council. That is a state of affairs I shall protest against in or out of this Assembly. I contend that our peculiar problems should be represented by special representatives who know these problems.

As regards the increased duty on tobacco used in the manufacture of cigarettes, it is well known that most of this tobacco is foreign grown tobacco. As far as I am aware there is no considerable quantity of tobacco grown within the Empire, and the bulk of the supplies of British tobacco is manufactured from raw material from foreign sources. The difference between the present duty of \$2.10 and \$2.47 plus the surtax must therefore be regarded as 48 cents per lb. Is this legislation in pursuance of the Empire Agreement, or is it an attempt to rake in some increased revenue? It is estimated that the increased duty is going to produce additional revenue of \$75,000. Is this a revenue collecting measure or one to give effect to the Empire Agreement? Or is it both? Government should have been frank and told us "While we are going to give effect to this Empire Agreement we are going to draw \$75,000 out of the people of the Colony." Let Government deny that it does not mean an increase of \$75,000 in taxation. We were told by Your Excellency in your Address that although you were unable to recommend any reduction in taxation there would be no increase of taxation. I respectfully submit that Government are not giving effect to your very laudable desire not to increase the burdens of the community. To say that there will be no increase in taxation and then in giving effect to the Agreement rake in \$75,000 is not playing the game. In view of the representations which have been made I think it is a matter for the consideration of Government whether this



increased taxation should be allowed to stand. I know very little about spirits, wood and timber; but I know that the shoes affected are largely used by children at school. I should like to know whether it is correct that impose whatever preference you like the net result is going to be that Empire goods are going to be dearer than foreign goods. Foreign goods will be bought nevertheless. Doesn't that bear me out that your representatives were not competent to deal with the case? If foreign goods will continue to be cheaper than Empire goods the position will be the same as if the Conference had not been held at all. I ask before this measure is passed that we should know exactly what is going to be the position. The mover did not tell us what is going to be the position four, five or six years hence. Is this to be a perpetual arrangement? Surely we should not be committed to an indefinite state of things. The Canadian Agreement is for a definite period and we know what are the benefits.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): I am rising on the question which concerns the duties on wood and timber. I suffered a slight disappointment from what Mr. Seaford said because I am now handling sufficient wood and timber to keep the Director of Public Works supplied, and I do not want to have any argument with him over materials as I hope to sell him some shortly. I think wood and timber can be considered from a slightly different point of view perhaps to most of the other items, because in this Bill we see more or less the effect of what we are going to give rather than what we are going to receive, because the Bill deals almost entirely with goods which are not produced in the Colony but which are imported from outside. In the case of wood and timber, on the other hand, we are in a different position because if one takes the figures over a series of years—and the tendency has been increasing of late years—it will be found that of wood and timber we on the whole export more than we import. If Canada wish to obtain a market for their Douglas Fir in this Colony in competition with the same type of wood—pitchpine, which also comes from abroad—they are giving us the same opportunity of trying to get our hardwoods into their country in competition with the American hardwoods which

they import at present. Under these circumstances we have on the whole got rather the better of the bargain. If it involves an increase, as it does, of the price of pitchpine I think it is worth while. If the quality of Douglas Fir which is going to be sent is going to be like two shipments of which I have personal knowledge, then there will be an increased opportunity for Colony woods to take the place both of Douglas Fir and pitchpine. The shipment of Douglas Fir that came here was very bad and went to powder and it would never have got into any soft wood classification. What I would like to point out is that whether it is pitchpine, Douglas Fir or any soft wood I know of, it is still going to be attacked by wood-ants when it comes to this Colony. That is a difficulty which cannot be overcome. These duties and the duty put on in England of 1s. per cubic foot on foreign timber dovetail with the attempt which the Forest Department is going to make to show that local woods can be seasoned for use in competition with woods imported and in competition with woods that go to other countries from elsewhere.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon recess.

Mr. WOOD (resuming): When the House adjourned I was elaborating the argument that it would be a good thing for us to give a certain preference on Canadian wood and timber because we were likely to do better with the preference in Canada proportionately than they would be doing from us, but there would appear to be some doubt whether a preference on our hardwoods in Canada has been granted. I think from the correspondence it is pretty certain that such a preference has been given. It has been given in regard to the United Kingdom to the extent of 1s. per cubic foot. That is a high preference. I think it came under the general mass of ad valorem produce which can go into Canada under the preference, but I am doubtful whether that is the case. However, I do not propose to alter my argument in respect of that fact. If the preference has not been granted we are ready to take it up at once and it gives us a very strong case to claim that reciprocity. If it has not been granted I think the reason is that Canada has not been an importer of the woods from the Empire in

any way but imported most of it already manufactured from the United States. Consequently, I think we are pretty certain of getting that preference if we represent it. However, if the preference is granted out here it is extremely small—one-ninth of one cent per cubic foot—but what has been a very distinct trend here for several years past is that local woods have been used as a substitute for imported pitchpine and whitepine boards. That trend has been very marked since the depression began and since pitchpine imported from America was more expensive. Owners of the leading mills in Georgetown have assured me for some time that they have been reducing their imports of pitchpine very considerably of late years and that reduction in the import of pitchpine has not had a corresponding reduction in consumption, particularly since the slump set in. Reduction in consumption is not as great therefore as in imports. I do not mean to suggest or claim for one moment that I can, like a rabbit out of a hat, produce a staple wood for any purpose in the world. I do not also claim that I can produce substitutes quickly for matchwood or for scaffolding and things like that where you require very light woods; but I do claim and I am quite certain that I can with the grant of \$25,000 show that we can produce wood which is not only a suitable substitute but better than imported pitchpine and whitepine wood.

Mr. D'ANDRADE (Comptroller of Customs): I wish, sir, to deal briefly with one or two of the comments which have been made. Firstly, it has been emphasised that mistakes have been made at the Conferences held in Canada from time to time and that we have always been giving and receiving nothing in return. One particular article mentioned is pickled meat. We know to-day that pickled meat entered under the British preferential tariff comes mostly from the United Kingdom. The meat is imported into England, cured there and re-exported. When the Ottawa Conference was held in 1925 practically 100 per cent. of the imports came from the United States of America and Canada was then making a bid in respect of that particular article for the markets in the West Indies. It seems only reasonable therefore that those who represented this Colony at Ottawa should have conceded a preference in respect of that article. If refer-

ence is made to the Agreement it will be seen that there is quite a large number of articles in respect of which these special preferences were asked. Canada has not been able to supply the local market in every instance, but at the time of making the Agreement it was certainly hoped that Canada would have been able to do so, and she asked for and obtained those special preferences. It has frequently been stated that we have gained practically nothing from the Agreement and that Canada has gained everything. I think reference to figures will prove very much the contrary. Our import trade with Canada in 1931 was \$1,110,000, including re-exports which came in at the general rate. This \$1,110,000 in our import figures is the c.i.f. values. On reference to the Canadian statistical returns we find that the exports from Canada to British Guiana during the financial year ending 31st March, 1932, amounted to \$778,469 f.o.b. value as against the c.i.f. value kept in our statistics for imports. Our total exports to Canada were valued at \$3,602,069.

It is exceedingly difficult to compare the value of preferences, but if it is done by showing the amount of additional revenue we would have collected on goods imported at the general rate of duty, we find that in respect of the trade of the Colony with Canada we would have collected \$176,083 more than we did. On the other hand, had our sugar exports entered Canada at the general rate Canada's revenue would have benefited to the extent of \$2,193,000—a figure more than ten times what we would have gained in revenue. It is said that the preference on sugar does not benefit this Colony to any great extent for the reason that a greater preference is now obtainable in the United Kingdom, but where you have a favoured market in only one country it is a very difficult thing to secure the full value of the preference. It is taken mostly by the refiner. The Canadian preference in 1925 was a little higher than the preference granted by England. The preference then granted in England was 89 cents per cwt. as against \$1.12 per cwt. in Canada, and as a result our sugar was attracted to Canada at a figure above what we were obtaining from the United Kingdom. Within recent months the United Kingdom has increased the preference granted us and the tendency is for our sugar exports to

be diverted to the Mother Country. That this transference of trade has not been greater is attributable to the fact that the advantage of the Canadian exchange has to a considerable extent counteracted the increase in the United Kingdom preference. I think the figures very clearly indicate that in so far as the Agreement between Canada and British Guiana is concerned we do not lose and Canada gains all round. We may go further. In regard to the Steamer Service it is true that we are paying very highly for our service—£8,500 per annum. On the other hand, it is well known that since the service has been inaugurated the Canadian Government has lost millions of dollars on it.

Comparisons are made very often between what this Colony is giving as compared with Barbados, Trinidad and other West Indian Colonies. That we give more is undoubtedly the case. In the Agreement the three Colonies agree to give apparently the same amount of preference, namely, 50 per cent. of the general rate. Unfortunately, this Colony has always had higher rates of duties and 50 per cent. here must of necessity be very much higher than the 50 per cent. in the neighbouring Colonies. If the day does come when we can afford to reduce our duties this Colony's preference will automatically be reduced on a level with that of the other two Colonies. The duty on tobacco is the one that has been most severely criticised. It has been stated that the rates fixed for tobacco manufactured wholly from Empire leaf are those now paid on all tobacco of Empire manufacture regardless of the origin of the leaf. It has been rightly stated that if the tobacco which is imported is wholly of foreign origin there will be an increase of revenue in the neighbourhood of \$75,000, provided there is no reduction in consumption. Unfortunately, there is no one in a position to say what, if any, British tobacco is contained in the blends of cigarettes imported here. It may be that a large number of the blends are wholly, or mainly, of foreign origin; but there can be little doubt that a comparatively large quantity of foreign tobacco is being used in those blends. The position to-day is that all these tobaccos come in at the same rate of duty. That position will be altered now.

There is an additional rate where cigarettes are manufactured from foreign tobacco and intermediate rates between those manufactured mainly from British and those manufactured mainly from foreign tobacco. Government has gone carefully into this matter to ensure that there would be no loss of revenue.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I think the Comptroller ought to tell us whether his assumption is that all the tobacco and cigarettes coming into the Colony will be made from tobacco from Empire sources.

Mr. D'ANDRADE: I must admit that I cannot possibly say what blends of tobacco will be brought into the Colony, but we must look at the possibility of what may happen. Reference has been made to the duties on wines. In nearly every case the rates will operate to the advantage of the consumer. In one particular case the rates would be a little higher on wines up to a certain strength, but if these rates were to be reduced below the existing figures those on wines of higher strength would be considerably reduced below those now payable.

Mr. WOOLFORD: During my experience in this Council I have never known a discussion on the tariff which did not evoke a confession on the part of Members of their loyalty to the Crown. I am tired of hearing it. I have risen to make a profession of patriotism and loyalty to the country in which I live, and if we bear that in mind we should oppose, as in sentiment I do oppose, these constant, recurring and unbeneficial amendments to our tariff. I was honoured by being a delegate to Canada in 1925 and I was appalled when on arrival there a Cabinet Minister laid on the table statistics which showed that for very many years the balance of trade between this Colony and Canada had been in favour of this Colony. While I do not think that it influenced the delegates either from this Colony or elsewhere in implementing the Treaty in 1925, there still seems to linger in the minds of people in this Colony the belief that in concluding that Treaty we did this Colony a great disservice. I propose to cite only one instance in which we did Canada a great disservice. One of the main exports from Canada to this Colony consisted of flour at the time of which I am speaking. There was then a special

preference of 1s. per kilo. I was present and heard the representative of the British Government make the announcement that whatever special preferences this Colony or any other decided to give to Canada the British Government would not necessarily expect the same treatment. But what did this Colony do? This Colony knowing of the existence of that declaration gave Canada a special preference of 2s. instead of 1s. and then proceeded to extend that treatment to Great Britain. I wonder what loyal Guianese in this Colony would say if they had concluded a Treaty between this Colony and another, as in the case of Canada which expected to benefit from that Treaty by large shipments of flour to this Colony, to find that the British Government in this Colony had so altered that Agreement as to allow so-called British flour to enter this Colony on the same basis. I wonder what anyone in this Colony would have said had the position been the reverse.

It is my local patriotism that rebels against the alteration of the Customs tariff of this Colony to give effect to expressions of opinion from Great Britain which are only to be interpreted in such relation as Great Britain may have to such parts of the British Empire as are not affected by any special agreement. In other words, British statesmen and Colonial Secretaries instruct the Administration here that it is the desire of the British Government that this Colony should fall into line, and it is expected that the local Administration would so interpret those instructions as not to cause any injury to those with whom she has treated, like Canada who came to the assistance of this Colony in allowing a market to sugar when Great Britain could not allow it. It saved this Colony. I am in a position to say that Canada saved the people of this Colony during those difficult years when Great Britain was unable to concede the preference. Always to Canada's credit that was possible with the statesmen of Canada. I do not know that any British statesman could have done that. I do not know that the electorate of Great Britain would have allowed them to do it. And when I say that the statesmen of Canada who held sway at that time are still Members of the Canadian House of Commons, some of them Senators, and still retain the confidence of the electorate, it only goes to

show that the spirit of public opinion in Canada is far more wide and less narrow than it is even in England, and I warn this Colony to be careful in its relations with that great Dominion. I am not a Canadian and I do not hope to become one by absorption, but what has impressed me most in this Treaty that has been concluded at Ottawa is that a comparatively young Dominion like Canada has been able to conclude a Treaty with Great Britain which provides that these preferential rates shall continue so long as the Canadian Legislature determines. It does not depend upon the will of the House of Commons but it depends upon the will of the Canadian Legislature. That is a marked advance on Dominion Government; it is a concession which I do not think the British Government would ever allow. Not only has Canada been able to conclude such an arrangement, but, I think I am right in saying, Australia has dominated the position also, and I recognise in those concessions the opportunity for a comparison when this Colony advances to a similar state.

Speaking more on the tariff question, I cannot for the life of me see why we are not strong enough to resist the peculiar attitude that British Colonies like ourselves adopt towards Great Britain, even assuming that we form part of the great British Empire and even assuming that we are at the present time borrowing money from them. I remember in this room when a Member sitting where the hon. Member for Western Berbice now sits attempted to protect customers in this Colony of motor cars and accessories the occupant of the Chair prevented that Member from carrying his proposal into effect by expressing his disapproval of any suggestion which would have the effect of giving certain motor cars and their accessories an advantage over those of British manufacture. The point then was that Government was not thinking of the consumer or of the cars popular at the time to the taste of the consumer when the particular commodity would have enabled Government to increase the revenue. The principle of Government was that for the sake of loyalty and patriotism we should do everything to foster British industries. While that may be true in sentiment I desire to impress upon those who are listening to this debate that we in this Colony are neither Free

Traders nor Protectionists from the point of view that those two standards exist in England. Our tariff is purely a revenue tariff, the means by which we can raise revenue for the purpose of administration. We do not impose duty on an article because we want to protect the manufacturer, nor is it a scientific tariff in any way. Of all the tariffs in the world British Guiana's is the most awful, most tinkered with and most unscientific. In order to adjust our revenue year by year we are throwing up balloons in the hope that some of them may reach ground and some may float forever, but I have never known within recent years an Official or Elected Member or a merchant in the street who was able to determine with accuracy that the result of any imposition would be so and so.

I object on principle to the proposed increase on cigarettes. The whole desire is to protect Empire grown tobacco. Cigarettes are imported with certificates of origin. We gain nothing from that knowledge. Because we are not certain about the source of origin and are anxious about losing revenue Government propose to the Legislature that we should increase the duty in a way by which consumers of tobacco will have to pay \$75,000. It seems to be an act of unwisdom. You are not certain whether there is any such tobacco in existence to reach this Colony; you are equally not certain that it can be imported in such quantities as to affect the revenue at all. But you are for that purpose mistaking the taste of the consumer, you are mistaking his attitude, and you are forgetting what he did when you attempted to do these things before. Never mind loyalty and sentimentalism. When you increased the duty on imported liquors the consumer ceased to drink whisky and consumed rum. Aren't you aware that if you increase the cost of cigarettes consumed in the Colony to-day that these very consumers are going to do what they did before and smoke a pipe. They are doing it to-day. Several smokers have given up smoking cigarettes on account of the excessive cost. The majority of cigarettes smoked in the Colony cost more than a cent. There is a "Tobacco ring" in the Colony and whether the cost is a cent, or more that ring does exist. If you want to reduce the cost to the consumer you ought not to allow that ring to exist to

the detriment of the consumer. You would get the same amount of revenue and, I believe, encourage the consumer to smoke more tobacco. That is the principle on which Government should legislate on tariff matters. If Government believe that there exists somewhere some tobacco equivalent to Virginia tobacco which is going to be grown, manufactured and consumed by the people in this Colony, you may be well assured that these gigantic trusts and big combines already monopolise the entire sources of supply. That tobacco does not exist and the proposal amounts to only a gesture, *i.e.*, let us pretend that we are doing something to protect Empire grown tobacco, which I believe does exist in Southern Rhodesia. But are you going to prevent the Jamaican growers of tobacco from competing in this market, kill their trade with this Colony or in any way curtail it?

There was a time when the cigar trade of this Colony was with America. Jamaica came to the rescue of the consumer and we got an almost equally good cigar at a cheaper price. Did Government lose any revenue by that? If you increase the duty Jamaica may lose this market. It may be said that Ceylon, India or some other place would benefit and it did not matter whence the direction of trade flows, but whilst we are building up an export trade in rice with Jamaica and whilst we are endeavouring to establish reciprocal relations with the islands, we should hesitate before we so dislocate the existing trade between one Colony and another by a suggestion to raise the duty. Flour is an illustration of a preference sometimes increasing the cost of a commodity to the consumer. Under the Agreement of 1925 our wise local tariff reformers allowed 25 per cent. of manufacture in flour to admit of that flour coming into this Colony under the 2s. preference. We altered our law to permit of flour not wholly from wheat in Canada or wholly manufactured by Canadian mills to enter this Colony from wheat grown in the Argentine as British flour. We allow oats from Russia to reach this Colony to the exclusion of Canadian oats on the ground that some bag in which it is brought is 25 per cent. British manufacture. Those are reasons why people refrain from doing business in this Colony. It is most unscientific and

is not based on anything, and I appeal to Government to examine each of these items individually, and not in connection with our relations with Great Britain but in our relations with the Colonies with whom we are now dealing. Why should we want to increase the duty on brandy, an article that we know enters very largely in alleviating cases of sickness?

Mr. D'ANDRADE: The duty on brandy is not increased. Foreign brandy will come in at the same rate but British brandy at a lower rate than at present.

Mr. WOOLFORD: If that is going to be the effect why should the best brandy in the world be excluded from the market for brandy of an inferior quality? The best brandy comes from Cognac in France just as the best port comes from Oporto. If a man can afford to pay and it makes no difference to your revenue, why should you seek to exclude the importation of the article? In this Colony the average consumer is protected by the price and not by the quality. You are going to stimulate a system that is at present prevailing in wheat and we know exists in oats. If you are going to give a preference to some brandy of British origin you will find that this Colony will not be able to obtain supplies, and some other foreign article masquerading under the name of British brandy or Empire manufactured brandy is going to find its way into the Colony. And what is going to happen? You are going to suffer loss of revenue and encourage an illicit trade in smuggling. You must not speculate on matters of that kind. There is no merchant in Water Street who will not tell you—I do not ask them to make a sworn declaration—that they get certificates of origin of goods shipped from British ports which they know perfectly well are not wholly British. The British Government knows that too, but in order to stimulate British trade and not being always able to trace every source of shipment the articles reach this and other Colonies. From the point of view of the consumer it is to his benefit as many brands of flour and whisky enter the Colony in order that the price should be cheap and one within his means.

I am not going to add much to what has been said with regard to what is known as “Yachting”; in my younger

days we used to call them “Dogs.” The point about them is that owing to your tinkering with the tariff here again you have excluded from this market Canadian enterprise. It was Canadian enterprise that made this shoe possible in this Colony. When you are speaking of loyalty and patriotism you made it possible for Japanese shoes to compete in this market. The proposal of the hon. Member for Central Demerara should be accepted by Government. If you put on a specific duty the poor man who uses those shoes will pay more; if you retain the ad valorem duty the increase will be infinitesimal. You must bring a certain amount of intelligence to bear on your tariff and not impose a specific duty because it is necessarily going to bring in more money. You have to consider whether it is going to have its result without impairing the fortunes of the poor class of the community. I think Government should accept the advice of the hon. Member that this duty should be levied ad valorem. There are one or two other matters to which reference has been made. Mr. Seaford directed attention to the fact that there is uncertainty about the term of the operation of these duties. I suppose Government will say our Customs tariff is an annual one. You will never have a fixed tariff in a community like this until the Colony makes far greater progress. Let us direct our minds, therefore, to the consideration of a revenue tariff. What I should like to see inserted in every Customs Ordinance—I know it won't be a popular idea—is that Government reserves to itself the right to alter duties like the one referred to when it has had the opportunity of seeing the source of trade, not affecting British goods but affecting alleged British goods coming from a foreign country. Something of that kind will be necessary when you come to give effect to some of these duties.

I think it should be made perfectly clear that this Colony does not undertake that these duties will remain in existence for a period of five years or to be coterminable with the Treaty relations between the Mother Country and Canada and the other signatories to it. I do not think this Colony should bind itself for such a period and I hope this Government will not give the British Government any such undertaking. It is a fundamental mistake in the relations of this and the Mother Country

that because they have entered into an agreement for a period of five years we should necessarily give an undertaking to the world that five years will continue in this country. Not the least important observation that fell from the hon. Member is one which has not even been recognised by the contracting parties and which to my mind has been a most deploring absent quality of the whole Conference. No attempt was made to deal with Exchange or exchange values and so far as this Colony is concerned it is a matter of very considerable importance that this Government should be advised as to what effect the maintenance of the gold standard in England has in a Colony like this where the Customs duties are not the result merely of a reciprocal treaty. In the case of a reciprocal treaty it is our duty to reciprocate and if Canada requested it to exchange by reciprocation certain commodities. The time has not arrived for Canada to enter into an agreement with us but when it does arise we shall expect Canada to maintain the agreement of reciprocity. But there is a difference between Reciprocity and Preference. One of these days the situation might arise—and it is here that the exchange value comes in—when we shall be torn between this loyalty of British Guiana and our patriotism and loyalty to the British Government and our respect for our obligation entered into with Canada. Therefore in fixing your tariff it requires an expert to be able to determine how far this Colony is to adjust its fiscal relations with Canada and how far it can be reconciled with granting Imperial preferences not to the detriment of the consumer.

Lastly, a very great disadvantage under which this Colony labours in relation to Canada, or Great Britain or Trinidad or Jamaica, is that if Great Britain maintain her right of asking this Colony to grant her preferential treatment in relation to articles produced in Great Britain and if the Empire asks us to do the same, it is fair that we should ask Great Britain and Canada and the Empire and those people with whom we have reciprocal and Imperial relations to remember that it is their duty to see that the ships which carry our produce to their lands are not so controlled as to render it possible for us to market our produce in those preferential countries to our disadvantage. This Gov-

ernment has to put a period to the control of freight rates existing between this Colony and other Colonies to which our produce is going in return for our receiving their produce on a preferential basis, and it has to do it if it has to collect harbour dues on those ships entering this Colony and the rice industry is going to be killed unless it is done. It must be made quite clear to these people in some way or other that this Government will see that its protest reaches Trinidad or Canada or wherever the arrival port may be on an equal basis as regards freight from any other place. It is no good our manufacturing or cultivating anything at all if we cannot market it advantageously abroad. While we are devoting all our energy to increased production of rice to suit the world's market it is all being negated by this unholy alliance between these ships. Let Government say it will never allow these ships to enter this port except at some advantage to the people of this Colony.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The last speaker's speech is the most interesting delivered on this debate and I congratulate the hon. Member on having made it because it raises some very interesting and very pertinent points. I entirely agree with him that this is not a question of sentiment. I tried to point out that this is purely a business arrangement within a family. I also tried to point out that owing to the change in the fiscal system of Great Britain it has been necessary for Great Britain and the Dominions, which started as we have done as a Colony and in a very short number of years have risen to a Kingdom within a Kingdom. It has been necessary for these partners of John Bull & Co.—because it is more a company now than ever it was—to meet together and decide the general effect upon the altered policy of one of the main partners in that firm. As one small member of the Colonial Empire we could not be represented, as has been suggested, independently, although we could have done what other Colonies did and that is to send a representative to the Conference to watch the proceedings. I believe the Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad sent one of their members to watch the Conference on their behalf. This Colony could have done the same thing. I entirely agree therefore with the views

expressed by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam that the question of patriotism and loyalty does not come into this discussion. It is purely a business proposition and must be examined as a business proposition.

It has been said by most hon. Members that we have got nothing, or are likely to get nothing, out of it. I submit that this Colony has taken already. We have taken very considerably from the Dominion of Canada. It has been pointed out that the preference given under the Trade Agreement of 1925 has been of the utmost value to this Colony in regard to its main product, sugar. It is not true to say that the Colony has received nothing. So great is the value of that preference considered to be by the sugar planters that they agreed that there should be levied, collected and paid to general revenue during the continuance of the Reciprocity Agreement a tax of 31 cents upon each acre of land under cane cultivation. That is an indication of the value that the sugar planters place upon the Agreement come to in 1925 and it goes without saying that it is of very considerable importance to this Colony. Figures have been already given as regards the value of our exports as compared with imports. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam dealt with the question of flour. That is a very difficult matter to deal with. It is true that we grant to Canada a preference of 2s. a bag and also granted the same preference to Great Britain. I was in another Colony similarly situated to this and it was suggested that that preference of 2s. per bag should only be given to Canada, but it was strongly resented by other members that that Colony should grant a preference to Canada which it was not prepared to grant to Great Britain. The fact also remains that Great Britain has been able to send to this Colony manufactured flour from wheat grown in foreign countries. That has nothing to do with the preference except in so far as we place a protective tariff by increasing the Empire content in a manufactured article. The question is—and it will be raised at some time or other—whether that figure should not be increased. Elsewhere it has been increased, but Government at the present time does not propose to make any increase. If it is felt that an additional preference should be given 100 per cent,

British wheat and flour the way to meet that is to increase the percentage of British manufacture. The intention is not to increase the price of brandy, and it is not going to encourage into the Colony possibly cheaper and not such good brandy as Cognac of British manufacture. I submit that is not likely to happen here. There is one British Dominion which makes all varieties of brandy—one known as brandy and one as dom. South African brandy or dom cannot possibly compete with the rum of this country. As regards high class brandy there can be no fear of competition. Those people who drink Cognac will have no more to pay for Cognac provided the merchant is prepared to sell him at the price it is to-day.

The hon. Mr. Seaford, the hon. Member for Demerara River and the hon. Member for New Amsterdam all referred to the period of this arrangement. I do not think the question of the period comes into it. I do not think I saw anywhere the question of the period mentioned. The principle of granting preferential treatment by the Dominions to the Colonies and by the Colonies to the Dominions and by Great Britain to both and both to Great Britain has become the economic policy of the British Empire and I take it that that policy is going to last until such time as the whole economic situation of the world is changed and tariff walls are broken down. The policy now of preference within the British Empire has grown amongst her own people and I think that term will be limited by a period of time. We have drafted at the present moment a new tariff based on modern lines and I hope later on in this session that the Council may find time to introduce it. Perhaps now will be the best time to introduce it, but it has taken a long time to prepare and it is better to deal with this matter in an amending Ordinance and later include it in the new tariff Ordinance. I entirely agree with what has been said with regard to our present tariff Ordinance and hope before many months are over to be able to introduce to this Council a revised, up-to-date, simplified Customs tariff. The hon. Member for Demerara River challenged anyone in this Council, or the mover of the motion, to say that any request had been made for protection on rice. I think the hon. Member is aware, but there are Members who know, that when the ques-



tion of the Ottawa Conference was first spoken of the Secretary of State asked all the Colonies to suggest certain items produced or in what manner the preference would be of benefit to them. This Colony, amongst others, after consultation with the commercial community and the country generally, replied stating what it would welcome receiving some preference with regard to rice. With Your Excellency's permission I will quote from a despatch which you wrote on the 9th May last :

"The development of rice and padi in this country has been remarkable as is shown in graph 4 attached to this despatch. It would undoubtedly be a means of establishing the prosperity of this Colony to secure for it the rice markets of Canada and the Caribbean Sea which would be an important factor in increasing the population in this Colony by immigration especially of East Indians. Demerara rice, since the steady improvement which has taken place in the quality of the seed used and the introduction of the Grading Regulations, has secured a first class reputation in competition with Indian rice and in this respect Indian rice enjoys an advantage due to special conditions of freight which not infrequently enable Indian rice to be put on the market at a lower rate. Under the Canadian Trade Agreement Colony milled rice pays half the general tariff duty rate. When the general rate was 75 cents per 100 lbs. Colony rice paid 37½ cents per 100 lbs. Recent charges increased the general rate to \$1 and Colony rice would therefore pay 50 cents. This means that the Canadian millers who work up rough rice are thereby definitely given an advantageous preference. The Colony is therefore asking for a preference of one cent per pound on both milled and rough rice (padi), the latter being at present duty free from all sources."

Under the Agreement we did not receive any preference on padi in Canada. The preferential treatment on rice remains the same, but Great Britain, at all events, has given us a cent per pound preference on rice. That this Colony has not been able to benefit, as other Colonies have, by this preferential arrangement is merely due to the fact that our exports are limited. Our main export is sugar. We have already sought and taken as much as we can get as regards our sugar, and it has been very valuable. We have asked for and obtained preferential treatment for rice. Now we are getting preferential treatment on produce which we hope will increase. I think the least we can do is to enter into this family or company agreement in the spirit which the hon. Member referred to should be wholehearted, and these preferences we are now

asked to give them may in some instances increase the price to a small extent. I do not believe they are going to increase, with one exception to which I shall refer presently, beyond the prices that have been ruling during the year. We take it that the representations made by this Colony and others were not overlooked by the Secretary of State and were used in any arguments he made at the Conference to obtain preferences for the Colony. The hon. Member complained that the Secretary of State did not have competent advisers. I submit that the Secretary of State probably had the most competent advisers possible. He had Sir Alfred Sherlock and Sir Edward Davson. Either would have done equally well. In fact, it cannot be denied that Sir Edward Davson's advice was of considerable value. He knows as much about this Colony as any Member sitting around this table and he was able to advise the Secretary of State in regard to matters that would be of value to this Colony. I will not deal further with the general question.

Tobacco has received considerable consideration during this debate. The Comptroller of Customs indicated what the effect of the increase will be. I remember the time not so long ago when the better brands of cigarettes, viz., Craven A, Players, Navy Cut and Capstan, were sold at 80 cents per tin. Those cigarettes are sold now at from 68 to 71 cents per tin. Tobacco has gone down in the same ratio. The reason for that is not that we have reduced the duties; in fact we have increased them not only in the actual rate but by adding a 3 per cent. Bill of Entry tax, yet the price of tobacco has not increased but is going down all the time. The increase proposed has not been done deliberately, as is suggested, but is simply based on a calculation to avoid the possibility of loss of revenue. It may be that for a year or longer the percentage of British tobacco in the mixtures that come to the Colony will not be increased to any great extent. We know that there are some very popular brands of smoking mixture in London entirely made of Empire grown tobacco. We shall lose revenue unless we are very careful, and I submit, therefore, we shall be wise to leave the figures as suggested. These figures have been approved by the Chamber of Commerce, as are all the other items. It will

be a fact that cheap shoes, and perhaps children's shoes, will probably become more expensive owing to this particular tariff. It has been suggested by the hon. Member for Central Demerara that we should do in respect of shoes exactly what we are doing in respect of hosiery, viz., have an ad valorem duty. If when we are in Committee it is considered worth while to alter the figures from the specific rate to the ad valorem rate to get some revenue it might be done, but the price of shoes generally should not go up if this proposal is adopted. The hon. Member for Berbice River was one of those who said we get no benefit from Canada or from the Agreement. I think the hon. Member, after what he has heard not only from his own colleagues but other Members, will believe that the Colony is undoubtedly receiving benefit. It only remains for me to move the second reading of the Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: Before putting the second reading I should like to make one or two remarks with regard to the debate as a whole. I think the Council is to be congratulated on the debate and I propose to send it to the Secretary of State. It is quite clear that representations can be made by the Colony in respect of what it hopes to get and should get in respect of benefits from elsewhere. I think we ought to visualise the position as a whole. The hon. Member for Demerara River referred to the Dominions and how they can do things for themselves. That is perfectly true, but the Ottawa Conference has brought the Crown Colonies into a very much stronger position than they had ever been before. Whatever may be the future of this Colony it has been considered a party to the Ottawa Conference. The Crown Colonies were not permitted to speak separately because there are so many Crown Colonies. It was impossible owing to the number that they should be so represented, and for the first time they took part in a Conference of this kind they were represented by the Secretary of State and his expert advisers in this matter. I appreciate that we may feel dissatisfied with what we have got but I hope not with what we are giving. It must be remembered that we are of one family, and while we may not have benefited to the same extent as others we have benefited to some extent. We have taken part on a basis of reciprocity

and it is not all a question of preference in this matter. Some Colonies have benefited to a large extent and others in a lesser degree. I am not going to say anything about patriotism. We are not arguing the matter from that point of view. We are glad and anxious to do what we can for the Mother Country, but I am sorry that the hon. Member for Demerara River did not complete his quotation from Dr. Johnson. I have a great regard for the memory of Dr. Johnson and should like to read the passage from Boswell:—

“Johnson suddenly uttered in a strong determined tone an apophthegm at which many will start ‘Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.’ But let it be considered that he did not mean a real and generous love of our country but that pretended patriotism, which so many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for self-interest.”

In this matter we are asked to give more than we receive but we are members of the family, and I am quite prepared to stand by the motto of the Colony. As I interpret it “We give and we seek in return.” I think the more you give the more you can seek. (Laughter). There is a great deal that can be said from that point of view. We heard yesterday of rice cultivation and the prospect of pushing it in Canada and elsewhere. I think it is very necessary at a stage like this in our history that we should be represented in Canada from a trade point of view, and I propose to put before the Council later a proposal to provide money for representation in Canada and to try to push our products there. As the hon. Member for New Amsterdam pointed out, there is no reason at all why we should not get a better footing for our products in that market, especially our timbers and rice. If we are not going to take part in the Ottawa Conference and be a party to it we shall be handicapped very considerably in any move we make with regard to preference from any other Colony. But I put it on the higher plane that we are members of a family. We are asked as members of that family to take part in a resolution which is being put into force with regard to this Ottawa Conference and I hope it will be approved by the Council. I consider it absolutely right that we should put our case forward and the views of hon. Members will be sent to the Secretary of State. At the same time we

should not hesitate to join in this Conference.

The Council divided on the question that the Bill be now read the second time and voted :

*Ayes*—Messrs. Peer Bacchus, Seaford, Austin, Anderson, Dr. Singh, De Aguiar, Eleazar, Crane, Woolford, Mullin, Dr. De Freitas, D'Andrade, Wood, Major Craig, Brassington, Professor Dash, Major Bain Gray, Millard, Dias, Smellie, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—22.

*Noes*—Mr. Cannon—1.

Bill read the second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clause 2—Amendment to First Schedule of Cap. 34.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I have risen in the hope that Government will change its mind in regard to tobacco. If the Colonial Secretary expresses the views of Government when he states that the prices of cigarettes have been reduced, I would like also to point out that it is a matter for reflection that the control of the Imperial Tobacco Company is established in this Colony. It must not be assumed that the present prices have anything to do with the duty; they are directly traceable to the agent of the vendor in the Colony. I fear that this idea of preference is going to fail in its object because the holders of stocks of other tobaccos might increase the price of tobacco from now or when it does not give control to monopoly prices as before. You cannot control the retail price and there will come a time when there is going to be something like retaliation. If the \$75,000 anticipated revenue

is of no value to you, why increase the cost to the consumer? Are you going to give a preference to imported tobacco and not give a corresponding preference to the local article?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The price of cigarette tobacco never had any relation to the Customs duty. The Customs duty as a whole has increased during the past few years on tobacco but in spite of that the price of tobacco and cigarettes is less than two years ago. That is due mainly to a reduction in the first cost of the commodity. The retail price is controlled by competition. Nobody are more alive to the effect the Ottawa Agreement is going to have on Imperial tobacco than the Imperial Tobacco Company, and I have no doubt they have long since made arrangements to include in their brands more British tobacco than they are doing at the present time. It is a fact that Government do anticipate, at the outset at all events, that we shall make some revenue out of tobacco. It is difficult to name any definite amount of revenue because we do not know how much percentage of British grown tobacco will be included. On every occasion that the duty on articles of luxury has been increased it has never made any difference to the consumer, the prices being regulated by other conditions than Customs duties.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: There can be no doubt that if these rates are approved revenue of \$75,000 will be collected. The representatives of various brands of tobacco and cigarettes have practically withdrawn sales until a decision has been arrived at of what the proposed rates of duty are going to be. I should like to move an amendment that item 47 (b) (i) be reduced from \$2.10 to \$1.72 per lb. and (ii) from \$2.47 to \$2.10 per lb.

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