

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 16th March, 1945.

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir GORDON LETHEM, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon James Lethem, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. O. Pretheroe, M.C., K.C.

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

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

The Hon. J. A. Luckhoo, K.C. (Nominated).

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

The Hon. J. W. Jackson, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin, O.B.E. (Nominated).

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

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

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. A. A. Thorne (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 15th March, 1945, were confirmed after amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

REVISED SALARY SCALES OF ADMINISTRATIVE, PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL OFFICERS.

The PRESIDENT: The first business of the day is the motion standing in the name of the Treasurer touching certain modifications of the revised salary scales of Administrative, Professional and Technical Officers in respect of which Council is being asked to make provision for 1945. I said yesterday that I had been asked to bring this matter forward, and I thought it proper to get this motion through as early as possible as already we are two months in arrears with our financial business. I said that I would sit to-day, and as I was probably leaving Georgetown late this afternoon I would wish to adjourn at 3 o'clock.

I would only say on this motion that it is the result of a great deal of discussion, including certain specific discussions with myself at the Colonial Office in August, and further consideration by the Executive Council here. It is now put before the Legislative Council for approval. If this Council does not approve of these figures, which involve certain additional expenditure, or decides to reduce them that would be in order. That lies with this Council, but with further modifications, additions or changes I would be unable to put through the motion to-day. It would put the consideration of it back for a further period. Therefore, I would suggest that if there are any other questions arising it would be better to defer them, though I hope we have reached finality in this matter. The immediate thing is to get the necessary provision on the budget so that we can pay the salaries.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.

THE NEW RICE MILL.

Mr. ROTH gave notice of the following questions:—

- 1.—With regard to the new rice-mill on order for the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Expansion Scheme, has any person with local experience of rice-milling been to see the type of machinery ordered?
- 2.—Has any representative of the suppliers thereof been here to see local conditions?
- 3.—Is Government satisfied that the new mill on order is suitable for local conditions, especially in view of past experience with the "white rice" mill at Anna Regina, now idle?

PRESIDENT LEAVES THE COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT then left the Chamber and the DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Mr. Woolford) took the Chair.

REVISED SALARY SCALES OF ADMINISTRATIVE, PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL OFFICERS.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Sir, I beg to move:—

That, with reference to His Excellency the Governor's Message No. 29 dated 28th February, 1945, this Council approves of the modifications of the revised salary scales with respect to the posts referred to therein and of the necessary supplementary financial provision being made in departmental estimates for the year 1945.

Council further approves of supplementary provision being made under a single vote for payment of arrears of salary due for the year 1944 to all officers whose salaries have been revised in terms of Council Paper No. 20 of 1944, as adopted and modified by Council.

Hon. Members will recall that when the report of the Committee which dealt with the salaries of the Admin-

istrative, Professional and Technical Officers was issued it was first submitted, with recommendations of the Government, to Members of Council in Finance Committee. At the meeting of the Committee the report was discussed in some detail but no definite conclusions were come to, and eventually the Committee decided to refer the matter for consideration by the full Council. In view of the delay which had already taken place, the report was not put before the Council in the form of a specific motion. Instead, Government presented the recommendations in the form of revisions of the salaries of the posts affected in the Draft Estimates for 1945 which were laid before the Council, and it was in that form that those recommendations were finally accepted by the Council. That is to say, by deliberate changes in the estimates for the current year. But His Excellency was at pains to point out to the Council that, notwithstanding the approval by Council of the revised scales for those officers, effect would not be given to them until the Secretary of State for the Colonies had had an opportunity to consider those proposals and signify his sanction or otherwise of them. The Secretary of State has quite recently communicated his sanction of those revised scales, but with certain suggested modifications. Those modifications were given careful consideration by Government, and with the concurrence of the Executive Council they have been put before Council in the form of recommendations as set out in the Schedule attached to Message No. 29, to which this motion relates.

The modifications take the form of certain suggested increases for a number of posts of what I may term scientific officers, and the reasons for them are that it has now been quite definitely established that this Colony will be unable to obtain officers with the required technical qualifications without some further improvement in

those salary scales. Members will recollect that His Excellency, in his opening remarks to-day, stated that he had had certain discussions in London, and that he had communicated that view to the Officer Administering the Government at the time. If Members would look at the Schedule they would see that the first three items relate to specialist officers of the Department of Agriculture — the Veterinary Surgeon, the Agricultural Economist, and Agricultural Superintendents—and what is proposed in respect of those officers is that the maximum of the salary scales should be increased from \$3,600 to \$3,840 per annum with respect to the first two, and with respect to the Agricultural Superintendents, from \$3,360 to \$3,600 per annum.

The second item relates to the District Engineers of the Public Works Department, and it is proposed to put them on the same scale as the other scientific officers of the Department of Agriculture. It is therefore proposed that their maxima should be increased from \$3,360 to \$3,600 per annum.

The next modification relates to the Medical Department, and Government has been urged to accept the contention that the status of the Senior Physician should be the same as the substantive scale of the post of Surgeon Specialist. That is to say, the Senior Physician's salary should be on the scale \$4,800 x \$120—\$5,760 instead of \$4,320 x \$120—\$4,800 per annum. I may mention that the present Surgeon Specialist, Mr. Grierson, is on a personal salary scale of his own, and this scale put down is the general scale of his successor on the occurrence of a vacancy. Attached to that is the rider that all fees for consulting practice, inside as well as outside the Public Hospital, are to be paid into Government revenue, with a remission of 25% to the consultants. I remember that some discussion arose in

Committee over that particular point, and I feel that that measure is likely to receive a good deal of support. The Director of Medical Services is himself very much in favour of fees being paid into Government revenue and not entirely going into the private pockets of the specialists concerned. Attached to that, of course, is a further rider that the existing specialist staff should be allowed to exercise the option of accepting the new salary scales and conditions governing consulting practice, or of continuing to serve on their present terms and salaries.

The third modification relates to the Geological Department. It is proposed that the Director of Geological Surveys should receive a salary of \$4,800 instead of \$4,220 per annum. It is absolutely impossible to obtain a Director with the qualifications necessary for geological work of the quality required in this Colony, at a salary less than £1,000 per annum, and we think it is only fair that the officer who now holds that post should be given the salary properly attached to it. There are two other modifications. It is proposed that the salary scale of the Senior Geologist should be increased from \$3,120 x \$120—\$3,480 to \$3,120 x \$120—\$4,320, which means an increase of the maximum by £100. In the case of the Geologist it is suggested that his salary should be increased from \$2,400 x \$120—\$2,760 to \$2,400 x \$120—\$3,360.

There are two other items which were not mentioned in the report of the Committee, but which had to be given some consideration. One relates to the office of Superintendent of Prisons. Here again it is a question of getting a proper man. We find it impossible to get a successor to Mr. Bookham if the scale is not revised. Therefore it is suggested that the maximum of the salary scale should be increased from \$3,120 to \$3,600 per annum.

The last item relates to the post of Second Assistant Mechanical Engineer, Transport & Harbours Department which, by the way, is a post on the Fixed Establishment. It is suggested that the salary should be increased from \$2,800 to \$3,120 per annum, which would bring that officer's salary in line with those of similar officers in the Public Works Department. So much for the modifications which the Council is asked to consider. If the motion is accepted the necessary increases would be included.

The second part of the motion is simple. It merely asks the Council to approve formally of the introduction of a vote on supplementary estimate in order to enable arrears of salaries of all the officers affected by the report, for the year 1944. I think it has already been generally conceded that all the arrears should date back to the 1st January, 1944, and as that year has now passed it is proposed to introduce a lump sum vote to cover the total required in that respect. In the wording of the motion before me the year is incorrectly stated, but if any Member is reading from a copy of the motion tabled yesterday he would see that there is a typographical error. The year 1945 should be 1944. With those remarks I formally move the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In seconding the motion I would like to make a slight explanation. The mover said that it would be impossible to obtain a successor to Mr. Bookham if the salary of the post is not increased. I think it is only right that we should be strictly accurate. That is not quite so. What has happened is that in order to persuade somebody, who has accepted now, we informed his Government that the Governor proposed to introduce this increase in salary. It is not quite true to say that it has to be passed before he accepts the post. I wish to make that point quite clear.

Mr. ROTH: With reference to the first item on the schedule—the Department of Agriculture—it is with considerable surprise and not a little disappointment that I observe that practically every one of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee has been ignored. What has happened now is that many of the recommendations having been ignored the Agronomist is to be second to the Veterinary Surgeon, whereas he was above him before. It was suggested that they should be put on the same scale, but that has not been done.

It was also suggested that the Deputies of the chief technical Departments should draw the same salaries, but that also seems to have been ignored.

With respect to the salaries of the Rice Officer and the Curator of the Botanical Gardens certain recommendations were made, but they have also been ignored. As things are now it means that the Assistant Agricultural Superintendents at their maxima will be drawing less salary than their immediate juniors, the Senior Agricultural Instructors. There is certainly some anomaly there that wants clearing up.

The Advisory Committee consists for the greater part of very busy men. Its recommendations were not made off-hand but as a result of considerable and deep study, especially on the part of the Chairman, whose opinions to us are invaluable. We do not expect all of our advice to be taken, but it seems strange that all of it should be ignored. What is the use of having Advisory Committees?

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am under the impression that the hon. Member is referring to representations made to the Advisory Committee concerning the salaries of the specialist officers of the Department, but I think he is

making particular reference to a discussion that took place at a recent meeting at which the question was asked as to whether a reply had been received from Government with regard to those representations. My answer then was that a reply had not yet been received, but I think the Member would find that very soon after that meeting, if it had not yet reached the Department, a reply would be sent in. I have just overheard that the reply has been sent in, although I have not seen it myself.

The hon. Member went into certain details of the representations that were made to the Advisory Committee. In substance and in fact what he has said is correct, but in view of what His Excellency stated just before he vacated the Chair I do not know whether we should continue discussion along those lines. I remember quite distinctly His Excellency said that any suggestions either to alter or modify the proposals before the Council at the present time might result in some delay of these proposals, which it was desirable to proceed with. I am quite prepared to accept that. I would be the last person to say anything here which would have the effect of delaying those proposals, but I do hope that some announcement will be made as to whether those representations will be considered in the light of the points raised by the Committee to which the hon. Member referred, and of which I have the honour to be the Chairman.

I want to make my position perfectly clear. I do not think myself that the Committee should be involved in what I consider staff or domestic matters. On the other hand I must admit that where very strong representations have been made it seems to me that some notice might be taken of them. There is a lot to be said on both sides. After hearing the staff and a Committee of the staff it

is my personal view that there is quite a good deal of merit in the representations that have been made. It seems strange to me where the Head of a Department describes his technical staff or his specialist staff as parts of a whole, that in the matter of salaries one should be treated somewhat different from another. That, of course, is only an ordinary layman's point of view, but it seems to me there is something in the point. What is strange is that I have not heard anything in conflict with that view; I have not heard anything to oppose it. For example I have not heard anyone say that the Agricultural Chemist is in a different position from the Agricultural Economist, or the Entomologist or the Agricultural Superintendents. They are parts of a whole, and I have it from the Head of the Department that each one of them is of equal value in the Department in his own sphere of work, and I believe, and have very good reason to believe, that it is quite right to describe them all as specialist staff. What will be the outcome of all this I do not know.

The motion before the Council today deals merely with three members of the particular staff—the Veterinary Surgeon, the Agricultural Economist and the Agricultural Superintendents—and as the hon. Member has pointed out, there are others who, apparently, have not received consideration. But even in these proposals it seems to me that the recommendations do not go far enough, and I am inclined to the view that perhaps certain anomalies will be created or perpetuated if the motion is allowed to go through as it stands. For example, attention was drawn to the salary of the Agronomist. I recall very distinctly how the salary of that officer arose, and I know what the answer is going to be. I do not think that answer would be sufficient in a matter of this kind.

It seems to me—perhaps I do not know what the nature of the reply is, but if the answer is a postponement of consideration of the representations that were made—that what my plain duty would be is to urge a reconsideration of them. But I do not wish to speak on that at all. I do not know what the answer is and I do not want to anticipate. However I take this opportunity of using the words I have said. I want to repeat what I said before. I do not think in a matter of this kind the Committee should allow itself as it were to be drawn into it, and any representation I might make here is not so much in my capacity as Chairman or Representative of that Committee but rather as a Member of this Council.

Dealing with the motion itself, I tried to listen to the hon. Mover when he was speaking on it to see whether he would have indicated what the increase would be. I do not think he stated the possible increase of these proposals. I do not think he gave the Council an indication of it. I think it would be very useful if Members are informed as to the total increase. I do not think it would be possible to go into the actual details. We are being asked more or less to give an undertaking that when the time comes this Council will agree to pass the necessary vote for the amount if this motion is carried. I think, therefore, we should get that information.

One last word I would like to say, and here I express disagreement with my hon. friend. I do ask him not to think of it in that way. I do not think that the representation that was made by the Staff to the Committee and was forwarded to Government had been ignored. Perhaps there has been some delay in receiving a reply, but assurance has been already given that a reply is coming. If the reply is not as favourable as

the Committee or the Staff would like, it seems to me they can go back to the Governor in Council in order to bring the matter to further consideration.

Mr. AUSTIN: I would like very respectfully to challenge the hon. the Colonial Treasurer when he says he does not think the Colonial Office can get Officers at salaries other than in our Civil List. That may be so at the present. We know very well the war will be soon over and a lot of people who are seeking employment throughout the Empire will be only willing and anxious to come along with the gratuity which they will obtain and their pension also, to the Colony and give of their best after special training. I rather deplore that an effort has been made to put these salaries on the Colony's Official List before the war ends so that later on the Colonial Office can state this is the maximum salary for a particular post and no attempt made to procure suitable men who are willing to accept a lesser salary. In other words we are doing as we did in the case of the Medical Service. We told the doctors "Gentlemen, if you do not take the salaries we think and say you should get we would make it difficult for you in the Medical Service." The salaries they were made to take were more than they would otherwise have taken, and I rather would like to see this matter deferred until very many anomalies which are now concerning the Civil Service of the Colony are dealt with. Looking through this List it all concerns Officers coming from abroad. But at this particular time does this matter need such urgent consideration? I do not want to embarrass Government at all, but I still have at the back of my mind the fear that the Colonial Office wants us in this Colony to pay salaries which are paid in other Dependencies but which we cannot afford. Let us wait until after the

war when, I think, we efficient Officers at than now indicated.

At this stage the PRESIDENT returned to the Chamber and resumed the Chair.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like the hon. Member to make clear what he is referring to. Most of the salaries have been already approved on the Estimates. Is the hon. Member referring to those? What we are putting to the Council are the modifications attached to the Message. The hon. Member will appreciate that. I am not certain what the hon. Member is referring to.

Mr. AUSTIN: The modifications I am referring to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: All of them?

Mr. Austin: Every one of them, except Superintendent of Prisons.

Mr. THORNE: On this motion I can only say something about the latter part of it—

“This Council approves of Supplementary provision being made under a single vote for payment of arrears of salary due for the year 1944 to all officers whose salaries have been revised in terms of Council Paper No. 20 1944 as adopted and modified by Council.”

What I want to say, and I think it is fair that Your Excellency should know, is that there is discontent not only among the employees of Government but the community. They feel that in the handling of this matter a section of your employees have not had the consideration they merit, and that affects the workingman and the people as a body. I shall be very brief. For years in this Colony, as far as I know, the Civil Service was looked to really to create what we consider the permanent middle class,

and for several years several of us have been watching it very closely because out of the Civil Service of this Colony those who belong to the Colony are going to remain here and spend their pension. We look to them to create a body in this country from which in the future the Colony shall obtain its lead and its government. I travel about this country in the course of my work, and I have heard it discussed very freely throughout the Colony and stated up to recently that under the new scheme in the handling of the Civil Service a period is put to our rising young men getting the salaries they should get so as to rear a family as they should. I have submitted some questions in order to draw your attention to that fact, because we believe you are extremely anxious to give everybody in the country a fair deal. You are anxious to lay the foundation for a future Guiana for which, we are satisfied, you will not have a standard unsatisfactory to the workingmen, those people who cannot afford to give their children the education they should possess. I hope I shall get an answer to those questions before I go out as a provisional Member of this Council. I have intimated to Your Excellency that is part and parcel of what will be coming up at the General Elections so that it should receive your attention.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: I quite agree with the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Austin, that the field of itself is somewhat limited in these days, and that we hope very soon that field will be widened and we will be able to get men who are qualified to serve in the various important posts in this Colony. I cannot say, sir, that at the present time we can draw from the men in the Service here to fill those important posts, but those who are filling those posts at the present time ought not to suffer in so far as the scale of salaries is concerned because they happen to be

men who have been born here or even in the West Indies. So it is only right for Government to pass the salary scale as it has done in the majority of cases. These certain modifications though not quite complete should be passed at this stage so that there should be no longer delay in these Officers obtaining what this Council has approved. Your Excellency mentioned at the beginning of the sitting this afternoon that there are certain other suggestions which have been presented to Government and which in due course will be dealt with. I think that ought to satisfy those who have not been considered and deserved consideration. I refer to one Department, the Education Department, of which I am Chairman of the Legislative Council Advisory Committee. I feel sure that Your Excellency will in due course of time give consideration to the proposals made by the Committee, but I agree with the motion as it stands and as moved by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. It should be passed without any further delay.

Mr. EDUN: If I receive the assurance from Government that this be the final act to end anomalies I would vote for it, I see no reason to believe that the final act at all. What I found in my own experience of Civil Service for the past one or two years is that there is a feeling of instability among all the Officers upon as you talk about money. They do not want to work but are simply looking with anxious eyes to the time when they will receive their lump sum and thinking what to do with it. That is what I have found. Just recently in respect of the Transport and Harbours Department some money was voted, and every time I have travelled across the ferry the employees there ask me when they get their lump sum. Hardly any work is being made to work except with anxious eyes to when that

lump sum payment is coming. I do not think that is the right attitude for Government to adopt, creating anomalies and rectifying salaries all the time without any finality. It does not give time for consolidation, and that is why we find so much laxity existing. Therefore if I receive an assurance that this is the final act I would readily vote for it and be done with it. Ever since I came to this Council all I have seen is increases, increases. I would be willing to give increases provided the work is done. So long as human nature is what it is and the criterion is money, the standard of conduct is money, you will always have this ordeal of anomalies. Therefore, I think, this Government should take up a considered stand and come to a period of finality. For a period of five years let us work in the interests of the country rather than have this unsuitable condition all the time.

Going through the modifications as presented here—I am not an adept at figures and I do not intend to examine them—it appears to me there will be dissatisfaction; the Officers concerned will not be satisfied, and I am sure there will be anomalies yet between these salaries. I want the hon. the Colonial Treasurer to tell me how much money these modifications involved, and I further want to be assured about the financial position of the Colony at the present. How do we stand? Have we reached the stage in our finances when we have to cut our coat according to the cloth? I think we ought now to be very cautious about spending, especially when there is no hope of financial stability in the near future.

Under Medical Department—item (2) (b) of the Modifications I see a principle evolving for which this Government ought to be commended, and that is, all fees received by Doctors for consulting practice inside as well as outside the Public Hospital

should go into revenue. That is, I think, the right way to look at it. That is the rational way to conserve our finances and, at least, it will give the idea that none of the Specialists at the Public Hospital are continuing outside practice. But why a remission of 25 per cent. when you have added to the salaries? In paragraph (a) there is an indication of adding to the salaries of the Senior Physician and the Surgeon Specialist. Why give 25 per cent. of the consultation fees as a remission? I do not understand why. It is like just giving with one hand and taking back with the other. Let 100 per cent. of the fees go into revenue and let us give increased salaries, and then there is no need to give 25 per cent. remission of the fees. Why should we give the existing Specialists the option to choose between accepting the new salary scales and the new conditions governing consulting practice and continuing to serve on their present terms and salaries? I think that in respect of the Medical profession it is necessary in the interest of the etiquette of the profession that the entire income should come from Government and whatever revenue accruing to the Department through their services should go into revenue.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I may explain that an Officer is appointed by letter under conditions which are approved by the Secretary of State, and those conditions of service are hardly ever changed without his consent. He cannot accept improvements in the Service unless he accepts the conditions attached to those improvements. You cannot force him to accept the improvements.

Mr. EDUN: Am I to understand that these Officers or Specialists are under contract? Well in that case I do not see how we can escape it, unless they resign or cancel their terms of contract. I am willing to vote this

money. I am very willing indeed but I do not like to grope in the dark. I want to know the figures, the sum that will be involved, because just recently we voted nearly \$180,000 for the Transport and Harbours Department, but I see the Engineers of that Department are coming under these recommendations.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Only one, I think.

Mr. EDUN: That is my position. I am fearful about our finances especially with some of the calamities that are facing us. For that reason I would ask whether the hon. the Colonial Treasurer is in a position to tell us what sum will be involved so that we can correctly know what we are committing ourselves to.

Mr. JACKSON: In raising salary scales anomalies must occur, and those anomalies should be adjusted as they come along. I understand the salary scale has been accepted by the Secretary of State with certain modifications which are now put before us for our confirmation. I certainly agree that when anomalies occur, be they in one Department or another, they should be adjusted. I give my wholehearted support to the motion as moved by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, feeling fully assured that when other anomalies occur in other Departments they will be adjusted.

Mr. JACOB: I have listened with great interest and attention to the remarks of all the hon. Members who have spoken, and, having studied this matter myself for some time and having been a member of the Committee which went into the salaries of the Senior Administrative, Professional and Technical Officers of the Public Service exclusive of the Classified Service, I feel I can suggest something to this Government which will in a way remove a good deal of the dissatisfaction which in some cases

amount to a feeling of "Why should I do so much work and not receive adequate remuneration while others are doing less work and receiving adequate remuneration and more on top of that?" There is a feeling in the Civil Service that certain people receive far too much consideration and others far too little. I recall reading in the "*Daily Chronicle*" recently the writings of "Iconoclastes." That writer stated there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in the Service and as a result the Service as a whole is suffering very terribly. I feel that this matter has been discussed or considered in too piecemeal a manner. The Committee, I have referred to, went into and, I understand, the Finance Committee went into this matter also. Your Excellency discussed it with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, I think, our Executive Council has approved of this motion based on your Message, No. 29, and, therefore, it has come before this Council for consideration and approval. I can quite understand hon. Members of this Council particularly—and I think three of those hon. Members have spoken to-day and have agreed in principle to this motion, —doing so. I hope it will be passed, and with this depleted Council I do think this motion ought to be passed. The whole Service especially the Technical Officers and the Specialists should be considered and given adequate consideration.

Certain hon. Members have referred to other specialists officers who have had no consideration recently. I think some of them have had consideration recently and they are up again for further consideration—double if not treble consideration. If this motion goes through it may be of benefit to those directly concerned, but it is going to cause further dissatisfaction in the ranks of the Service. While I would certainly like to see all officers of Government, especially technical officers, receiving adequate salaries. I do not think this

Colony, taking everything into consideration at the present time, is able to pay its technical officers salaries based on what other Colonies in a better position can afford to pay their officers. All of us cannot be in those wealthy Colonies where we can get big salaries, and officers who are serving here should be content to receive the salaries which this Colony can afford to pay them. I believe the Colony is overburdened with salaries. It has always been stated that the Colony's Administration is top-heavy the Heads of Departments and upper classes are receiving too great consideration, and the lower classes not receiving sufficient. I have always championed the lot of the underdog, so to speak.

What has this Government done recently in regard to the people who are merely receiving sufficient to subsist — not to live, but receiving merely sufficient to subsist? Government has not given them proper consideration. We were told that subsidization was going to help and would be continued in order to help that class of people. As I have stated here not so long ago, these people cannot live on what they earn. Some of them can barely subsist, yet no further consideration has been given to them recently. All these officers mentioned in this schedule are in a position to live comfortably and to save some of their earnings. The people I have referred to, who barely subsist, are unable to provide for the rainy day. I think the method of Government is all wrong. You have to consider those unfortunate people first, and consider these officers six months hence. While some of these officers may be entitled to further consideration I am satisfied that the majority are not.

I wish to go into details with regard to a few of these officers. I understood from the mover of the motion that these specialist officers who hold scientific posts deserve these

additional salaries. It is called modifications of their salaries. I do not know why the word "additional" was not used. It is not merely to modify, it is to increase.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why the word "modifications" is used is because the maxima of the salary scales are being increased.

Mr. JACOB: I do not think the maxima in all cases are being increased. I think in some cases the maximum salary is being increased. However, I am not pressing that point at all. This schedule has created a peculiar impression in my mind. I had to read and re-read it to see whether additional amounts have to be voted, and I am satisfied that additional amount have to be voted.

I have criticized the Department of Agriculture so often that it seems unnecessary for me to say anything more, except to say that I repeat what I have said before. I do not wish to make any personal reference to the officer, but the Veterinary Surgeon has been here for some time. Maybe he has given valuable service and is the right type of officer to be here, but when I look around and see the condition of the livestock of the Colony I must say that the people of the Colony are not receiving full benefits for the money paid to that officer. Up to quite recently His Excellency had to go to Brazil to get cattle for this country. We used to export cattle at one time. When scientific officers require additional pay their scientific qualifications are stressed. When we look around we find that we are unable to find sufficient meat for the people of this Colony even at this stage, and we want to increase our scientific officers who can advise us how to get the right type of cattle.

As regards the Agricultural Economist, we have had a visit by Dr. Platt who appears to be the world's greatest

scientist at the present time. He is going to make people live on something that never existed before. I hope that this Economist of ours—I have nothing to say against the gentleman but I am not satisfied that the economy of the country is properly planned; particularly for the small man. Our agricultural economy is not properly planned. Whether it is the Economist who is responsible or the Director of Agriculture, who is a super-economist, I do not know, but I am 100 per cent. satisfied that our agricultural economy is not properly planned. Regarding the Agricultural Superintendents, well they have to take instructions from the scientific officers, and there again the remarks I have made apply with equal force to the Agricultural Superintendents.

With respect to the Public Works Department I would be inclined to add half a dozen officers to that Department, but I am wholly disinclined to give the present officers increased salaries. As a matter of fact the majority of the District Engineers should be transferred to other Colonies if they cannot be dismissed from this Service. I am not certain that the state of affairs revealed at the recent trial is not continuing, and at a greater rate. It is known that the District Engineers do not supervise the works properly. I have made certain complaints but I can get no proper answer. I am asked now to vote increased salaries for District Engineers, but I certainly will not in view of what has happened, and what I suspect is happening at the present time. They may be scientific men. I do not know whether they know any science at all and can properly estimate for construction and buildings, and particularly materials. As regards scientific training, if they have had any they are not using it at all. Therefore when it comes to the Public Works Department I am exceedingly sorry that I cannot agree that the District Engineers should get increased salaries.

Regarding the Medical Service I am sympathetic, but I cannot see the reason why the Senior Physician should be placed in the same position as the Surgeon Specialist. However, I am not prepared to say too much about that. If Government wishes to carry it I am not going to oppose that strongly, but I feel that that office should not be touched at the present time.

Reference has been made to the 25% remission of consulting fees. I think that should be done. Consultants to work outside of official hours should be called in, and for their services I think they should be paid a portion of the fees.

With regard to the Geological Department I cannot say very much. I am prepared to take Government's advice, and if Government thinks that these officers are worthy of these increased salaries and other officers cannot be got, it is a matter for Government, but I agree entirely with what the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Austin, has stated about deferring these matters until the war is over, when I am sure scientific men will be wanting work and there will be no work for them. I cannot imagine why there should be this haste to increase the maximum salaries of these posts at this stage. The war is certainly going to come to an end very soon. In today's paper I saw that the Prime Minister said it will end before Summer.

Mr. AUSTIN: In the Summer.

Mr. JACOB: There can be no doubt that the war in Europe is going to end very soon. What is going to happen? Hundreds of thousands of scientific men now engaged in war work will be glad to come to the Colonies. Why anticipate that there is going to be difficulty in getting such men in the future? I am sorry that Government has put up these proposals in this form. I agree with Mr. Austin, particu-

larly as regards the Geological Department—that the proposals should be deferred until later on.

As regards the Superintendent of Prisons the mover referred to that as a scientific post.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I did not say that at all. I said it was difficult to get a successor to Mr. Bookham, but the Colonial Secretary corrected that.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. Member referred to all these as scientific officers. I am certain that Government would be very well advised to select some local individual to look after our Prisons at even a lower salary than what Mr. Booknam is receiving. I see the Colonial Secretary shaking his head. I maintain that this Colony has as good a population as one can find in the British Empire and in the whole world. I cannot imagine that we cannot find someone to look after the criminals in this Colony, and I think a salary of £500 ought to be quite sufficient. I would certainly like that item to be reduced to that figure, and if this Legislature has any stomach at all—or what I may call “guts”—and would look into things as I hope it will, I think we should have a Superintendent of Prisons at £500. If there are reforms they would be available in literature form, and any sensible officer would study and apply them. I cannot agree that there is anything scientific about the work of a Superintendent of Prisons. As a matter of fact, if the economic condition of the Colony improves our prisons would become empty. They are full to overflowing now because of the economic conditions. What are the crimes being committed due to? There are many people who cannot get work.

With regard to the Engineers of the Transport and Harbours Department I think the proposed increases

could be well left over until the railway expert comes. I see no need to put them through now. Government will not increase freight rates. I am told it is very unwise for me to stress that every time, but Government will not do certain things until the expert arrives. I plead with Government not to do this particular thing until the expert arrives.

I think I have said sufficient to indicate to Government that on the whole this motion should not be passed, but should be deferred to a later date, more particularly in view of the fact that the European war is going to be over very soon and there will be little or no difficulty in selecting the right type of people to govern this Colony, particularly in the scientific and economic field.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The second part of the motion is, to my mind, much more important, but I notice that no Member addressed himself to it at all. The second part asks for the authority of the Council to introduce a vote to meet arrears of salaries due for 1944 for all the officers whose salaries have been revised as a result of the acceptance of the Committee's report, and as no Member has mentioned it, as far as I know, I take it for granted that that part of the motion at least has unanimous acceptance.

The hon. Mr. Austin was the first speaker who directly challenged what I may call one of the main grounds on which this motion is brought forward, and that is the statement that officers of the right type cannot be obtained at the present salaries of their posts. That challenge was directed at me but I take it that he really intended to direct it at the very definite statement which Your Excellency made before I moved the motion. You announced that you had discussed the

matter in London with the Secretary of State, and that you had satisfied yourself that these increases were necessary from that point of view. Although some Members have referred to what might happen after the close of the war, it is a fact that even now in some cases hardships have been created because some of these officers would like to get transfers to position which carry higher salaries than they are getting now, and the complaint has been made—whether true or not—that they have in some way been prevented from accepting appointments which carry higher salaries than this Colony offers. I am satisfied, having read the Secretary of State's communication, and having heard Your Excellency's statement, that it is correct to say that our salary scales are too low for officers of the qualifications required.

The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth, touched on one point—the salary of the Rice Officer. He is really an Agricultural Superintendent, and should have been so styled. In the Estimate the note to his post reads:—

“Post formerly designated Assistant Plant Breeder. Salary increased to scale of an Agricultural Superintendent as approved in supplementary estimates, 1944. The officer may be called upon to perform duties other than those of Rice Officer.”

It is taken for granted that he and the other Agricultural Superintendents would be entitled to a maximum of \$3,600 if this motion is carried. I think I am right in giving that assurance that his salary scale would be modified in some way.

Two Members referred to the question of cost, and one Member criticized the use of the word “modification.” The reason why no cost was put down in the Message is the same as that for using the word “modification.” All of the posts dealt with in

this schedule are modified to the extent that the maximum of the scale is increased. Therefore, for this year and probably for another year or two there may be no actual increase, except perhaps in one case. If you wish to arrive at the total cost, assuming every officer was at the maximum at the same time, it is completely easy to do so, because we know the number of officers and the amount of increase in each case. I hurriedly made the calculation in pencil while the hon. Member speaking. The total cost would be £0 but that assumption is quite wrong. We cannot assume that every officer will be at the maximum at the same time. However, hypothetically the cost would be \$5,760. I cannot say what increase, if any, will fall on the budget this year. There may be one or two cases of officers who have already reached their present maximum.

The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Thorne, intervened to mention something which was slightly irrelevant, and that was the conditions of service of the clerical officers. He referred to them as the cream of the community, and said that their salary scales do not enable them to maintain that status. I will challenge him on that point. He is new to the Council and, perhaps, does not fully appreciate the benefits which have been conferred on the Clerical Service. Some day I should like to have the advantage of a heart-to-heart discussion with him when I hope I shall be able to convince him that officers of the Clerical Service as a whole are in a considerably better position than they have ever been since my time in this Council.

The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) said something which I think should be ignored. He referred to the underdog and seemed to think that he had not been dealt with.

Mr. JACOB: I said they had not received adequate consideration.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The very first class of employees dealt with in this Council in regard to increases were the lowest paid skilled and unskilled workers. They received their increases first. After that we dealt with subordinate employees—Medical and so on—then the Clerical Service, and lastly we dealt with the Civil List officers and Senior Administrative, Professional and Technical officers. Therefore it is incorrect to say that Government did not deal with the lowest paid first.

The hon. Mr. Edun questioned why the specialist medical officers should be given a remission of 25% of the fees for consulting practice. A specialist officer is consulted outside of official hours. He has to attend cases of people who can afford to pay, and who call on his services at all times, day or night. Even though he is a professional man I take it that some little inducement is required to give his best at all times to all classes of people. In fact some of the people who consult him would prefer to know that a part of the fee goes into his own pocket. I know, strictly speaking, that it would be very desirable if every professional man in the Public Service got his remuneration direct from the person. As it now stands, it is a better scheme that a part of the fee should be retained by him, and that is suggested here.

On the general points about representations having been made for other increases you have yourself, sir, announced that they will be considered. They cannot be dealt with at this particular point, and the Council is therefore invited to pass this motion. Let us get on with it. These Officers have been waiting for their arrears

of salaries for quite a long time and we want to get it off. I do not think there is any other point I need refer to.

The PRESIDENT: I would just like to make one or two brief remarks. I said in open Council this is a matter of practical politics. These modifications can go through now and be put into effect. I have listened to two conflicting views, and I disagree with both. Government is taking the middle path which is practical and will not lead us into serious difficulties. If you purpose to raise some of these salaries, as I have heard today, you will quite inevitably be thrown into a very large scale recasting of a very large number of salaries throughout the Service, which will not only eat up an enormous amount of the time of Senior Officers but will quite inevitably land us into a very big bill of recurrent expenses. I am not going to take the responsibility for doing that. There may be one or two hard cases and there always are, but provisions such as I have suggested will land us into that immediate difficulty. We have had to take these things piecemeal, as I said before, because until September, 1943, we were still under Treasury Control, and we had to begin with the lowest paid and gradually thereafter come up to the others.

Another point of view is that we should not accept these increases but should hold them up for the post-war period. My answer to that is: "Well, we will not then be able to get Veterinary Officers or Geologists, to mention only two." I told hon. Members here that we have one Geologist. We are proposing a certain reasonable salary. If we are to hold it up to get, as hon. Members seem to think, people coming out of the war, we will lose our only Geologist and will have none. With the important work of development of the Interior, is that a position we can face? I do not think so. That is my belief and I have certain grounds for knowing what lies behind these things.

As to the proposals before us today, I was not in the Colony when the report of this Committee was made. Its acceptance or modification was done in my absence. I was, however, in London when certain points did come up touching certain specific classes of the Service. I discussed them in London and telegraphed out certain proposals to this Government, and this is the result in part of them. I cannot state the details of my discussion in London or what the precise figures were, but Government ultimately put forward concrete figures with the support of the Secretary of State.

There is another side of this matter altogether, and that is the levelling up of salaries, for example with other parts of the West Indies or other parts of the Colonial Empire. It is a desirable thing in itself that all the Colonies should pay approximately similar salaries so that each Colony should get good services. Because a Colony is poor and cannot pay it should not be deprived of the services of the better quality of men. The way out of that was put up by the late Lord Moyne in the House of Lords not less than four or five years ago, when he said that uniformity in some degree or manner throughout the Colonial Service was desirable for the reasons I have stated and that it might come back to be an Imperial responsibility on the United Kingdom taxpayers. That is out of the question until after the war.

I cannot tell you the details of my discussions with the Colonial Office, but I can tell you that the unification of the Caribbean—West Indies Services is under consideration and has been for some time, and that may well be the result of it. If that result comes out of it, it will be to the greater advantage certainly of our most Senior Officers, but at the present moment that is quite out of the realms of practical

politics. What is practical for the benefit of the Service and the Officers in question is to pass this resolution.

I have heard so many conflicting opinions that if Members prefer to go into Committee and take the proposals piecemeal I am quite prepared to do so, but my advice is that the practical thing to do is to take the motion as a whole. With the consent of Members, therefore, I proceed to put the question "That the motion standing in the name of the Colonial Treasurer be agreed to."

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion passed.

Mr. JACOB: I would not like it to be noted that it was agreed to unanimously.

The PRESIDENT: Do you desire to record anything?

Mr. JACOB: I am alone.

The PRESIDENT: Do you ask

for a vote?

Mr. JACOB: No.

The PRESIDENT: Item (c) is largely a formality and I purpose taking that at a later stage. I am going away to-night or to-morrow as I have an important appointment with the American Authorities. I do not know what day in next week I will be back and, therefore, I suggest we adjourn to week after next.

Mr. EDUN: May I suggest there are two motions standing in my name. The Clerk asked me yesterday whether he should put it on the Order Paper of today and I told him I was not fit to speak too long and I rather my motions should come up next Wednesday.

The PRESIDENT: I have not seen your motions. If the hon. the Colonial Secretary is ready to take those resolutions they can be taken in my absence.

The Council adjourned to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 21st March, 1945.