

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 9th January, 1935.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, SIR CRAWFORD DOUGLAS-JONES, Kt., C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. P. W. King, (Acting).

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

The Hon. T. T. Smellie, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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. A. Luckhoo (Eastern Berbice).

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

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer (Acting).

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

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

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

The Hon. F. Birkitt, Postmaster-General.

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. J. L. Wills (Demerara River).

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 8th January, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.

PETITION.

Mr. WILLS laid on the table a petition from Mrs. Elizabeth Boatswain praying for a gratuity in respect of the services of her late husband in the Police Force.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

INTERCOLONIAL FREIGHT RATES.

Mr. BRASSINGTON : I beg to move :—

THAT this Council recommends that Government should take up the question of communicating with the Canadian Government in accordance with Article XVIII. of the Canada-British West Indies Trade Agreement, with respect to freight rates on rice, cattle and other minor agricultural products to Trinidad and the British West Indies.

As Your Excellency is aware, I tabled this motion in the form of a question, but Your Excellency ruled that it should be brought forward as a motion. I was mainly concerned with the subject that received very full attention by the Chamber of Commerce in connection with the Canada-British West Indies Trade Agreement which will be terminated in July, 1937. Article XVIII of that Agreement says :—

“Freight rates on all services shall be subject to the control of the Canadian Government. The Government of any Colony shall be at liberty at any time to make representations to the Canadian Government in respect of such rates, to which the Canadian Government shall give the fullest possible consideration.”

I claim that Government has not given attention or support to the representations

of the Chamber of Commerce in regard to freight rates between this Colony and Canada and the British West Indies. The freight rate on sugar to Canada is 12 cents per 100 lbs., and 25 cents on rice. In my opinion the difference between the rates on sugaar and rice is out of proportion. I am not in any way against the lower rate on sugar, which is the mainstay of the Colony, but at the same time it must be admitted that after sugar rice is the next important industry in this Colony. They are the two main industries of the Colony and I certainly think that the Government has not sufficiently hammered at the door of the Canadian Government and as strongly as it might have done.

It may be said that the Agreement will be terminated in a few years, but much harm can be done to the rice industry, which is in a very critical state, if something is not done between now and the termination of the Agreement in July, 1937.

The freight rate on rice to Trinidad is 17 cents per 100 lbs. as against 12 cents per 100 lbs. on sugar to Canada. To the Windward Islands, rice pays 18 cents per 100 lbs. and to the Leeward Islands 20 cents per 100 lbs. With regard to cattle, in respect of which a great effort is being made to create an export trade, what do we find? The freight rates on cattle to Trinidad are \$12 per head for shipments under 20 head, and over 20 head \$6 per head, an attendant to accompany the cattle. This in my opinion is ridiculous. Deck passengers can travel at \$5 each, but you have to pay \$12 per head for cattle. On plantains to Trinidad the freight rate is \$6 per ton or 27 cents per 100 lbs., coconuts \$5 per ton, coffee \$6 per ton or 27 cents per 100 lbs.

This is a subject which I am sure several Elected Members are more competent than I am to go more fully into, but the main object of my tabling the question was, if possible, to get the Government, to get a move on in regard to securing a reduction of the exorbitant freight rates we pay on rice to Canada and the West Indies generally. I do not ask that sugar should be handicapped in any way by any undue favouritism towards the rice industry, but I do not think the most ardent supporter

of the sugar industry can claim that the difference between the freight rates on rice and sugar to Canada and the West Indies is an equitable one. A freight rate of 25 cents per 100 lbs. is a crushing burden on an industry which, although well established, is in a very critical state at the present time. I do not know how the Government would have answered my questions. I have been trying to find out but I have been unable to find how often Government has made representations to Canada in regard to these freight rates, and what were the replies received. I have great hope that as the result of this motion Government will make an early effort to get some reduction in the freight rates on rice and other commodities under this Agreement.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: It affords me very great pleasure indeed to second the motion moved by the hon. Member. The mover read Article XVIII. of the Agreement with Canada, which clearly states that not only this Government but all the Governments in the West Indies shall at all times be at liberty to approach the Government of Canada on the question of freight rates or any other questions that affect the Trade Agreement. What brought about this Trade Agreement with Canada? We in this part of the world wanted to be assured of a regular steamship service between Canada and the West Indies, and a regular agreement between the various Governments was arrived at. On the one hand this country, in common with other West Indies Governments, gave certain preferences on goods of Canadian manufacture, and we also contributed a subsidy in the sum of about £8,500 per annum. I believe that Canada gave us similar benefits and in addition a regular passenger and cargo service. Therefore it was a bargain.

If the time has come—my view is that the time is more than overdue—for us to approach Canada on the question of freight rates on one of our commodities, or on all of our commodities, I think it is the duty of the Government to make those representations. I am aware of the fact that the Government did not at any time allow the matter to slide, because I know that some time ago representations were made, but they have borne no fruit. That is exactly where I am most concerned. If the Government of this country, in common

with the Governments of the West Indies, makes representations to the Government of Canada and the representations made bear no fruit then it seems to me that there is something radically wrong somewhere, especially when we in this Colony have had the experience of obtaining cheaper rates of freight on the same commodities in respect of which representations have been made to the Canadian Government from time to time. But since the competition which then existed has been withdrawn the freight rates have gone up again. In my opinion that savours of big-stick methods, and that is just where I agree with the mover of the motion. I think it is the duty of Government to take the question up again. Rice as we all know—and cattle is in the same position—is now giving the farmer a very small return, and every penny that can be obtained in the marketing of that produce, or by way of reduction of freight, will certainly find its way back to the producer. It is therefore of the greatest importance that this matter should be taken up very strongly again with the Canadian Government, and in this instance I think it should be pointed out that not so very long ago freight rates on rice, particularly to Trinidad, were reduced as the result of competition, and it should be inquired why that rate of freight should not be enjoyed on the Canadian National Steamers.

It might be argued that the reduced freight rates were brought about as the result of what might be termed inferior competition. I refer in the first place to the competition by schooners, and in the second place to what is commonly termed "pirate" lines. If those "pirate" lines can carry produce from this country to Trinidad and other West Indian markets at a lower rate of freight it seems to me that the Canadian National Steamers, which are in receipt of a subsidy from this Government, should be in a better position to carry that class of merchandise even at a lower rate. Perhaps the point might be stretched further by arguing that they might be able to carry it at a lower rate of freight by reason of the handsome subsidy they receive. But we are not clamouring for that. We have been told that these steamers are operated at a loss. That may or may not be so. There is a conflict of views on that point. One can

operate a service at a profit and yet show a loss. It all depends on what your charges are and on the kind of service that you give. We are all agreed that the service we get is one of the best, but at the same time we do not know what are their charges against the operation of the service. If we did perhaps we might find that those charges are responsible to some extent for the annual loss incurred in the operation of the service. I still think it is the duty of the Government to take the matter up with the Canadian Government, and I believe that although the Trade Agreement has a short time to run it may be possible to obtain the relief that is now being sought, relief which in my opinion, and I am sure in the opinion of those engaged in the rice and cattle industries of the Colony, would be of great value, and anything this Government can do that will assist in that direction I feel sure would receive the appreciation of those persons engaged in those industries.

I do not propose to make any comparisons whatever with the rate of freight that is being charged for other commodities such as sugar and so on. My friend made reference to that, and I think he has fully covered the ground, but I do feel that the position with respect to rice and cattle, particularly in Trinidad, is one that should receive immediate attention. The position is very serious. At the present moment the rice industry is undergoing very severe competition in Trinidad with rice from the East. Forward prices at present are exceedingly low. It is true that at the present moment shipments that are made immediately are enjoying a slight premium on the indent prices for forward shipment, but that position will not last very long. It may not last even two months. That, however, will give this Government sufficient time to make representations, so that if the rates of freight are reduced by the time this Colony faced with that serious competition, the shippers on this side would be undoubtedly in a better position to meet that competition to some extent. It would not be possible to meet it on the whole, neither can we expect to obtain a difference in freight that would offset the difference in the price of Indian rice. For that matter the duty to-day is even higher than the rate of freight on the bag, but whatever

difference in freight that is obtaining as the result of the representations made by this Government would certainly be of valuable assistance to the industry.

Mr. AUSTIN: I think we are all concerned in this Colony about securing reasonable freight rates between this Colony and the neighbouring Islands, and the United Kingdom. I will deal first with sugar which the hon. Member for Western Essequibo spoke about. He must bear in mind that sugar is taken on board here as what is known as bulk shipment. It goes in bags and to all intents and purposes it is not touched or handled until it gets to the port of discharge. Apart from that it goes alongside the dock, but in the case of rice and other products, coconuts and copra for instance, they have all to be put into lighters and loaded over the side of the steamer. Therefore the freight on sugar must be cheaper than that on other products from this Colony that have to be doubly handled.

As regards the freight on rice—and I can only deal with it as regards Trinidad and Barbados—I do not think Members of the Council realise the charges made in Trinidad for handling our rice. I have not the figures with me at the moment. I rather think Trinidad's charge is 60 per cent. against our 40 per cent., and our 40 per cent. includes a fairly large sum for tonnage dues, pilotage and light dues and overtime. When a steamer leaves here for Trinidad a cable is sent stating the quantity of rice on board and that she may arrive at sunset. That rice is worked at night in Trinidad; it has to be, and that is an extra charge on that commodity which the Colony exports. It is not the fault of the steamer agents that these charges are incurred, it is just a natural charge which somebody has to pay, and the person is either the producer or the consumer.

The hon. Member for Central Demerara spoke of pirate lines and schooners taking rice. They do take rice. Do they ever pay claims for damaged rice? Can they get that rice insured? They cannot. When a schooner slips into Port-of-Spain and slips out again as soon as possible any claim for damaged rice either *en route* to Port-of-Spain or from the schooner to

the landing place is against the owner of the rice. When all these things are considered I hold that the charges made by the steamer agents in this Colony are not out of proportion with those that have to be paid after the steamer leaves this port.

Mr. WALCOTT: In considering a matter of this kind one has to throw one's mind back about 9 years. When the subsidy was given for this service we had no steamship companies operating here which would take passengers out of the Colony. Even people who wished to go to England had to leave here 10 or 14 days ahead of time so as to catch a steamer in Trinidad, and one of the reasons that prompted the Government of the day to give this subsidy was to get regularity of service for passengers between this Colony and Trinidad. Trinidad being one of the principal West Indian Colonies to whom we supply rice, it goes without saying that we should try to obtain as low a freight rate as possible. Whilst I have a great amount of sympathy with the steamship companies for the heavy ligherage rate and landing fees that have to be paid in Trinidad on goods taken by steamer, I also realise that the subsidy given by this Government was given for a specific purpose. I think the Canadian National Steamships fully realise that, but unfortunately they have what is known as Conference Lines which have persuaded the Canadian National Steamers to join them and keep the rates at a certain figure, whereas the Canadian National Steamers, if there was no Conference, would be satisfied to take a lower rate and perhaps get more cargo.

The rate on sugar is low; it is a very fair and good rate, and of course we could never expect our rice to get a similar rate because, as the Hon. Mr. Austin said, sugar is shipped in large quantities, and it is taken direct to the refineries in Trinidad. There is no cost of handlings whereas rice has to be handled on the steamship wharf or at St. John or Montreal, and we would naturally expect to pay a higher rate. But the question is how much higher? I think the present rate is altogether out of proportion. It seems to me, therefore, that as they have pointed out over and over again, only very small quantities of rice are shipped to Canada. We might argue with the Canadian

National Steamers that if they reduced their rates by 5 or 10 cents per 100 lbs they would not lose very much revenue, but they would help an industry that well needs help at the present time. I think therefore that Government would have very fair argument in asking for a reduction of the freight rates on rice to Canada.

With regard to the rates not only to Trinidad but to the other Islands I claim, and I feel that I am right, that the Canadian National Steamers having made an Agreement through the Canadian Government as part of the Reciprocity Treaty, should keep themselves free from Conference entanglements. (Hear, hear). Whilst the Conference might serve a good purpose in certain directions, the Canadian National Steamers have an obligation to the Colonies which give them a subsidy, to try to help their produce to get from one place to another at as low a rate as possible, and I feel sure that if proper representations were made to the Canadian Government by this Government they would be able to obtain some consideration. It is well worth trying. We know that our minor industries have suffered very considerably during the last year. There is no immediate prospect of any improvement in the rice industry on account of the low prices of rice, and taking all things into consideration the time seems to be opportune for this Government to make a special appeal to the Canadian Government for some reduction of the freight rates on produce other than sugar shipped from this Colony to the West Indies and Canada.

With regard to the remark made by the Hon. Mr. Austin about insurance I think he will find that he is wrong on that because we can get insurance on produce shipped by schooner to Trinidad and the other Islands. I admit that the rates are higher than on produce shipped by steamer, but the lower rates of freight more than compensate for the extra insurance we have to pay.

Mr. SEAFORD: I feel sure that no one in this Colony would oppose a motion of this kind because it is naturally of benefit to the Colony to get as cheap freight rates as it is possible to get. There are, however, one or two points which should not be lost sight of. I am

referring to the reference made by the hon. Member for Central Demerara to "pirate" ships. We know what "pirate" ships are, and that the Canadian National Steamers would never attempt to compete with those "pirate" ships. We know the wages the men on those ships get in comparison with those on other ships, and I do not think any British ship would attempt to compete with the rates on those "pirate" ships. That was brought in just as a little manœuvre.

It was pointed out that the lighterage charge is heavy. Perhaps that will not last very long. That matter has been taken up on several occasions, and I think it is realised that Trinidad is at the present moment building a deep-water harbour and boats will be able to get alongside the wharves there. As soon as the work is completed freight rates will be reduced.

I am not clear on one point. Before I went on leave I took the matter up and the Trinidad Government was quite prepared to send a Government steamer here for rice and cattle, and the freight rates were considerably less because that steamer could go alongside the wharves in Trinidad. Why is it that arrangement has not continued? As far as I have been able to find out I think it is due to a lack of co-operation amongst the rice people in this Colony. It is not a very large steamer but I think it can carry all the rice they want, and that it can be chartered at a very cheap rate. That also applies to cattle. I do not think it is the cost of freight as regards cattle, but there are other questions which I think Government has also gone into fully. I have taken the matter up again. Fortunately I am not a member of the Rice Marketing Board or the Rice Association, but I feel they may assist on the question of freight rates and try to secure greater co-operation amongst the rice people of the Colony. I would be only too glad if Government could do something to reduce the cost of freight by any means in its power.

Mr. ELEAZAR: As I have always said in this Council, I would not have taken any part in this discussion, but for the fact that the hon. Member wanted to know why it is that the people did not take advantage of the

steamer coming from Trinidad. It is because Trinidad would not let them. There is a lighterage combine in Trinidad which protested against the lighters being put out of commission because the steamer went alongside the wharf. That is one phase. Only recently a cattle dealer in Berbice took a single shipment of cattle to Trinidad and got them to accept a reduced freight rate. The lightermen protested very strongly and he had to pay the higher rate. That is one of the reasons why. We are between the devil and the deep sea, the Trinidad lighterage combine and the Canadian National Steamships.

I ask Government to accept the motion. The Canadian Reciprocity Treaty has always been the subject of controversy from the inception because, while on the face of it it appears to be a very good bargain, we cannot put as much stuff in Canada as she can put here, therefore we have to find a reduced tariff. We send a handful of goods to Canada. I consider it manifestly absurd to say that the Company, in spite of the subsidy, is losing money on the service. The same thing happened in the case of the Demerara Electric Co. who should never have been awarded the lighting contract if they could not carry on the tram-car service. We give a subsidy to the Canadian National Steamers so that we could get reasonable rates, and we cannot continue to allow the argument to prevail that because they have to do a little more handling in the case of rice it should be taxed out of existence. That is what it amounts to. Rice from Burma after six weeks' travelling can compete with British Guiana rice which takes 36 hours to Trinidad, because of the cheapness of the freight from India and the high amount we pay. Again the large importers in Trinidad insist that the rice should be sent by the Canadian National Steamers so as to keep the freight rates up. I do not believe in begging when we are paying money. Two years hence this Treaty will come up again for re-consideration. This is the time to go into the whole matter. The Treaty is all in favour of Canada. It was known when the Treaty was made that we could not send to Canada what she could send to us. We should not go hat-in-hand to Canada. While I do not think they are doing too much for sugar they are doing

too little for rice. I think Government ought to take steps to remove the obstacles if possible.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. P. W. King): After listening to the remarks made by the various hon. Members who have spoken, Government will take action in this matter, but I would like to point out that Government has not been neglecting the position in the past. Some time in 1933 representations were made by the Chamber of Commerce, and on those representations the matter was taken up with the Canadian authorities with the result that the freight rates were reduced from \$4.50 to \$4 per ton, but the Canadian authorities then pointed out that with regard to rice exported to Trinidad especially, the cost of handling was very heavy. In fact it was estimated that out of the \$4.50 per ton \$2 is spent in actual handling charges, and that the \$2.50 that remained was not enough for carrying it over that distance

With regard to competition with Indian rice they made the point that rice was brought from India more or less as ballast and not as freight, and that was the reason for the low freight rates. Government has taken up all representations that have been made. In 1932 representations were made, and from the figures which I have here it would seem that it was reduced to \$4 per ton in 1933, and on the 9th February it dropped as low as \$3.90. On the 9th March, 1934, it was further reduced to \$3.36 per ton to meet some special competition by schooners plying to Trinidad, but having got rid of that competition they raised it again to \$3.90 per ton. That was in November, 1933, and Government asked the Chamber of Commerce when the freight rate was reduced to \$4, to see how it would work, and on further representations being made the matter would be taken up again. As recently as November last year the Chamber of Commerce wrote again asking Government to look into the matter again, and Government has taken the matter up. We are now awaiting a reply from the local steamship agents on certain questions that have been asked, and when that has been received the matter will receive full consideration of Government, and further representation will be made to the Canadian authorities which Government hopes will

result in a reduction of the freight rates. The Agreement will have to be renewed in 1937; perhaps that would be the best time to represent all these matters and try to get better terms for this Colony. I can give the assurance that the matter will receive every consideration by Government and proper representations will be made.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: In view of the general and strong support I have received for my motion I do not think it is necessary to say very much. With the single exception of the Hon. Mr. Austin it has received very strong support indeed. As far as I could gather from his remarks the Hon. Mr. Austin was the only Member who did not think that the freight charges on sugar and rice to Canada—12 cents and 25 cents per 100 lbs respectively—were out of proportion, and advanced as a reason for the difference the double handling that took place with regard to rice. That evidently was not the opinion of the other speakers. The Hon. Mr. Walcott said he considered the freight rate on rice was out of proportion, and I think all the other speakers held the same view. I endeavoured in my opening remarks to make it clear and emphasise to the best of my ability that I was not cavilling or trying to argue that sugar was too lightly taxed in regard to freight. I am a sugar planter, and I emphasised that sugar was the mainstay of the Colony, but sugar planter as I am I cannot reconcile or conscientiously say that a freight rate of 12 cents per 100 lbs on sugar and 25 cents per 100 lbs. on rice is a proportionate and fair charge.

The Hon. Mr. Austin also laid stress on the advantages of insurance by the Canadian National Steamships and other Lines. I am not in a position to go into the question of what freight rates steamship companies must charge to balance their accounts with regard to the running of their steamers. The hon. Member has an advantage over me because he is a steamship agent, but however the steamship companies are suffering by depression in freight rates throughout the world, or how many Lines have several of their steamers lying idle on account of not being able to get freight does not alter the fact of the comparison I have made between the freight rates on sugar and rice to Canada.

The Hon. Mr. Walcott spoke of shipping rings. I think there will always be that sort of thing not only in steamship lines but in any form of business. Another point made by the Hon. Mr. Walcott was as regards insurance on freight by schooners. I think he made it clear that claims for loss are made good by the owners of the schooners. I do not wish to make any comparison between the subsidy this Colony pays to the Canadian National Steamships and the advantages we receive in connection with trade, but I would say that the feeling in this Colony is that the subsidy of \$40,800 is a very handsome one, and as the hon. Member for Berbice River said, now is the time for us to put our house in order and to know exactly what we want and what we are prepared to give and to do when the next Conference takes place in 1937. I think in that respect this debate will be helpful. I understand from the Colonial Secretary that Government made representations to Canada as recently as November, 1933. I am glad to hear that, and as I and other Elected Members have emphasised, we hope Government will take further steps very early and very strongly with regard to the general dissatisfaction with the freight rates we have to pay, not only on goods going to Canada but to the West Indian Islands.

Motion carried.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I beg to move.—

That in the opinion of this Council the appointment of the Committee to enquire into the administration of the Medical Department is a violation of the privileges of the Unofficial Members of the Council and a dangerous precedent to future administration.

This motion was tabled by me at a previous session of the Council, but for some reason or another it was crowded out. Whether it was done adroitly as a political move or otherwise I cannot say, but it has necessitated my having to table it again. But for the principles involved I would prefer to let the matter rest. I have brought it again with some amount of regret, and that regret is due to the fact that I am driven by Government to make remarks about myself, and Government will be the first to say that it is because of

the ensuing General Elections. (Laughter). My only regret is that I am placed in that position, but the remarks I intend to make about myself will be very few. I can assure Government that I had nothing like the General Elections in my mind because I can stand before my constituents and say that during the time I have served them in the Legislature I have endeavoured to do so honestly (Hear, hear), and I have done so all the time conscientiously and consistently, and I can say that wherever the facts or circumstances permitted I have done so as temperately as I could. I have never attempted to cajole Government or attempted to cajole or flatter the public. I think I speak as I feel on all matters. If I know Government is wrong I say so, and if I think Government is right I say so. Those, sir, are the principles by which I have been guided all the time I have served here.

Therefore when I am called upon indirectly by Government to make the statement I propose to make to the Council today it is very painful to me. The circumstances however warrant it, and when I have made it I am done with it. I say first of all that whenever a motion is brought by a Member of the Council for the appointment of a Committee or Commission that Member must have in his mind certain irregularities or certain conditions which he thinks should be removed or improved. The Member who brings the motion naturally expects to be given an opportunity to serve on that Committee or Commission if it pleases Government to appoint one. In this instance Government thought fit to accept the motion brought by me for an inquiry to be instituted into the administration of the Medical Department, and equally fit to leave my name out of the personnel of the Committee. I thought at first it was an oversight on the part of Government because in all my experience in this House and outside of it I have never known a single instance in which an Unofficial Member who brought a motion for an inquiry was left out of that inquiry. Therefore I can only conclude that when Government conceived the idea of leaving me out Government did so intentionally. It was an attempt to balk the inquiry, to deny me the advantage of inquiring and satisfying myself

whether the information which prompted me to bring the motion, and the observations I had made were well founded. Government did not wish to know that and therefore thought fit not to include me in the personnel of the Committee. I consider I was entitled to inclusion—at least my opinion should have been asked—and Government should have asked me whether it was possible for me to give my time on the Committee. I consider it a privilege not only of my own but the privilege of every Unofficial Member of this Council, and that is the reason why I insisted on bringing the motion. I could have snapped my fingers at it, but I realised that was a dangerous attitude to take up; it would have put a weapon into the hands of Government for further use. The next time Government might leave some other Member out. It has never been done in this Council before.

When Government's attention was drawn to the motion Government had the temerity to inform me that it hoped I would go before the Committee and give evidence. If that was not insolent absurdity I fail to understand what is. What evidence can I give? Hearsay evidence that somebody told me so and so? Would that be evidence at all? I have not been practising law for over a quarter of a century for nothing. It was a gratuitous insult to me and nothing short of that, and the suggestion could only have emanated from a veritable tyro as regards the law of evidence. Further Government said it did not think it was a violation of the privilege of a Member of this Council. If it is a right then Government's position is worse. I have a recollection, and I think it is a very vivid recollection, of the fact that Government has been consistently depriving the Unofficial Members of the Council of several privileges. When I became a Member of the House it was the privilege of the Senior Elected Member to respond to the Budget Speech, but the moment the new Constitution came into force I was politely told at the very first meeting of the Council by another Elected Member that I would not be permitted to reply to the Governor's Speech, but it would be the Senior Unofficial Member. I am not suggesting that the hon. Member who did it was not worthy, but it was not his privilege notwithstanding the fact that it was a Budget for a large deficit, and

that from that time it has been nothing else.

I also have a recollection that when I became a Member of the House I found the Elected Members with the privilege of inquiring into petitions addressed to Your Excellency and this House. The moment the Constitution was changed it was suggested to the Elected Members that they could leave those petitions to the Governor in Council. I know that since then many of those petitions never reach the Governor in Council at all; they are decided by the Governor alone. What the petitioners get afterwards is an intimation that Government is sorry it cannot interfere, and so many a petition with a lot of merit is thrown into the waste paper basket. Consideration of petitions was the right of the Elected Members of this House which they were induced to give up, and they ought to regret it forever because they have derived no benefit by doing so. Therefore, with that experience, when in this instance another privilege was sought to be withdrawn from us by omitting me from the Committee I felt it was my duty to bring it to the notice of Members of the Council for an expression of opinion whether Government's action was the correct thing.

I do not think I have much need to say very much more, but I would ask Government itself to say whether this is not a very dangerous precedent for future Administration. Your Excellency will recognise that although this Council cannot bind its successor the precedent will be established. When the precious Committee was formulated not a single Government medical practitioner who had experience in hospitals or in the districts was asked to be a member, and it was only after long agitation that Dr. de Freitas was put on the Committee. The doctors had decided that they would not give evidence before the Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: I would ask the hon. Member to be more careful about his remarks. There was no very long agitation. The very moment Government received the request it was agreed to.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am very sorry if I

have misrepresented the position, but Your Excellency will permit me to say that I was informed that they made a request and it was denied. They made a second request and decided that they would not give evidence before the Committee until a Government Medical Officer was appointed, and then Dr. de Freitas was appointed. I am not here to quarrel with Government. I am here to say just what the motion says, that I regard the appointment of this Committee as a violation of the privileges of the Unofficial Members of this Council and as a dangerous precedent. The original motion stated that it was calculated to frustrate the object of the inquiry, but after a doctor who had experience was appointed I withdrew that clause of the motion. Government will therefore see that I was very careful about what I was putting before the Council. What I am putting before the Council is that the Committee, composed as it is, is a violation of the privilege of the Council, and is a dangerous precedent considering that we will be having a new Governor and a new Colonial Secretary, and that it would be easy for them to say that there is precedent for it. There are few privileges left to Elected Members, and withdrawing them like this does not appeal to me. I therefore think it is my duty to put it to hon. Members to say whether I am correct in my view or not.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I second this motion on the ground that I agree with the hon. Member that there are certain privileges of Members of this Council, and those Members are within their rights if they are jealous of those privileges. At the same time I am mindful of the fact that the appointment of a Committee or Commission, whether as the result of a motion by a Member of the Council or as the result of representations made by any individual, is entirely at the discretion of His Excellency the Governor. But I think it should not be overlooked that a Member who moved such an important motion as the one referred to for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into a Department should at least have been approached as to whether he would be willing to serve on the Committee. It seems to me that Government would be acting unwisely if after a Member moved a motion for the appointment of a Com-

mittee to inquire into any Department, it did not include that Member in the Committee appointed.

Your Excellency is well aware that when the motion was tabled there was a great deal of unrest generally speaking. The Council practically as a whole took the opportunity of ventilating its views on the subject. That should have shown Government that the subject was one of very far-reaching importance, and it seems to me that an error was committed when the hon. Member was not included in that Committee. At the same time I wish to say that so far as I am concerned I am perfectly satisfied that Government had no motive whatever in not including that Member in the Committee, but on the other hand I am sorry to think that he was not even approached. The question this Council has to decide to-day is whether it is within the privileges of a Member to expect such an appointment. It seems to me that is something which should occupy the attention of the Council. I am entirely in agreement with the view that if a Member of this Council tables a motion for an inquiry into any Department that Member, with all due respect to the discretionary power of the Governor, would be entitled to a seat on that Committee on the ground that he would be then given an opportunity to fully explore the complaints that led to his motion.

As far as I am concerned I have no particular reference to make about the personnel of the Committee, although my humble opinion is that there are some people who should properly have been included, but the appointment was entirely at the discretion of the Governor. Some Members will probably say that they would have liked to have seen a couple of ladies on the Committee, especially as there was so much talk about children and nurses in connection with the Public Hospital. But when the mover of a motion for the appointment of a Committee is not asked to serve on that Committee I agree with the hon. Member that it is a violation of the privileges of the Council which every Unofficial Member should endeavour to uphold. For that reason I beg to second the motion.

Mr. WILLS: I am not saying very much. All I say is that I agree with the

views expressed by the two previous speakers.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I also do not propose to say very much, except that I do not think there is any Member of this Council who is more jealous of the privileges of the Unofficial Members than I am. To the best of my knowledge, since I have been a Member of this House, there has been no instance where the mover of a motion for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry has not been included in the personnel of that Committee. I do not know Government's reason for not including the hon. Member in the personnel of the Medical Committee, but I am quite sure Your Excellency was not actuated by any ulterior motive because all the Members of the Council are aware of your high appreciation of the services of the hon. Member for Berbice River.

While we are on the subject of privileges I think the hon. Member for Georgetown North asked earlier in the session who was the Senior Elected Member, and Your Excellency promised to go into the matter. May I remind Your Excellency of it and express the hope that we will get an early reply? Committees and Commissions are becoming of everyday occurrence, and in the next few days I will give notice of questions in regard to how many Commissions have been appointed, the names of members and their attendance. (Laughter). I expect that in the matter of attendance there will be a good deal of heart-burning because some members seem to me to be selected by Government to sit on nearly every Committee that is appointed. I am not at all anxious to be one of those who sit on all Committees because I think they are greatly overdone. The appointment of Committees in most cases means the shelving of the matter. The report of the Committee is pigeon-holed, and in two or three months most people forget that such a Committee ever sat.

A Commission has been appointed to inquire into conditions in Essequibo. I am not going to quarrel because my name does not figure among the personnel. I am very glad it does not, but I will have the privilege to give evidence, I hope, and I will be quite satisfied with that. But I do say that within my recollection the

invariable rule has been that the mover of a motion for a Committee or Commission of inquiry has always been included in its personnel, and I would be interested to know why the hon. Member for Berbice River has been excluded from this Committee.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I also rise to support the motion which I think was brought that this Council should decide whether it is the privilege of the mover of a motion for the appointment of a Committee of inquiry to be appointed to that Committee. It is desirable that the question should be settled once and for all. I think it is in the interest of any inquiry that the Member who asked for the inquiry should be included in the personnel of the Committee. I presume that Government had the best intentions in leaving the hon. Member out of the Committee, but I think it would serve a good purpose if this Council is made aware whether it is the privilege of a Member who moves a motion for the appointment of a Committee to be included in its personnel.

Mr. LUCKHOO : The object of the motion is to get an expression of opinion from the Council whether it necessarily follows that the mover of a motion for the appointment of a Committee should be included in its personnel. We are all very jealous of the privileges of Elected Members, and I take it that having heard the views of hon. Members Your Excellency will take it as an expression of their opinion as to what should be done in future. I do not suggest for a moment that there was any intentional omission of the hon. Member, but it seems to me an unfortunate omission. The hon. Member is not seeking redress for any personal grievance but wishes to establish a principle and get a ruling by the Council.

With respect to the point as to who is the Senior Unofficial Member of the Council I do not think we should engage in any seniority tangle. I do not claim to be the Senior Elected Member of the Council, but I think the point might be decided by Your Excellency so that we can determine who is the Senior Member.

As regards the selection of the personnel of the Committee, I observe that two private practitioners have been included,

and I take it those men have had practical experience of the work of the Medical Department. The point to be decided is whether we can claim it as a matter of right or as a privilege of the House, or whether the appointment of the mover of a motion to a Committee is in the absolute discretion of the Governor.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I propose to deal briefly with the motion. In my opinion there has been no violation of any privilege of Members of the Council. The appointment of a Committee is entirely a matter for the Governor of the Colony, and not a word has been said this morning to support the claim that it is the absolute privilege of the mover to be appointed a member of the Committee. The rights and privileges of Members of the Council are set out in the various Laws and Rules of the Council, and I know of no Rule which says that the mover of a motion for the appointment of a Committee is entitled to a seat on that Committee. In this particular instance I can give the hon. Member the assurance that there was no ulterior motive whatever in not appointing him to be a member of the Committee. These Committees give a considerable amount of trouble to organise. It is essential that we should have on these Committees members who are willing to serve and able to attend the various meetings of the Committees. I can assure the hon. Member that there was no intention to slight him. Government cannot admit that the moving of a motion for the appointment of a Committee entitles a Member to a seat on that Committee. The statement has been made by hon. Members that during their time in the Council it has always been the practice. Whether that is so or not I am not prepared to dispute, but even that would not entitle a Member to say that it is an absolute right or privilege of his, or that if his name is omitted, any of the privileges of the Unofficial Members of the Council have been violated.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I am pleased to hear Government, through its official mouth-piece, say that there was no intention on its part to violate any principle or deliberately leave me out, but I do not think that is an answer. However, I must take Government at its word. But I cannot understand the argument of the

acting Colonial Secretary, who happens to be a lawyer like myself, when he says that this thing has been going on in and out of season. Against that there is the evidence of one hon. Member who has been a Member of this House for 24 years, that this is the only instance he can remember. If the Colonial Secretary had been in another place he would have been the first to speak about custom. If all the laws to be observed were put in writing the world would not be able to contain the books. The question of seniority never came into my mind at all. I mentioned it incidentally. After what the Colonial Secretary has said I need not press for a division on the motion. The Unofficial Members are satisfied with the assurance of Government, and I am satisfied at having brought the matter to the notice of the Council.

Motion withdrawn.

PENSIONS REGULATIONS, 1933.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I beg to move:—

THAT Government be requested to prepare forthwith, for the consideration of this Council, a Bill to amend Regulation 17 of the Pensions Regulations, 1933, under Ordinance 20 of 1933, with respect to the allowances to officers who have served fifteen years in a non-pensionable office.

I brought this motion hoping to get Government's sympathy. Government knows the situation that has arisen as mention was made of it before. The acting Colonial Treasurer was very kind to point out to me Section 17 of the Pensions Ordinance, 1933, which he thought would meet the case. Of course I excuse the hon. Member because he is not a lawyer, but in law every syllable is given its intrinsic value. Section 17 (1) states:—

“In special cases any person holding a non-pensionable office who after the commencement of this Ordinance retires in circumstances in which he might have been granted a pension if he had held a pensionable office may if he has not less than fifteen years continuous service in the Colony be granted an annual allowance not exceeding two-thirds of the pension that he might have been granted had he been employed in a pensionable office.”

That, the Colonial Treasurer felt, would meet the case of persons who are not employed in a pensionable office and that there was no need for such persons to be apprehensive. But those two words “special cases,” mean more than the rest

of the section. They mean that when such a person retires he will have to appeal to Government who will very probably appeal to the Head of his Department who may be a new man and will have to look at the defaulters' sheet. He may find that the officer had been fined 24 cents for smoking cigarettes during office hours, or reprimanded for arriving at office 5 minutes late. A list of such offences over 20 years would look very formidable to a person who did not know they were all trivialities. Then he is told that he cannot be given a pension on the face of his record. I do not think that is a position in which any person who has served Government should find himself. In nine cases out of ten, if this section is applied, an officer would get nothing at all. If Government is really sincere in dealing with these men I think those three words “In special cases” should be removed. I do not think they were put there intentionally. When the section was drafted the period was 15 years. I think it was changed last year to 20 years.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon recess.

Mr. ELEAZAR (resuming): When the Council adjourned I had said all I had to say and was just making a final appeal to Your Excellency. All I am pleading for is the deletion of those words “In special cases,” which will not harm anybody. I think after a man has served 20 years all his sins should be forgiven him, and he should be given a pension without further consideration. If Government deleted those words it would be doing a lasting service to those who are really deserving.

Mr. WILLS: I beg to second the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps it might save the time of the Council if the Colonial Treasurer replied now and dealt with the matter from Government's point of view. It may not be necessary for other Members to speak.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): In the interval I have been endeavouring to ascertain the origin of the words “In special cases,” which the hon. Member has complained of. I find that with the Bill which was put before the Council in 1933

there was published an explanatory memorandum which specially noted that the words "In special cases," had been added to Regulation 17(1). As the hon. Member is a lawyer and was present during all the debates when the Bill was before the Council I take it that he must have given all attention when the explanation was offered. Therefore I feel there was deliberate intention on the part of Government in putting those words in, to make the grant of a pension or award of an annual allowance not automatic. The Council is aware that pensions cannot be granted as an absolute right, nor can an allowance be granted as an absolute right. Government intended to obtain some power to award such allowances when they were fully earned by reason of meritorious service.

I may say that in the two or three cases that have arisen since the passing of this Ordinance a very generous interpretation has been placed on those words, and no one has yet failed to earn a pension by reason of not having given meritorious service. But I am quite prepared to agree with the hon. Member that perhaps some phraseology which is capable of more precise interpretation than "In special cases" should be used. I am not prepared to say now what that phraseology should be, but it should be some phrase which would give Government power to refuse the award in a case where an officer or person has not given satisfactory service. In the case of a public officer there is a section in the Ordinance which empowers the Government either to reduce or not grant a pension at all if his conduct has been such as to warrant such a course. Therefore in a section dealing with annual allowances there should be similar provision.

I agree that some precise words other than in "In special cases" might be used, and if the hon. Member would, with the permission of his seconder, withdraw his motion Government would undertake to consider the question very carefully and arrive at some more satisfactory phraseology than is in the Ordinance at present. That would help not only those persons whom it is intended to help but those who have to administer the Ordinance, because we ourselves might find some difficulty at some later stage in definitely stating

whether or not some person is entitled to a pension. Perhaps the hon. Member will agree to withdraw his motion on the undertaking given.

THE PRESIDENT: I appreciate the hon. Member's action in drawing Government's attention to this matter, but I think the hon. Member also appreciates the difficulty as explained by the Colonial Treasurer. If the hon. Member would be satisfied to leave it as it is Government would look into the matter.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I will have to do that because there is nothing else I can do. (Laughter).

ELECTION OF VILLAGE CHAIRMEN.

The next item on the Order Paper was the following motion by Mr. WILLS:—

WHEREAS by section 34 (2) of the Local Government Ordinance, Chapter 84, the power to appoint Chairmen of the several Village Councils is vested in the Local Government Board;

And Whereas in his Minute No. 2 on Local Government and Administration, dated the 6th December, 1931, addressed to the Legislative Council by Governor Sir E. B. Denham, intimation was given (page 4, para. 1) that Government had approved of the Village Committees (Councils) having the power to elect their own Chairmen;

And Whereas the Village Councils, in consequence of the said intimation, have been exercising the right of electing their own Chairmen;

And Whereas it is desirable that the practice of the Village Councils in electing their own Chairmen as aforesaid should be consolidated by, and have the sanction of law:

Be it, therefore, Resolved,—That this Council recommends to Government the amendment of the Local Government Ordinance, Chapter 84, to provide for the Village Councils electing their own Chairmen, and that such amendment be introduced to this Council in time to permit its being passed into law before the New Village Councils enter upon their office for the year 1935 as provided by section 65 (2) of the Local Government Ordinance, Chapter 84.

THE PRESIDENT: Before the hon. Member moves his motion, perhaps if the Colonial Secretary made an announcement it might not be necessary for the hon. Member to move it because the point raised has already been met.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In connection with the motion by the hon. Member a Bill has been drafted dealing with the election of Village Councils, in which provision has been made along the

lines of his motion. That Bill will have to be submitted first of all to the Secretary of State, and in the circumstances I would suggest that the hon. Member withdraw his motion. I might read Clause 7 (1) of the Bill which says:—

“ Each village council shall elect one of their number to be chairman for the ensuing year.”

I think that will cover all that the hon. Member desires.

Mr. WILLS: I beg to express my deep appreciation, and the appreciation of the village authorities, of the expeditious manner in which Government has handled this matter. It is an important matter, and I am sure that the country will repose that confidence in Government that Government deserves. I need not say any more because the matter has been well covered by the proposed Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: I appreciate the remarks of the hon. Member, but the matter has not been quite so expeditiously dealt with as he thinks. Government has been trying to deal adequately with the question of village elections since 1925. (Laughter).

Motion withdrawn.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPERIAL INSTITUTIONS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 8 of the 20th of December, 1934, this Council approves of the insertion in the Estimates of Expenditure of contributions to the undermentioned Imperial Institutions:—

- (a) \$528 per annum as from the year 1934 towards the maintenance of the work of Imperial Agricultural Bureaux and of the Imperial Economic and Shipping Committee; and
- (b) \$192 as one payment in respect of the period 1st October, 1933, to 31st March, 1935, towards the work of the Farnham House Parasite Laboratory, the Biological Field Station (Stored Products Research) Slough, and the Low Temperature Research Stations at Cambridge, East Malling and Aberdeen.

The reasons for this motion are clearly set out in Message No. 8 which has been communicated to the Council, and I do not think I can usefully add anything to what has been set out.

Mr. SMELLIE seconded.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Have we been carrying out these obligations, or are they new commitments?

THE PRESIDENT: The position is that these donations have been paid, and the purpose of the motion is to give them some continuity. The Council will now undertake to pay these sums over a period of years rather than make an annual payment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Paragraph 4 of the Message states:—

“ The work of the Imperial Bureaux is also well known to this Government and Members will doubtlessly recollect the passing of Resolution No. XV. of the 6th of December, 1929, approving of the contribution by this Colony of \$480 per annum for a period of 5 years towards the work of the Bureaux. This contribution was, however, discontinued after 1933.”

We are asked to resume it and to contribute \$528.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I wonder if we can afford to make these *largesses* at the present time. We do not hope to get a single stiver in return—no benefit whatever. We must be just before we are generous. The Imperial Agricultural Bureau is costing us a lot already. It seems to me just another addition to the \$118,000 we are paying on this side. We are playing with money which we have not got. The Secretary of State wants us to do lots of things which we know we cannot afford to do. I can hardly conceive any Unofficial Member of the Council sanctioning a payment of this kind.

Motion carried.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1935.

Mr. AUSTIN: Year in and year out this Department comes in for very severe criticism, but I do not think the strictures passed upon it are altogether deserved. I view it from this point: that we have this huge Department in a yet undeveloped

country, and I take it that if development is to come along the lines that Government and the Authorities at Home wish, we have to provide the technical staff to visit the interior, and look after the rice and sugar industries and other agricultural industries, so that when the call comes we may be in a position to produce such goods and agricultural stuff that may be wanted. As a Water Street sugar planter I want to pay a tribute to the Department for the very able way it assists the sugar industry. (Hear, hear). On occasions we have been generally able to secure an officer as expeditiously as possible to look after any disease that may be attacking the sugar cane, but the sugar industry is not the only pebble on the beach. The other industries have to be looked after as well. Our late Governor, Sir Edward Denham, made no secret of it—in fact it was common knowledge that he thought the time had come to curtail the expenditure on this Department. He spoke about that in many ways, and although I am not against the estimate, except one item, I certainly think that the new item introduced above the line—the Plant Breeder—might be put below the line for 1935 if the officer is wanted, and at the end of the year, if the new Governor or Colonial Secretary thinks it advisable that he should be kept on we would then consider whether he should be placed above the line. In the meantime I suggest to the Director that the salary of the officer be continued as it was in 1934.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I spoke at some length on the activities of the Department when the Members of the Council had the opportunity of replying to the Budget Speech of the Colonial Secretary at the opening of the session. At that time I was at pains to point out and to quote figures showing an increase in the personal emoluments of this Department during the past 10 years. Those figures are well known to Members of the Council and I do not propose to repeat them to-day, but I would invite the Director of Agriculture to pay some attention to the remarks I made on that occasion and, if possible, justify the expenditure on that Department for this year. There can be no doubt about it that the increase in the personal emoluments of this Department is going up by leaps and bounds, and will go up year after year. As has been

pointed out, we will be asked to put another officer above the line, an officer who came to this country three years ago on special duty, and whose salary was paid by the Colonial Development Fund. But because the amount that was voted for the salary of the officer has expired at the end of December, 1934, the Head of the Department considers it necessary—in fact he considers it very important that the services of the officer should be retained, and for that reason he has placed him on the Estimate as a charge against the working of the Department.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Member not to make a general statement. When we come to the item about which he is speaking—the Plant Breeder—he can deal with it. We are now considering item 2, and the discussion must be more or less confined to the item. It seems to me that the hon. Member is making a repetition of what he said before.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I only meant to take advantage of this occasion to cover the entire ground and make my criticisms in one speech as regards the working of the Department. If your Excellency desires that I should bob up every now and then as an item is reached I shall do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: That would be the correct procedure.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: That is the correct procedure and I accept your ruling, but it will delay the proceedings of the Council if you restrict my remarks to the general outline of the estimates.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will allow the hon. Member to speak if he gives me an undertaking that he will not say what he is saying now when the item comes up.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: It is merely for that reason that I wish to cover the entire ground. I was going to say that the question this Council has to consider is whether the services of this officer would be required—whether there would be any justification for him to continue the work he was specifically sent out to do. From the report of this officer to the Department for 1933 it is evident that his work in this country is completed. At least that is how I interpret what he says. He

is supposed to have come out here specifically in connection with rice, and his report for 1933 covers exhaustively the work he has been doing in that respect. I wish to make reference to one or two items in his report. On page 62, paragraph 8, he states:—"This disease ('Man-ricc' disease) presents a striking appearance in the field, as the affected tillers shoot up above the healthy plants, turn pale green and then die off." In paragraph 9 he states:—"This table supports the results of previous tests, namely, that the long grained varieties produce lower quality rice than the medium length types." That disposes of that subject. In that paragraph he tells us something we knew about long before he came here. Paragraph 13 states:—"Although the manured plots gave a higher yield than the control, the increase was not significant." In paragraph 18 he writes:—"The highest yield obtained was at close spacing with an application of sulphate of ammonia, and amounted to 3,088 lbs. per acre. Even this increase, however, was not remunerative." He has practically completed his work.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): I would ask the hon. Member to carry on to pages 66 and 67 and thereafter.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would like to remind the hon. Member that he will have an opportunity to reply. If pages 66 and 67 support his case—I do not think they will—he may take advantage of them. I do not want to cut the ground under his feet. I have read the report very carefully indeed. I have also read his report issued as late as December in the Agricultural Journal, and even in that he does not tell us anything we do not know. If that is so we have no more use for that gentleman. We should thank him for the service he has given for three years and bid him goodbye. The suggestion by my hon. friend to put him below the line is only the thin edge of the wedge. He has been here since 1932, and up to 1934 his salary was paid by the Colonial Development Fund. When he is put on the Estimate below the line the Colony will have to pay him, and in 1936 we will find him squeezing himself up above the line, and when he gets there, amen.

Most of the criticism against the

working of the Department is on account of its top-heaviness. There are too many experts. That is how the personal emoluments have been increased from \$32,000 in 1927 to \$66,000 in 1933. Government has charged Members of the Council with not introducing means by which the country could be developed. Members are afraid to make suggestions. I would not be surprised, if anything comes out of the banana industry, to find that we are called upon to have a banana expert to brush away the Panama disease that we hear so much about. We will probably also get a citrus expert. We want a little more work and a little less red tape. Where do these experts come from? We cannot find any room for our own people. Not very long ago I had the misfortune of having to join in a debate in connection with a case in which a stranger to the Colony was given employment in this Department in preference to one of our local men. I have reason to believe that even up to the present moment that youngster has not even had fulfilled a promise that his application to Government would be considered. Yet we know that there are other employees in the Department who, with less experience gained only lately, have been able to obtain lucrative jobs, while those who, perhaps with equal qualifications, are not yet sure of obtaining situations that are equal to the qualifications they possess.

That is what is operating in this Department. That is what Members of this Council are always complaining about. That is the main stricture that is being levelled at this Department and will continue to be levelled. Until Members of the Council feel satisfied that the officers in the Department are pulling their weight criticisms will always be levelled at the Head of the Department from this side of the House. At the present moment one of the most important officers of the Department is engaged on other work. A little later on this Council will be faced with the question whether the salary of that officer is being borne by his present employers. Government has already given the assurance that the work that is being done at the present time by the officer concerned will not form a charge on this Government, and I have every reason to believe Government will not break faith from that promise.

A great deal is being made about the rice industry. I agree with the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Seaford that the rice industry now needs, instead of a Plant Breeder, some protection in the markets where rice is being sent. Representations are being made to the neighbouring Islands' Government to grant a preference to our rice, but nothing has resulted. The Ottawa Conference is in the way, and probably something else. If we can get protection for our rice industry obviously we would be much better off. The Plant Breeder will not help us to grow another bag of rice, or help us to get better prices. Further I agree with the general statement that although this is an agricultural country we can hope to expand very little unless we have our irrigation and drainage problems looked after. One would be foolhardy enough to think that we can do much more than we are doing at present until these problems are solved. It must be heart-rending to those people who year after year have had to suffer loss either from drought or flood. That is a problem we should tackle. We have land in the Mahaicony-Abary district. The cost of the scheme is something in the neighbourhood of \$120,000, but look at the return. Instead of reaping 60,000 bags of padi we would probably get 120,000 bags, an increase of 60,000 bags of padi from an area which is entirely dependent on drainage conditions. That is where Government should turn its attention to try to do something that will improve the land for those people who are at present engaged on it. Let us have all the rice we can grow and all the bananas, and when the trouble commences then bring in the experts. In deference to Your Excellency's wish I shall only make one or two observations on some other items which I not have touched upon in the course of these remarks.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have given a good deal of latitude in the manner in which this debate has been conducted, and I think we should abide by the usual Rules of the Council, and that is to make remarks on each item. Each item is a motion and should be dealt with separately.

Item I (13)—1 Plant Breeder (\$2,160 to \$2,880 by \$120), \$2,760.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move the deletion

of this item. I cannot find language adequate to express what I wish to say. I consider it a gross insult and want of regard for the opinions of the Elected section of this Council. Here is a Department that is mounting by leaps and bounds and subject to severe criticism, and every year we are saddled with another officer. The explanatory note says —

“In view of the importance of the rice industry to the Colony it is considered essential that the services of a Plant Breeder should be retained for continuous selection and breeding work to maintain and improve the standard of rice. The salary of the Plant Breeder has been paid for from September, 1931, from a grant by the Colonial Development Fund which will be exhausted at the end of 1934.”

We had Sir Wilfred Beveridge here to investigate scientific conditions in the Colony. Were we called upon after his investigation and report to engage his services? We have had Mr. Wynn-Williams here to investigate education generally. Was the Department of Education incompetent to carry out his finding? In the Department of Agriculture we have an “ologist” in every line, but we get not a blade more rice. The Plant Breeder was sent out to assist the Department which, with all its elaborate equipment, could not conduct this investigation. He came and saw and has reported what he has found. He has not reported a single instance in which he wants more time in the Colony to be able to decide anything. The major portion of his investigations concerned the colour of the grain and the leaves. He has not said that a particular variety would give a better yield, or that there would be a better market for a particular type of rice. A Fourth Standard boy paid a salary of \$15 per month and sent along with the Plant Breeder would be able to teach the whole Department. I do not think Government should put us to the trouble of having to vote on this item. I do not happen to know this officer at all. If it became necessary for him to remain in the Colony longer, why wasn't that fact made known to the Colonial Development Committee? Why wasn't the Committee asked to continue its good offices by allowing him to remain for another year to complete his investigations? It is monstrous to say that a Department which is so ably manned by experts requires a special expert to breed rice. Isn't it a scandal? If this officer is necessary then the Director of Agriculture does not know

his job. Keep him on and let the Director go.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. Member to have some consideration for the Council. After all he dealt with this matter at great length a few days ago. I think he has said all he has to say. He has admitted that he knows nothing about rice. I think rice planters know the value of this officer's services, and I think the hon. Member should leave it to the people who know about rice. I would ask the hon. Member not to waste the time of the Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Rice planters alone have not got to pay him; we all have to pay him. I eat rice and I know that it is sometimes very stink on the table, and the Department is not able to tell you what to do to prevent the stench. I know why it is all broken up and what to do, but the Department is not able to find that out yet. I see that Government is anxious to push this thing through because the Electives are in the minority. I suggest that if the officer has not completed his investigation the Colonial Development Committee should be asked to keep him on, although it would not be quite true to tell them that. (Laughter). I think the action of the Director in such matters robs him of the little bit of praise he would have got for some things he has done. It would be monstrous for me to say that he has done absolutely nothing, but he has not done sufficient for the money we are spending, and he is continually adding to it. If Government would relieve us of this officer Government would earn the respect of the community and the Department would have the respect of the community. I move the deletion of the item.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I find myself not quite in agreement with my friend the hon. Member for Berbice River. I move an amendment that the item be put below the line. I do not think I can be charged with inconsistency. I said yesterday that owing to the existing conditions of growing padi we would require such a Plant Breeder to maintain the standard of the seed padi because under existing conditions the farmers are unable to get pure-line seed padi because in one year their crop is swamped out and in another it is scorched.

This is an important officer so far as the rice industry is concerned, and I intend to support his retention.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would like to ask the Director whether his Department, previous to 1931, was able to supply the farmers with pure-line seed padi.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Director may be able to supply the hon. Member with the information.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I would be the last person who would like to see the Department of Agriculture abolished. I am fully aware of the abilities of the present Director, but I think this is an item which should never have appeared on the Estimate. I have a recollection that the Agricultural Superintendent for Demerara, Mr. Peterkin, used to do this work. He was sent to British Honduras to instruct them there. He is an efficient officer and one who thoroughly knows his job. He started life as a planter; he was an overseer on the East Bank of the Demerara River. We have his knowledge and valuable experience to go on. If the Colonial Development Committee chooses to send out a man who has special knowledge and can teach men who have been engaged in the rice industry anything, well that is their business. They sent him out, his time has expired, and we ought to thank them for his services. We do not want him any more unless they are good enough to keep him on for another year at their expense.

It is a very unpleasant thing for any of us, and I do not think there is a single Member who wants to put an officer out of bread, but do not let us run away with the idea that the officer is going to be out of bread. The Colonial Development Committee will quickly find a job for him. The question is, does the Colony require him? Can we afford to make him a pensionable officer when everyone is crying out against the heavy burden? I do not agree with what is a compromise, in my opinion, to put him below the line. In my opinion he should either be kept on or he should be told that his services are no longer required here. We cannot afford a luxury of this sort. I would like to know what salary this officer was drawing before he came to the Colony, and what post he occupied. I am afraid that

if the truth were told, that prior to his coming to the Colony he never held any very important position in the Colonial Service of the Empire. I contend that the Department can well do without this officer. In the Deputy Director of Agriculture the Department has a man who has special knowledge in regard to the rice industry, yet we want to add another expert. I cannot stomach this, if I may use a vulgar word.

Mr. WILLS: I happen to move about the country and get in touch with people engaged in the rice business. I would be failing in my duty if I did not record my strong protest against this Plant Breeder being put on the Estimate above the line. As far back as 1930 the Director of Agriculture informed this Council—I was not a Member then but I have a vivid recollection that the Director informed this Council in a printed report that the Department had the Demerara Creole and Blue Stick varieties, which were the only pure-line padi bred, and that they were distributed by the Department. Now if in 1930, previous to the arrival of this gentleman in the Colony, the Department had a person or persons capable of distributing to rice planters a variety of padi which was pure and would give an increased yield, it seems to me unnecessary to retain the services of this officer who, after three years, must have imparted some knowledge to his subordinates. The hon. Member for Western Essequibo rightly drew the attention of the Council to the Deputy Director of Agriculture. He is an officer who, I understand, possesses special knowledge of the rice industry, and was the officer who, prior to 1930, was responsible for getting pure-line seed padi distributed in this country.

Professor DASH: He was not here prior to 1930.

Mr. WILLS: Whoever it was, if the Director himself was responsible in 1930 for distributing to rice planters and millers pure-line padi I think he should continue to do it. As far back as 1931 the Director of Agriculture told this Council that rice was a major crop in this Colony. Is that true to-day? The rice industry is in a state of chaos. Are we going to burden the industry with this Plant Breeder? It seems to me that the Director means to

to keep him. Perhaps at the end of the time we will see his title changed to some "ologist."

Mr. SEAFORD: I am sorry to have to repeat that it is a pity the Director did not explain the matter. It might have saved a lot of talk and perhaps a lot of useless talk too. I am prepared to be guided by what the rice people say in the matter. I do not profess to know anything about rice. If they consider the Plant Breeder necessary I will vote in favour of the item. If they say he is not necessary I will vote against it. I think he might have taken the place of some other gentleman on the staff. I think Government has to some extent brought on its own head the accusation that the Department is overstaffed. Two officers from this Department have been taken away and sent to the interior for three months. One of them has as much work as he can possibly do. In fact he cannot get through all his work, and a private firm in this Colony, realising that fact, is paying for an assistant to that gentleman. Government takes officers away from the Department and gives them extraneous work to do although we are told that they are absolutely necessary to carry on the work for which they are employed. I think in cases where members of the staff of a Department are sent out on other duties the least Government might do is to inform the Council of the matter.

Government did not treat this Council with due respect when it spends money which has not been voted on the Estimate. Government has also increased officers' salaries without the knowledge of this Council. It is realised that Government has the power to override the decisions of the Council, but I claim that there are certain rights and privileges of the Council which should be maintained. I feel rather strongly on that point because, if Government is to be treated with the respect everyone desires, I feel that this Council should be treated with equal respect in the matter. (Hear, hear). I am not blaming the Department of Agriculture for that because possibly they have no say in the matter and have to carry out instructions. It seems to me rather comical to say that these people are essential for the work they have to do and then they are sent to do other work during 25 per cent. of the year. I was

hoping we would be able to show a reduction in other ways because a large amount of the time of the Department has been taken up in running the Bush Lot scheme and Anna Regina. I think those places have been sold, and perhaps the services of one of those officers might be curtailed on that account.

Coming back to the Plant Breeder, I have made inquiries in various parts of the Colony, and the argument some people have put up is "Why do we want to breed better rice, there is no market for No. 1 or super rice? It is no use getting better rice for which there will be no market." That is one side. Others have told me that what this gentleman is going to do is to grow stronger rice which will give greater returns. I do not know which is correct, and I am entirely in the hands of the people who grow rice and prefer to be guided by their opinions, rather than by those who admit that they know nothing about rice. Perhaps the Hon Mr. Walcott might give us further information on the point.

Mr. WALCOTT: I am delighted in thinking that the Government has at last shown some concern about the rice industry as to think that a Plant Breeder is necessary. I presume that three years ago Government thought so, and that is why it accepted the kind offer of the Imperial Government. I suppose that having a lot of the Colonial Development Fund available, the Imperial Government thought it could find a place for this very estimable young gentleman, and sent him here to help us and relieve an officer of the Department for other duties. As far as I know he has done excellent work, but we have been getting his services for nothing, and the question now arises whether we can afford to pay for those services, or whether we have not got another officer already in the Service to fill his place. At the moment we are not under any obligation to this officer. Our obligation is to the Imperial Government to whom our thanks are due for the free services of the officer. I presume that the Government is up to the present time not pledged to keep this officer. But if the Government is in no way pledged, and the Director of Agriculture is satisfied that he has no one who can do the work as well as this officer, I would be satisfied to vote

his salary for 1935 below the line but not above the line, and to make it perfectly clear in doing so, that we are doing it as a temporary measure, and that there is no reason to believe that it will be permanent.

I know that prior to the arrival of this officer we had an officer in the Department who did excellent work in producing a pure seed padi. We owe him quite a lot. I have no doubt that he worked under the able guidance of the Director of Agriculture. There is no doubt that we should have someone doing this work if the rice industry is to progress. If the officer doing this work can confine himself to increasing the yield and strengthening the stalk of the padi so that it will not fall when rain falls—it costs no more to produce a first-class padi than it does to produce a poor padi—and even if we receive no higher price in the markets of the West Indies, we should certainly get a further increase in the yield which would make it really cheaper to produce this first quality padi than the padi we have been producing until recently and even now.

There is no doubt about it that we are up against very severe competition from the East, and if our rice industry is to continue and is to increase we must produce the very best padi possible, so that we can compete with the East in regard to quality. There is absolutely no doubt about it that to-day the Burma market is supplying what is known as cargo rice of much better quality than they did 8 or 9 years ago, and we have to meet that competition. By an increased yield which the Department of Agriculture is hoping to bring about, we should be able to produce rice cheaper, and be in a better position to meet that competition than to-day.

The first question to be considered is whether full advantage is taken of the work of the Plant Breeder, and not only of the Plant Breeder but other officers of the Department. I know from personal experience that the average farmer thinks he knows all about everything. You show him a new variety of padi and in his ignorance he says he can produce as good as that. He tries to produce from his own seed the same result as produced from the specially selected seed. The result is obvious to anybody. Unless our farmers are prepared to benefit from the work

which the Department of Agriculture is being paid to try to do for them it is a waste of money to have a Department of Agriculture, (Hear, hear), and for that reason I agree with some of the remarks made by my friends that the money is being wasted. I speak in all consideration for the farmers. I only hope they will take my remarks to heart, and instead of trying to poo-poo the idea that they can be taught, they should realise that better educated men than they have found out that they can benefit from science, and that scientific knowledge properly applied to practical farming can make a very great difference in their returns.

It seems to me that this item has the unlucky number, 13, but I am prepared to vote for it below the line for a year. It should be clearly understood, however, that this Council expects Government, if it finds that there is someone already in the Department who is capable of carrying on these experiments, to utilise him and not put someone else on the Fixed Establishment. We are paying too much at the present time for our Government and the sooner the Government and everybody realises that the better it would be. We cannot go on increasing taxation. The Colonial Secretary says that Government cannot go on. We have to do something to bring down the cost of Administration. We can never really get our production increased until we have a lower taxation, because a man has got to get enough to live on. The more taxes he has to pay the more he has to earn, and if he cannot produce his stuff at a competitive figure with other countries he is not going to produce, and Government will have to put him on the dole. That is what we are going to face

Professor DASH : There are one or two points on which I would like to have had the opportunity to make a few remarks, but as we are taking these items one by one it seems to me that I shall be unable to refer to them.

THE CHAIRMAN : I will give the hon. Member latitude in replying to the debate.

Professor DASH : I do not want to go over old ground. We have a great deal of this discussion every year. Certain hon.

Members indulge in loose talk, which is the only thing I can term it. Loose talk impresses no one except those who indulge in its use. I think it is generally recognised that the Department of Agriculture in this Colony has a very up-hill task. There is no question about that.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I wish to call the hon. Member to order and to ask Your Excellency to say whether he is justified in characterising an expression of opinion by Members of this Council as loose talk. I think it is unparliamentary.

Professor DASH : I had no intention of offending hon. Members because I suppose most of us do at times indulge in loose talk, but one or two Members of the Council do so a little more often than they really should, and in respect of certain things which their commonsense must tell them they are wrong about.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I again ask Your Excellency to rule on what the hon. Member has said.

THE CHAIRMAN : I may remind the hon. Member that people who throw stones should not live in glass houses.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I quite appreciate that ; I learned that as a boy. I say only those who are competent to throw stones should do it.

THE CHAIRMAN : I submit that the Director is quite able to reply to remarks or stones thrown by the hon. Member.

Mr. ELEAZAR : If he is able to prove that it is loose talk I shall be able to answer him. General remarks do not carry us any further.

Professor DASH : It is significant that although we get no thanks from certain hon. Members in this Council who purport to be in touch with cultivators, those very cultivators are the ones who frequently express appreciation of the efforts of the Department in what we are doing for them. A great deal was said about the floods for example. The Department has certainly done all it possibly could in connection with resuscitating the flood areas. Our distribution list shows that. We have distributed 3,226 bags of padi, and we have on hand for further distribu-

tion another 2,700 bags. In the ground provision areas we have distributed something like nearly 1,200 bags, and bundles of cuttings peas, beans, banana suckers, nursery trees and so on. We have loaned farmers in the Pomeroun about \$4,000, and spent a great deal of money in one way or another in connection with the floods. I do not wish to go into that too fully. I merely mention it in reply to those Members who said we had done nothing.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Isn't that Flood Relief money you are talking about?

Professor DASH: A part of it is. It is supplied by Government anyway. So far as the expenditure on the Department is concerned I think it will be agreed that it is a small fraction of the whole budget. After all we are not a commercial Department. Our stock-in-trade consists of a staff of investigators, so that it is not fair to make comparisons on the basis of expenditure on staff in relation to other charges. If the estimates are studied carefully it will be found that certain revenue comes back to the Department under certain heads, Rice Grading, Cane Agronomist and so on. I would also remind hon. Members that since the Department was organised we have taken on additional duties in respect of rice grading. We have also taken on the Co-operative Credit Banks, so that our total expenditure might show a slight increase whereas on agriculture proper we have been subject in 1932 to 10 per cent. cuts, and when the whole expenditure is analysed I think you will find that the expenditure has not increased to the same extent as some Members have depicted. The expenditure of most Agricultural Departments has increased with post-war activities. When I was Assistant Director in Barbados some years ago the total annual expenditure did not exceed £4,000. To-day it ranges between £15,000 and £20,000 for one industry alone, namely the sugar industry. If we are to continue to live by agriculture we must support the Department which is charged with research and investigation and extension work in connection therewith. I do not think that some hon. Members give sufficient study to the agricultural problems of the Colony. Some of them we hardly ever see. I do not think they know where we live, and they come and criticise us with-

out giving careful study to all the factors that we have to deal with and the problems we have to investigate. During the last few years our production figures have gone up enormously in every direction. It is true that last year we had a difficult year on account of the floods. I question that any Colony in the British tropics has shown the increase in production we have shown. I think that covers the ground so far as any general remarks are concerned.

I come now for a moment to the *piece de resistance*, the Plant Breeder. I certainly do not desire to add one penny to the expenditure of the Colony or the Department of Agriculture. I think hon. Members who have experience of my work in other directions can testify to that fact. But certain things are essential if we are to keep going. It is no use looking back to 1924 or 1926. We were just marking time then, and hon. Members know that very well. We have brought up to date this Department of Agriculture which certainly deserves a little more credit than many hon. Members would like to give it. I know that some Members do not appreciate scientific work, and they do not take the trouble to worry about it and find out the careful steps which have to be taken in connection with it. I am sorry for them, but it is unfortunate that while we are trying to do our best there is this type of nagging going on every time the Agricultural estimates come up. In 1928, soon after I came to the Colony and began to look into the re-organisation of things, I think it was Sir Gordon Guggisberg who said I would certainly need someone to breed a better type of rice. I replied that I would, but not at the moment, as I would like to go through the material we had at the Experimental Station, to seek out data and begin work on it in a modest way until we see where we are going before the services of a Plant Breeder would be required. So for the first couple of years that is what we did. Reference has been made to one officer who did very good work in that connection. He and I worked very closely in those early days. That officer would be the last to think he is a Plant Breeder. He is a very good practical agriculturist. Up to 1930 we went along as best we could multiplying seed, but in 1930 it became quite clear that we could make no

further progress with the work of improving varieties and getting new ones for our conditions here and markets abroad unless we had the services of a specialist Plant Breeder. Due representations were made to the Secretary of State, and assistance in the form of a free grant was provided by the Colonial Development Fund not only for the officer in question but for a number of other activities. I think sums totalling \$33,484 were provided. During 1933 we got out a Rice Bulletin for which we have had a large number of applications and a considerable number of appreciations in respect of the work therein recorded. In an introductory note I wrote as follows:—

“It should be remembered that this remarkable progress has been achieved during a period of great economic stress and depression; the last five years have given rise to such troublous times that the tendency has been for industries to collapse, not to expand. It is therefore felt that the industry has a bright future if the efforts to date are not in any way compromised. Research and experiment cannot be prosecuted without adequate staff, funds for the continuity of the work in progress must be assured. In this connection, it may be noted with regret that the term of office of the Plant Breeder, whose post, as previously mentioned, has been provided by the Colonial Development Fund, is due to expire in September, 1934. It is to be hoped that further assistance will be provided from some source to enable the services of this officer to be retained; it is regarded with apprehension that the work on which he is now engaged should suddenly be stopped.”

Sir Edward Denham took the matter up with the Secretary of State, and the following is an extract from the Secretary of State's despatch to the Government:—

“... my Agricultural Adviser has expressed the view that in view of the importance of the rice industry to the colony, the services of a Plant Breeder are permanently required. He considers that continuous selection work and breeding are necessary if the quality of the rice is to be maintained or improved, and has pointed out that the history of the rice industry in the colony has given evidence of the chaotic position which is liable to arise from the mixture of types if supplies of pure-line seed are not evolved and multiplied for the use of growers. This industry he observes, is dependent to a larger degree each year on its export markets, and uniformity of quality, which can only be secured if new races of pure seed are being evolved, tested and multiplied, is essential for the retention of such markets. He has stressed the fact that the British Guiana industry can only hope to meet the increasing competition from cheap producing areas in the East by gradual and steady improvement of its methods of production and by securing the largest acreage yields from the most suitable lands. I concur in his opinion, and I am satisfied that

the services of a Plant Breeder shall be permanently retained in the colony.”

He directed us to place the Plant Breeder on the Fixed Establishment. Here (indicating sample bottles of rice on the table) are a number of our best strains and types illustrating some of the work the Plant Breeder has been doing. It is not such easy work as some hon. Members think. First of all he has to study progeny with mathematical precision and to verify the strains. It is work of a highly scientific nature, and only a specialist officer can carry it through to proper fulfilment. While we want to stress our export markets it is highly impossible to think we are going to maintain them or secure new ones unless we provide types to supply those markets, or to satisfy our own agricultural conditions here. Here is a sample of a new type, D 111, which gave only 4 per cent. of broken grains in the first trial with an Engleberg huller. That is an example of some of the work the Plant Breeder is doing. I would stress the importance of retaining him, and I cannot see at the moment that the expenditure on the Department is likely to be increased in so far as staff is concerned. I cannot see it for the next few years.

The Hon. Mr. Seaford referred to Essequibo. Nothing can be done in Essequibo as far as staff is concerned until the new Governor arrives and has had an opportunity of going fully into it. Hon. Members may rest assured that I will not suggest the employment of officers who are not absolutely necessary for the work in hand. Officers may be called upon to go into various parts of the Colony. I do not think I need stress anything more in connection with the Plant Breeder, and I think I have convinced hon. Members of the necessity for permanently retaining him. Certainly if I had another officer in the Department who I could say is a highly skilled Plant Breeder I would utilize him. Recently an officer was given 9 months leave to go to Harvard to study plant breeding for the benefit of the sugar industry. I do not think if you suggested to the sugar planters that they should stop breeding canes they would have agreed. Why should we do it with regard to rice? I would like to thank the Hon. Mr. Walcott for pointing out our difficulties and giving a practical view of the work that has been carried on.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I shall press for the striking out of the item. The Director has said a good deal but said nothing. He has told us that he reported to the Authorities in England that the officer should be kept in the Colony and they acquiesced. We have not heard whether he asked them to continue to pay him. He has thanked the Hon. Mr. Walcott for helping him. Let the Hon. Mr. Walcott tell us that there is nobody capable of carrying on the work. If Government intends to press the item it is because Government wants to do it, and not because the Director has convinced Government I am still urging that the item should be deleted, but it seems to me that I am not going to get the support of the Council. I think the Hon. Mr. Walcott made a very happy suggestion, that the item be put below the line, and that we have the officer for a year on the distinct understanding that his appointment was not permanent.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Did the Director say that the Plant Breeder's agreement terminated on the 30th of September?

Professor DASH: It ceased at the end of 1934.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Was September ever mentioned?

Professor DASH: It was some time in September, but the Secretary of State approved of his being paid from some surplus sum on the same vote to the end of December when we could put him on the Estimate.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Has the Colonial Development Committee paid this officer out of its funds from September?

Professor DASH: All has been paid from the Colonial Development Fund.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I am very glad to hear that.

Mr. ELEAZAR: What was his salary per month?

Professor DASH: It was practically the same. He is only given one increment here.

Mr. ELEAZAR: What was his salary under the Colonial Development Fund?

Professor DASH: He was on the £500-£550 grade.

Mr. ELEAZAR: That is \$120 per month. I ask that it be carried out at that figure. Why is his salary increased to \$230 by Government straight away?

Mr. SEAFORD: Do I understand that his present salary is \$2,640?

Professor DASH: It is £550. He came on at £500.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I would like to ask the Director whether Mr. Peterkin, the Agricultural Superintendent for the East Coast, is capable of doing this work, and whether he did not do it before the Plant Breeder came to the Colony.

Professor DASH: I think I explained at the opening of my remarks that Mr. Peterkin and I worked together in sorting out the material we had at the Station, and we reached the stage in 1930 when we found we could not progress any more without the services of a highly trained Plant Breeder. It is a highly mathematical and botanical job, and the ordinary man cannot do it. He has to have a special knowledge of cytology and mathematics.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: What is his age?

Professor DASH: I cannot answer that without looking at his papers.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I ask that I be given the age of the officer to-morrow. As far as I understand he is quite a boy, and I am glad to know that we have a budding Napoleon here.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item deleted.

Professor DASH: I beg to move the insertion of a new item as follows:—

Item I (17)—1 Plant Breeder (\$2,160 to \$2,880 by \$120), \$2,760.

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