



# DEBATES

## SESSION OF 1942.

### CONTENTS:

	PAGE
Appropriation Bill, 1942-43—Committee Stage:	
Head 67, Forest Department—(contd.)	1895
Head 68, Registrar of Co-operative Societies	1904
Head 69, Irrigation Department	1904
Head 70, Irrigation Annually Recurrent	1910
Head 71, Irrigation Extraordinary	1914
Head 77, Minister of Local Administration	1915
Head 78, Commissioner of Local Government	1921
Head 79, Valuation Department	1930
Head 80, Commissioner of Motor Transport	1930
Head 81, Salt Department	1930
Head 82, Department of Mineralogy	1930
Head 83, Department of Fisheries	1931
Head 84, Schemes Assisted by the Colonial Development Fund	1935
Head 85, Petrol Control	1935
Head 90, Minister of Health	1935
Head 91, Quarantine	1939
Head 92, Medical and Sanitary Services	1939
Head 93, Indigenous Medicine	1947
Head 100, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce	1949
Head 101, Registrar-General	1949
Head 102, Director, Tourist Bureau	1950
Head 103, Director of Commerce and Industries	1950

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# STATE COUNCIL OF CEYLON.

Thursday, August 27, 1942.

The Council met at 10 a.m., Mr. SPEAKER [THE HON. SIR WAITIALINGAM DURAISWAMY] in the Chair.

## † APPROPRIATION BILL, 1942-43.

Pursuant to order, the Council resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House further to consider in detail the Bill intituled "An Ordinance to make provision for the Public and Railway Services and the Electrical Undertakings for the financial year 1942-43, to authorise the payment by way of advance out of Revenue of moneys required during that financial year for specified purposes, and to provide for the refund of such moneys to Revenue", the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Island for the financial year 1942-43 (Second Print tabled on July 10, 1942), and the amendments to those Estimates tabled on August 13, 1942.

In Committee—

MR. SPEAKER presided as Chairman.

### SCHEDULE I.

#### Head 57, Forest Department.

Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 559,967—(contd).

Amendment moved [Minister of Agriculture and Lands: August 26]:

Under Details of Sub-head:

Item: Forest Rangers.

- (a) Increase money provision for 1942-43 from Rs. 81,983 to Rs. 83,783. Amend footnote "c" to read "Cadre approved on recommendation of the Retrenchment Commission is 35, provision has been made for 8 surplus officers who are engaged on field work connected with timber supplies for war purposes".
- (b) Increase Rent Allowance from Rs. 32,060 to Rs. 32,392.

**Mr. E. R. Tambimuttu (Trincomalee-Batticaloa):** I wish to bring to the notice of the Minister and this House certain facts connected with the activities of the Forest Department, with special refer-

[Note.—An asterisk (\*) against the name of a Member indicates that his remarks have not been revised by him.]

† For the Observations of the Financial Secretary and the Report of the Board of Ministers, see HANSARD of July 10, 1942.

ence to my district, and to ask the Hon. Minister to take steps to give us some relief.

Out of the 2,500,000 acres of land which is the area of the Eastern Province, some 500,000 acres constitute reserved forests. This figure of 2,500,000 acres includes the lakes and rivers. The process of reserving forests has been going on in my districts for over 50 years. There were certain parts of the district where the Government Agent refused to allow forests to be so reserved. There is a large forest in that part of the district which was known in ancient times as the Mahavedi-rata. This was the last to be reserved. This forest includes land suitable for chena cultivation. What was left unreserved in this area was low jungle quite unfit for cultivation.

We were content to carry on chena cultivation in this area, but the action of the Forest Department in allowing people to cultivate in these areas was condemned. Having reserved this large forest in an area which was the country of the Veddahs, they have instituted a new system of reafforestation in this area. They mark out a certain extent of land and say, "These lands have to be reafforested".

They want it planted mostly with teak, and they call upon these Veddahs, or any others who want to take up land, to plant teak for the Department in this area. The Department get this work done without any payment. A form of *rajakariya* has been instituted by the Department, which causes great hardship to the people.

When a man wants to take up 5 acres under this reafforestation scheme, he is called upon to deposit Rs. 5 per acre. I might mention that in one case I was able to persuade the Land Commissioner to waive the deposit. But usually the system demands a deposit of Rs. 5 per acre. When that sum is deposited, the man, or group of men, are given a certain area, and they are asked to work on the land under the instructions or guidance of an Officer who lays down a line and says, "You must plant this row with teak, and the rows must be so many feet apart. Between these two rows you can sow anything you like".

But if the cultivation interferes with the teak plants, they are asked to pull out their own plants. Because there are no other lands available, these people

[Mr. Tambimuttu.]  
are compelled to take up land on these terms and cultivate. In the end they are not paid anything for the work they have done for the Forest Department; on the other hand, if any damage has been caused to the teak plants—if the teak plants have not grown up or have been damaged or allowed to die, a deduction is made from the deposit.

Do you not think, Sir, that that is a form of *rajakariya*? The Department do not pay anything for the teak plantation. It reminds me of the Biblical saying, "They reap where they sow not". The Department do not spend anything, but they fine these people if the work is unsatisfactory.

These lands have been taken away from the people. These are chena lands, and the working of this system causes great hardship. The poor man who wants to cultivate a chena of three acres is asked to deposit Rs. 5 per acre. He goes to a moneylender and gets the money, which is returned to him after four years. He has to pay interest on the money at 50 per cent. or more. In the old days there was a system of rewards for each teak plant successfully grown, but that has been discontinued.

What benefit does the Department derive from these teak plantations? In my district there are plantations which are over 50 years old, but the trees are no bigger than poles. They are not suitable for use as anything but poles, for putting up village houses. The Forest Department appear to believe, contrary to all biological laws, that if they plant the trees near each other, only a few feet apart, the trees will grow very tall. It is true that they will grow tall, but the girth will remain small. Height and girth must grow simultaneously.

I am reminded, in this connexion of the jak plantations in Kurunegala. The plants were put down so close together that the girth did not increase. The teak that is grown in my district will not be of much use. When they are thinned out, the trees are sold at about 25 cents a pole. The Department get the income, but apart from that, I do not think the Department will make anything out of these plantations.

This policy should be revised. I have mentioned this matter once or twice to the Minister. If the Department wants to reafforest this area, it should pay the people for doing it properly. The work should not be done in the guise of chena cultivation. A man cannot grow manioc, for instance, in these plantations because that would overshadow the teak plants. He cannot cultivate any other crop that would be of much use to him. I would like the system to be revised. Let the reafforestation be carried out on a basis of payment, or let the land be given to the chena cultivators.

When a forest is declared a forest reserve, it comes under various regulations made in respect of forest reserves. One of them is that a man may not trespass on these forests; he cannot go and collect anything in the forest; he cannot graze his cattle in this forest for fear that they might damage the plantation. But what about the wild animals that remain in the forest day and night? They are not supposed to damage the teak plants; but if a villager takes a few head of cattle to graze in the forest, he is charged!

But sometimes the Department sells the right to graze in the forest, at the rate of about 25 cents a head of cattle. I think the Department should abandon this practice. People in the neighbouring village should be allowed to graze their cattle free in these forests.

Before these lands were declared forest reserves, the villagers round about were in the habit of gathering fruits, leaves, and honey, from these forests without any restriction. Now the right to gather these articles is sold. A man buys up that right, and the people who do the collecting must send the produce to him; otherwise he can prosecute them for trespassing on the forest.

At a time like the present all these restrictions should be withdrawn, and people should be allowed to collect fruits, honey and things like that from these forests. The people in the adjoining villages who have no paddy lands make a living out of these forests. The Forest Department tell these people, "As you are a resident in the neighbouring village, you have a right to gather fruits for your own use. If you want a

Aug. 27, 1942]

woodapple, you will have to climb the tree yourself, but you cannot gather a large quantity and sell it to others". That works great hardship on these villagers. I would ask the Hon. Minister at least for the duration of the war to remove all these restrictions so that people might make a living from the produce of these forests which now goes to waste.

During certain seasons people are allowed to shoot wild animals, the elk and deer, which provide the meat-food of the villagers. But a poor man cannot take out a licence for Rs. 5 to shoot these animals. That fee is meant to be received from sportsmen.

**\*The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake (Minister of Agriculture & Lands):** For his own food, the man can shoot the animal without paying any licence fee.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** I beg your pardon?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The rule has been amended.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** But licences are not issued by the Government Agent. A complaint was made to me in Trincomalee. A man applied for a licence. He was asked "What do you want it for? You are not a sportsman". The man replied that he wanted to bring the meat for sale. "We cannot allow you to make a big profit by shooting animals for sale." The man is not allowed to shoot the animal and sell the meat to other people in the village. If the rule has not yet been amended, I would ask that action be taken to do so. I am not aware of the practice now.

These are matters that I thought of bringing up by way of a motion. But there is long delay over these motions, and I thought that I might mention the matter in Council so that the Minister might see that for the duration of the war at least the various restrictions are removed and people allowed to gather food in the forests. People in the villages do not live on rice alone. They depend on the forests to provide a part of their food supply.

In this connexion I might mention that the last time the Minister of Agriculture and Lands and the Land Commissioner were in my district I showed them some children in the village. It

was a time of great scarcity of rice, but these children were thriving on yams and fish and articles of food which they were able to gather from the forests.

These concessions will be a great boon to the villagers most of whom live near about these forests.

**Mr. H. R. Freeman (Anuradhapura):** The sham phrase "food drive" should be wiped out whilst all these harassments of the jungle people go on; not only during the war but for all time.

**\*Mr. S. Samarakkody (Narammala):** I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands to a notification I saw in the newspapers some time ago, issued under the Defence Regulations, with regard to the felling of trees on private land. We know that a large number of forests are being exploited to-day for the purpose of assisting the Military authorities in putting up sheds and doing various other things. This is going on at an alarming rate. Perhaps it may be necessary, and I can understand some regulation being framed, to bring trees like the jak and the bread-fruit trees, which are food-producing trees, under such a Regulation. But, Sir, if I have 2 or 3 acres of forest and I want to cut trees for my own purpose, I have to obtain a licence from the Minister or someone else to do so.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** No; there is no such regulation.

**\*Mr. Samarakkody:** I saw this notification in the newspapers. I do not know whether it was done with the knowledge of the Hon. Minister, but I know that the notification appeared in the newspapers. It may have been a mistake or it may have been done without the knowledge of the Minister. But, Sir, if the position is as stated in the notification, then I think we ought to protest. I can understand utility trees being included in that regulation. Supposing I want to cut a wild tree growing on my compound, I certainly think that it is going beyond the limit that should be tolerated to ask me to obtain a permit to cut down the tree.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I might answer that question first. It is quite possible that a notice may have appeared

[The Hon. Mr. Senanayake.]

with reference to another notice, and from reading that notice the impression may have been formed that no tree can be cut without permission. I know that there was a first notice—I do not know whether it is the same that the hon. Member is referring to—under which the cutting down of jak trees and breadfruit trees was prohibited. Then there was a second notice stating that the trees prescribed could be cut down only with permission obtained from the Ministry. I think that is a relaxation of the first rule rather than the imposition of a new restriction.

**\*Mr. Samarakody:** It went further.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I shall look into that matter, because there was no intention of preventing any trees except fruit trees, and so on, being cut down. I shall look into it and see whether there has been a mistake in drafting, for instance.

With regard to the points raised by the hon. Member for Trincomalee-Batticaloa (Mr. Tambimuttu), I can tell him that I am in agreement with everything that he has said. I agree that the practice of chena-clearing in the Batticaloa District was certainly harmful in the way in which it was being done. It was being done by clearing the land, planting a few teak trees and after 3 years allowing it to grow into jungle. The only thing that has happened is that *mana* grass has been introduced wholesale into the place and the jungle has been spoilt. These teak trees are of no use as they are said to be bad, for the same reason as my hon. Friend mentioned.

I can tell him that that system of re-forestation has been abandoned. In fact, it is a wasteful system. It is not profitable to Government or anyone. The method of reforestation that we adopt now is really not reforestation but regeneration in areas by removing the unnecessary trees and encouraging the growth of other trees in those areas. That is the method that is adopted. So the suggestion made by my hon. Friend has been given effect to and will be strictly followed. In fact, I remember my hon. Friend himself drawing attention to this matter, I think, about 10 years ago and it has been taken notice of.

With regard to the reservations, there seems to be a misunderstanding about the matter. All the lands that are considered to be reserved forests are not reserved forests, but a large number of them which it is considered necessary to reserve are reserved. The policy that has been adopted is that the Government Agent, the Local Land Committee and the Forest Department go into the case and they try to find out the village needs and the expansion needs, and sometimes land is taken off even from the reserve.

There is one thing that I am hoping to do in the Batticaloa District—and I hope I shall succeed—and that is, when I have more irrigation schemes higher up, I hope to shift the population from the coast to the interior. There is a very thickly-populated area right along the coast, and on the other side it is all jungle. What we are really trying to do is this: when a place is habitable, that is when tanks and other facilities are provided, we hand over the area for development.

I certainly do not like these unnecessary reserves that are being made; as a matter of fact even the Forest Department does not know what lands have been reserved. We are going into the matter district by district where the question has cropped up. That is our policy and it is practically in keeping with the idea that my hon. Friend has in mind.

With regard to the question of the destruction of wild animals, the matter was taken up very strongly by the hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare). He was very anxious to protect the wild animal for the use of the people of the area. As far as they are concerned, they can not only destroy these animals when they destroy chenas, but also shoot the animals for their own use as food without obtaining any licence or permit to do so.

But there are two kinds of people from whom the villager has to be protected. One is the sportsman who shoots for the fun of it, and the other is the trader who goes and kills all the animals for the purpose of selling the dried meat. We want therefore to protect the animals as best we can. As far as dried meat is concerned, we are trying to prevent the

sale of dried meat and the shooting of animals for that purpose, because it is done sometimes at a rate that is really harmful. As far as villagers are concerned, they are allowed to shoot animals to dry the meat and keep the dried meat for their own use, but if they are allowed to kill the animals and bring the meat to other areas and sell it, it would only mean that the villager who is there, who has to depend to some extent on the dried meat himself will be affected.

With regard to minor forest produce, the people are entitled to take such minor produce, but there is a little difficulty about the matter. Certain minor produce are used for consumption, and so on, and the villagers have a right to such produce. They are allowed even to make use of the firewood. But if anyone from outside goes to those areas and tries to make a trade of it, then we try to prevent his doing so.

There are other produce which are permitted to be collected on certain payments being made. One of the articles permitted to be collected and sold is deer horn. There are certain areas I believe, either in the Batticaloa District or just outside it in the Uva District, where you find the gall nut, and that too can be collected. It is being collected in large quantities, and there is even an export trade in it. We are also trying to permit of even mee seed being collected. We are buying the mee seed ourselves and trying to get the British Ceylon Corporation to extract the oil. I believe with the assistance of the Corporation and the Marketing Commissioner, we have been able to establish some industries, but I do not know how they have been affected by the war. I know that there is very good oil extracted from mee seed.

There may be a little hardship caused here and there sometimes. When officials do things, they may exceed their authority. Our policy is to allow the use of a forest for the benefit of those who live around it. We are even trying to allow timber from certain forests for the use of villagers. Although there is so much jungle in Batticaloa, I am sure my hon. Friend will agree that Batticaloa has some of the cleverest timber-dealers in Ceylon; there is no doubt about that. With all the restrictions, you find that

there are people who export timber to India. My hon. Friend brought the matter to notice and got a Commission appointed to investigate it; I had the pleasure of serving on that Commission.

**Mr. D. H. Fotalawala (Badulla):** May I know from the Hon. Minister from whom a permit has to be obtained for cutting jak and breadfruit trees?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The proper authority is supposed to be myself, but what I intend to do is this: trees will be allowed to be cut for three purposes. One is, if a tree is dying, it will be allowed to be cut; the next, if it is endangering a house or anything of that sort, it will be allowed to be cut. I am going to ask the Headman or the Government Agent to give authority at once to do that, but authority can be obtained from me at any time. The other purpose for which it will be allowed is for building boats and other things. In that case the application will have to come to me. We make inquiries and see for what purpose the timber is to be used, and then give permission.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** Now people in villages around forests are to be given free timber. Is it limited only to the poor people, or is it applicable to everybody? In the villages there is very little distinction between poor and rich. If a man has a garden of his own—a paddy field and a few coconut trees—he is supposed to be a well-to-do man in the village, but he may still not be rich enough to buy timber.

A case was brought to my notice of a Vedarala who owns his own house. He told me that he wanted to put up a house for his daughter and required timber. I said that timber was given free to villagers, and asked him to apply for it. He applied for the timber, and his application was sent to the Chief Headman for report. The report of the Chief Headman was to the effect that the Vedarala was a well-to-do man. May I know whether there is any such restriction like that?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The man described by the hon. Member is not a well-to-do man. There are people who are well-to-do, and they will not be issued free timber. But certainly our

[The Hon. Mr. Senanayake.]  
desire is to improve the houses of people. There are a number of well-to-do people in districts like that, but the number is very limited. To those people, a free gift is not necessary.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** This was a hard case. Evidently the man waited for a long time; and the Chief Headman having kept the man waiting, he came to me. I requested him to see the Chief Headman about it; and that was the report sent about the man.

**\*Mr. S. Abeywickrama (Uduagama):** The Hon. Minister of Agriculture admitted yesterday that the Island was something like 16,000,000 acres in extent of which only one-third was cultivated. Each district has its own forest problems to deal with. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he would consider the cases of isolated blocks of land being included with other lands to be reserved and whether he would be so good as to have a conference soon to get these lands settled.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** With regard to that point, it is not only isolated blocks that have to be reserved; there are other blocks of land as well to be reserved. We have, therefore, to take into consideration all the circumstances of the case. My hon. Friend will realize that one of the greatest difficulties we have in the Southern Province is the lack of timber, not only for building purposes, but even for domestic purposes. Besides, there are other purposes; for instance, the conservation of water and things of that sort. It is only after all those needs have been taken into consideration that we consider the general need of the population.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** There is one other matter which I should like to bring to the notice of the Minister. I have a copy of a letter written by the Secretary to the Minister which is interesting reading. This is a copy of the reply sent to me on a petition submitted to the Minister through me regarding a particular land at Elpitiya. The reply is as follows:

"With reference to her petition dated 16th March, 1942, forwarded through Mr. S. Abeywickrama, M.S.C., Mrs. N. H. Mary is informed that the Hon. Minister sees no reason to interfere."

It is August now; and six months after the petition was sent, this is the reply

that she receives. We have had enough trouble with the Government Agent over this matter, and we have made our representations to the Minister concerned. After six months of waiting, lo and behold! I get a letter to say that the Hon. Minister sees no reason to intervene. Surely another sentence could have been added to that reply, out of courtesy to the Member of this Council, to say that the petition was duly inquired into, and that "for the following reasons we cannot accede to the requests". Instead of that we get a curt reply to say that the Minister sees no reason to intervene.

If that is going to be the sort of reply that is given, what is the use of our making any representations? We take all the trouble of writing the letter, and send it by registered post, to see that something is done about the matter. After sending that letter, this poor woman came to see me every month to find out whether a reply had been received. This sort of reply discourages public work in the Island.

Surely we must know what the reasons are why the Hon. Minister does not want to intervene? The Ministers are an appeal board in connexion with the conduct of the Government Agents, and the Members of the Council are the advocates to press the cases. If a reply like this could be sent, especially by a Minister whose Departments are well administered, who is supposed to be a go-ahead Minister, I wonder what the other Ministers, who are less competent according to public opinion, would do to us.

I would therefore request the Hon. Minister to see, whenever representations are made by us, that at least some reason is given; and in cases in which an inquiry is to be held, I should like to be notified to be present at that inquiry. Very often, when petitions are sent to Ministers, they refer them to the Government Agent concerned, who keeps them as long as he wishes and sends a stereotyped reply, which is passed on to us.

In cases where I make representations, I want the Hon. Minister to note that I must be notified to be present, and however inconvenient it may be, I will be there, with my man who made the representations, and I will see that



Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

justice is done. In the case of these people who make representations, they cannot do it themselves; they go to a petition-drawer, pay him Re. 1, and get the petition drawn, and wait for days together until we return from Colombo in order to see that something is done. This is a very unsatisfactory way of dealing with petitions.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** With regard to that matter, the hon. Member should realize that when a petition is sent to him he does not make an inquiry himself; he forwards it to some other person who in turn has to make certain inquiries. Well, after those inquiries have been made, if there is no reason to intervene, then a reply to that effect is sent. Well, when there is no reason to intervene, can I give any reason? The reason is that there is no reason to intervene!

There are, very often, cases where lands are given. I do not know whether it was so in this case. But if my hon. Friend had told me that he would raise this question, I would have brought all the papers with me, and he would have either been convinced that the action taken by me was right, or he would have had all the facts before him to show that my action was wrong. But to make a general statement such as the one he made, without knowing the facts, is not quite fair by the Minister.

I can tell the hon. Member that if it took some time to send a reply, it was because an inquiry had to be made. Then, when the Government Agent sends in his report he is asked to make further inquiries again and make further statements. In certain cases the Land Commissioner himself goes into the case and makes inquiries. All that takes time. Previous to this, the Land Commissioner may have received a report in a very much shorter time, and that may be because there was the practice of using printed post cards for the purpose; as soon as a letter is received under registered cover, a post card is sent in acknowledgment.

As regards the suggestion made by my hon. Friend about Members being present at inquiries, I would mention that there are advantages and disadvantages in it. If he will only look at the Constitution, he will find that it is not considered desirable even for a Minister to get in

touch with anyone else except through the Head of a Department. If that suggestion is adopted, I believe it will handicap a man very much if in the discharge of his duties or when making investigations there should happen to be a disagreement between that officer and the Member concerned. The Member would feel that he had been ignored—it may be a difference of opinion—and that sort of thing would not lead to good relations which would otherwise exist between the people.

I have not the slightest doubt that my hon. Friend is one of those who takes a personal interest in many things that come within his notice, that he looks into things very, very carefully, but merely because he does such a thing, to try and alter certain practices which may result in embarrassment to an officer in the discharge of his duties would not be quite fair. One of these things that we should try to inculcate in the minds of Heads of Departments is that they should act fairly and squarely, without any influence or any fear or any other consideration—out of a sense of duty. If an officer is wrong, well he can be corrected afterwards.

With regard to this matter, I can show my hon. Friend all the papers, and he can then tell me whether my action was wrong. If it is wrong, I am prepared to consider the matter further. But at the same time, although the statement "I cannot intervene" is there, he will realize when he goes into the matter that the reasons that have been given are not good enough for me to intervene. It may be a short form of doing it to say "I cannot intervene", but actually, if one tried to give all the reasons that weighed with one in coming to a decision, it would only involve one in lengthy arguments and correspondence. But there are occasions when that could be done quite easily.

**Mr. Freeman:** Will the Hon. Minister be good enough to get this matter about the Veddah's house pursued because, as it stands, the thing is simply dropped? If anyone reads the book by the Seligmanns on the Batticaloa Veddahs about thirty years ago, he will see how they took up their case and the traditions, such as free timber, etc. applying to

[Mr. Freeman.]  
them. There are simple things like this to be done for them by the Government. The Hon. Minister no doubt means well by them, but generally his good intentions do not "carry" to subordinates, who cause these troubles. I shall be very thankful if the Hon. Minister will look into this case.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I am very thankful to the hon. Member for bringing the matter to my notice. If my hon. Friend will give me details of the case, I will inquire into it.

**Mr. Freeman:** A word more about petitions. In our Committee too there are petitions with the reply declining to interfere. I always want to see the whole file and to make inquiry before accepting official reports.

**\*Mr. Dudley Senanayake (Dedigama):** On the question of Crown reservations, I would like to point out that there is a certain amount of dissatisfaction prevailing among the people owing to the policy that is being pursued. I appreciate the desire, for the purpose of conservation of water, to keep certain areas free of alienation, but sometimes it is difficult to explain this to the villager in view of the fact that neighbouring lands adjoining large estates have been opened up and are doing damage daily. The damage that we are seeking to prevent by prohibiting the alienation of Crown land is being done day in and day out by large estates being opened up. Therefore, I would like to know whether it is intended to pursue a policy of acquiring these estates in order to take adequate measures for the conservation of water and the prevention of soil erosion.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Actually that difficulty has arisen. Say, where there is a stream, for the purpose of preventing soil erosion or preventing the banks dropping into the stream, they try to keep a certain extent, about a chain, uncleared. But just above it there is land which has been encroached upon. Where there has been encroachment, we are surveying the land and trying to recover it. But I feel that it will be necessary, for the sake of protection, to acquire even land which was alienated some time ago.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle):** Some time ago a Soil Erosion Committee was appointed, and that Committee published its report. I raised this question two or three years ago and I was told that a certain Civil Servant—I believe it was the late Mr. Pinto—was collating certain information with regard to the matter and that the recommendations made in that report would be given effect to. I think, if those recommendations had been given effect to, the trouble which the hon. Member for Dedgama (Mr. Dudley Senanayake) referred to would have been avoided. I wish to know why that report has not been considered and why the recommendations made in that report have not been carried out by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Actually Sir, some of those recommendations have been carried out, and it is in pursuance of those recommendations that certain areas have been declared reserved land which was not to be alienated. I believe my hon. Friend will remember that it is on those recommendations that the Kelani Valley Soil Preservation Committee was appointed. The Kelani Valley Committee made certain recommendations with regard to land which was too steep and those recommendations have been given effect to.

The only recommendation that has not been carried out is the recommendation that we should bring in legislation for the purpose of getting the present owners of steep land to go in for reforestation. This question was discussed at a meeting of the Agriculture Board, and one of the Agricultural Department Officers was set apart for the purpose. This officer has drawn up with the co-operation of the planters, a scheme which we are trying to give effect to.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I understand that a large quantity of timber is being exported from this country to other countries for war purposes. I should like to know whether this Government is receiving any payment for the timber that is being exported.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** We were exporting to the Middle East, and we still have certain orders to execute. But I am afraid we will not be able to execute

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1903

those orders or to export any more timber until all our own requirements have been met. There is a heavy demand for timber for Defence purposes here, and that is being met. I can tell my hon. Friend that we receive payment not only for the timber that is exported to outside countries but also for the timber that is used here for Military purposes.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I am glad to get that information because our forests are denuded of very valuable timber which is exported to these outside countries. Such a large quantity of timber is being exported that the Plywood Factory which is situated quite close to Galle is not able to obtain the timber it requires from a very well-known forest only about 20 miles from Galle. I was told that all the best timber from that forest is being sent outside Ceylon, with the result that the Plywood Factory authorities have to go a longer distance to get the necessary timber. Therefore, if no payment has been received by this Government for the timber that was exported, it would have been a great loss to the revenue as well as to the public at large.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** With regard to that matter, there seems to be some misunderstanding somewhere. A statement has been made, but I do not know what justification there is for it. As far as I am aware, the Plywood Factory was built at the mouth of the Gin-ganga merely because it was considered convenient to get the timber from certain forests. We were asked to keep those forests as reserves, and up to this date I am not aware that any timber has been removed from them. Although these forests are kept in reserve, I know that timber from an adjoining land which belongs to a private party is being extracted for the use of the Plywood Factory.

Since then there was an application to utilize timber from lands that have been cleared. We have agreed to that on certain conditions. If they tell us what timber is required for the Plywood Factory, we shall try to help them as much as possible and provide the timber. Of course, there is a reluctance on my part to reserve jungles for the special purpose of the Plywood Factory.

not in favour of reserving jungle land for any special purpose, but I am prepared, as far as I am concerned, to give the timber.

My hon. Friend thinks that we are supplying all the good timber to outside countries. I must say that we are not doing anything of the sort. The only timber that was of any use here which was sent out was hora. Otherwise the timber that was sent out was of the soft-wood type, which it was to our advantage to export, since we are trying to stock the forests with special kinds of timber which are necessary not only for the manufacture of tea chests and matches but also for other purposes.

**\*Mr. D. Wanigasekera (Weligama):** There is a talk, with regard to this Plywood Factory, that Mr. Balfour or a relative of his owns some jungle close to the Factory and that inferior timber from that jungle was being extracted in preference to the timber in the Crown reserve.

**\*The Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea (Minister of Labour, Industry & Commerce):** That is absolutely false. I have the fullest details with regard to the Plywood Factory which I will be able to give hon. Members when my votes are taken up.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I would like to say just one word with regard to the question of petitions sent to Ministers.

Before the inauguration of the State Council, the people in the villages got their grievances redressed by the Government Agents by giving bribes and other presents to Mudaliyars and other officials. Now, with the inauguration of the State Council, we have told the people that their grievances would be redressed by us and that they need not give any bribes to anybody. As it is, these people find that they cannot get their grievances redressed by sending petitions. So they feel that it is better for them to revert to the old method of getting their grievances redressed by giving bribes and by saying to different people "*Ehei Hamuduruwo*".

These are general remarks on the matter which the Board of Ministers and the State Council should take notice of.

**The Chairman:** General remarks cannot be allowed in this debate.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Thank you, Sir, for allowing me to make these general remarks.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** If any Member is dissatisfied with the action taken by me, I shall be only too happy to put before him all the information available in regard to the matter. I will place all the papers at his disposal and then he can decide whether my action is wrong or right.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was then passed.

*Sub-head 2, Travelling, Rs. 60,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Increase provision from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 61,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 2, as amended, was passed.

Sub-head 3 and 4 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 5, Rent of Quarters, Officers and Checking Stations, Rs. 2,500.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Increase provision from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 3,700.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 5, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 6 to 16 were passed without amendment.

Head 67, as amended, was passed.

### **Head 68, Registrar of Co-operative Societies.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 171,543.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Under Details of Sub-head:—

Item: Assistant Registrars.

Delete "Class I., Grade I., 3 at Rs. 4,800—300—6,000"  
and substitute "Grade I., 3 at Rs. 6,000—240—7,200".

Increase money provision for 1942-43 from Rs. 29,929 to Rs. 30,049.

Make the consequential amendments in the totals.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 9 were passed without amendment.

Head 68, as amended, was passed.

### **Head 69, Irrigation Department.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 839,400.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Under Details of sub-head:

"Additional staff for Emergency Services."

Insert "6 Clerks, Class III., Grade II., 600—42—1,398—Rs. 6,550".

### **Mr. H. de Z. Siriwardana (Negombo):**

I wish to make a few remarks on this Head.

Now that we have made the Minister of Agriculture and Lands the Minister who will be responsible for the production, purchase and distribution of food, it will be necessary for him to produce more food for purposes of distribution because we cannot depend on India for our food. A large sum of money is being spent on major irrigation works, and we are thankful to the Hon. Minister for it. These major irrigation works take five to six years to complete. But we require food immediately, and the only way to get more food is to spend more money on minor irrigation works.

Although during every Budget debate the necessity for improving minor irrigation works has been stressed, this work has been neglected. Now that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands has been appointed Minister of Food, I trust that he will take a greater interest in minor irrigation works.

There are a large number of minor irrigation works in my area, and if those irrigation works are attended to, we can produce sufficient food for our area. In fact, there is an area between Kochelikkade and Katana where the paddy-fields of a certain number of villagers are damaged by floods every year. These people cultivate their fields three or four times a year, and every time those fields are cultivated they are damaged by floods.

If the cultivation is successful, these fields will yield very good crops. Unfortunately, for want of proper irrigation facilities, these fields cannot be cultivated. As a matter of fact, these people have been agitating over this matter for the last seven or eight years. They formed a Cultivators' Society in 1941. They made representations to the

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1905

Government Agent, and lastly they made representations to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands and when they did so, the Hon. Minister replied as follows:

"With reference to your letter dated 14th February, 1941, addressed to the Hon. Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce and forwarded to this Ministry for disposal, I am directed by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands to inform you that he is advised that the clearing of Thoppu ola which passes through these villages has been undertaken as a relief measure in order to provide employment to those who have been thrown out of work as a result of the closing down of fibre mills in this area."

I do not know who gave the information that a portion had been cleared; only one-fourth of the work has been done. I think we were informed that these minor irrigation works cannot be undertaken immediately because there were other works to be done. If we have to wait in this manner, we will have to wait for five or six years for this work to be done.

I understand that there is not a sufficient number of Irrigation Engineers to attend to this work. I do not know how far it is true, but I heard that the Irrigation Engineers lent to us by the Indian Government have left and therefore there are not sufficient Engineers. These works have to be attended to immediately; unless we attend to these works we cannot improve our food situation.

If there are not a sufficient number of Irrigation Engineers, I would like to suggest to the Hon. Minister that, as in certain parts of India, these irrigation works be undertaken by the Irrigation Engineers, but once the work is over the maintenance be done by the Public Works Department. So, if only the irrigation work is attended to by the Irrigation Engineers and the maintenance be done by the Department, I think a number of Irrigation Engineers can be spared to attend to these minor irrigation works.

Those are the few suggestions I would wish to make.

**Mr. P. de S. Kularatne (Balapitiya):** Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands to the state to which lands in my constituency have been reduced, due to damage done by floods. The Bentota River is subject to floods several times in

the year and steps have been taken, I understand, to protect the other side of the river—the Alutgama side of the Kalutara District—from floods. It has made the situation worse as far as my constituency is concerned. Large sums of money have been spent by the Ministers on food production, but there will be very little encouragement to the people to undertake such work unless steps are taken to protect the land from floods.

Sir, during my election campaign, I remember, within a few hundred yards of the main road—the Galle Road—even the important roads were flooded. This happens regularly, and I think it is high time that action was taken by the Minister to do something for this area. My area has been very badly neglected not only by the present Minister but also by the then Minister. It may not be their fault; it may be that the late Member for this area was interested in the larger questions and neglected his constituency leaving it to the Ministers to look after its needs. But other Members who pressed their claims got what they wanted, and my poor constituency seems to have suffered.

I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what steps he has taken or what steps he proposes to take and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter in the near future.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Sir, I wish to endorse the remarks made by the hon. Member, although I cannot support him in the concluding part of his remarks. There is the same complaint throughout the whole of the Southern Province.

As a matter of fact, very large areas in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Udugama (Mr. Abeywickrama) and my constituency get periodically under water owing to floods from the Gin-ganga. We have both pressed for a survey of the Gin-ganga basin and for the formulation of a comprehensive scheme to check these floods. Every time this question was raised by me, the Hon. Minister promised that the matter would be considered and something would be done. But I regret to say that for the last twelve years nothing has been done to grapple with this problem. It is a serious problem.

[Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya.]

We are told that a special laboratory has been put up and that there is an expert carrying out experiments. I do not know what the results of those experiments in connexion with flood protection are, but if those experiments have not been successful, I think the expert should be sent away and another expert got out who can satisfactorily solve this problem; the more so especially at a time when food is greatly needed.

The Southern Province is a very thickly populated one, and if only these minor irrigation works are attended to and protection from floods given to the people in that area, I can say, without any hesitation, that this Province will be absolutely self-sufficient, and I think we will even have more paddy which could be distributed to the other Provinces that greatly need food.

Sir, while attending to important irrigation works, the Hon. Minister should also immediately devote his attention to minor irrigation works as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Negombo (Mr. Siriwardana). After all, these major irrigation works are in the dry zone where the people have to be attracted and have to settle down in life anew. But in the thickly populated areas, if these minor irrigation works are attended to immediate results can be attained. I hope the Hon. Minister will not lose sight of that fact and will pay more attention to and spend more money on these minor irrigation works, while, at the same time, developing the dry zone.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana (Gampaha):** Sir, I wish to point out the manner in which the Gampola District flood problem has been tackled. I do not blame the Hon. Minister, but at the same time I should like to press on him that it is a matter of very urgent necessity. It is not one which can be delayed.

During the last few years—since I entered Council—a motion on the subject was introduced in this House, and it went before the Executive Committee twice or thrice; I was told that the matter would receive attention. It has taken so many years to receive any attention. Last year the Hon. Minister wrote to me to the effect that gaugings were being taken.

**The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I can give the hon. Member any information required.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Guawardana:** He says that gaugings are being taken, and he expects to take some kind of action. The Hon. Minister knows that year in and year out we have floods in the Gampola District. A tremendous amount of damage is done to the fields—they are destroyed, fields that are dear to the Hon. Minister—not to speak of the other losses, not to speak of the whole town and the whole area being submerged.

One cannot visualize and appreciate very much the extent of damage done in this part of the country because, in the Up-country districts, floods subside within a day or two; they subside in a very short time, and there are no head lines in the papers regarding floods. All that the papers say is that the floods have subsided, and everybody in the country is satisfied. In the Low-country that is not so. The floods are there to attract the attention of everyone, for a week or two. The papers keep the Executive Committee, the Ministers and the Officers reminded of the floods. That is the unfortunate position in which the Up-country districts are really placed, particularly in regard to floods.

I would earnestly ask the Hon. Minister to see that something is done to prevent these floods in the Gampola District. Sir, when I saw the hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare) about the matter, when he was Acting Minister of Agriculture and Lands, we considered the question of getting the Indian Engineers to go into this matter. Of course, he was helpless because there were no data at all to go on.

There is another unfortunate story to be told in connexion with the floods. In the neighbouring villages land gets submerged. You find plenty of high land and the Hon. Minister is in charge of it. These high lands belong to estates. I am particularly mentioning the cases of Mariawatte and Sinnapitiya. All round Wahalagoda in Gampola there is high land just by these low lands. Even if a few acres of this land can be acquired, it will be a great blessing.

While the flood problem is being tackled, there are certain other steps that can be taken to alleviate the sufferings

of the people, and that is to remove these people to lands that are available. I have gone into the matter in great detail; and I do hope the Hon. Minister will take some kind of action. It was only the other day that the Assistant Government Agent pointed out to me the urgent necessity for tackling this question in some way or other. May I ask the Hon. Minister to take immediate steps to tackle the problem?

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya (Moratuwa):** Sir, I wish to refer to Katubedde and Molpe in the Moratuwa area. I am told that there is an extent of about 300 acres of paddy-fields with a lock-gate, but I understand that at the moment this lock-gate is not functioning. I wish to bring this matter to the notice of the Hon. Minister. I understand that there is an Irrigation Officer in charge of it, but it is very difficult to get at him because he is stationed at Colombo; I am told that he has not paid any attention to the complaints made. I believe some time ago representations about the matter were made to the Hon. Minister. I would like to know whether the Hon. Minister has looked into the matter.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Sir, I begin with the last speaker and then go on to the others.

With regard to the lock-gate, I do not remember the exact instance, but I shall certainly make inquiries and find out why, if the lock-gate is there, it does not function. There is one thing I remember. It is a case of a lock-gate being taken over by field-owners, for maintenance. They had not been cleaning it, and we had to send an Irrigation Officer to attend to the matter. But now, in every case I have given definite instructions not to hand these lock-gates over to the cultivators to maintain, because they cannot do it properly.

I will certainly inquire into the matter mentioned and let the hon. Member know. There was another matter mentioned to me yesterday. Well, that is an area that I am very familiar with, and it is one of the areas that I am very anxious to develop. But unfortunately the controversy that arose here about the Bolgoda Lake and Kalutara North prevented that area from being attended to. I had the whole scheme ready, and

by this time I would have been working on that scheme. Unfortunately the Council turned it down, with the result that I am helpless now. If only the Council will pass that resolution, I shall get the scheme to benefit both sides.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Why not bring it up again?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I have everything ready.

**\*Mr. U. Batuwantudawe (Kalutara):** You might devise some alternative scheme, Sir.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** With regard to minor irrigation schemes that have been attended to, I do not know what my hon. Friend calls "a minor irrigation scheme". The ones that he mentioned cost only about Rs. 2,000,000 or Rs. 3,000,000; that was the cost of each scheme. I do not know whether the Gin-ganga scheme is one of them.

With regard to the areas in the Southern Province, I may say that they are areas that I am doing my very best to tackle. The success that has been achieved with regard to the Walaweganga is very encouraging, and if my hon. Friend goes round to that area—I had the pleasure of going along with the hon. Member for Weligama (Mr. Wanigasekera) who has taken a great deal of interest in the matter—he will find that the people in adjoining areas want that scheme extended. The whole scheme is not complete yet. It has benefited the people greatly, and as far as Gin-ganga is concerned, I believe the experiments have been almost completed.

As regards the scheme mentioned by my hon. Friend the hon. Member for Balapitiya (Mr. Kularatne), I may say that his predecessors too had been at me, and we have done a certain amount of work. I have a number of schemes already for these areas. I believe I have something like nine schemes already for my hon. Friend's constituency. But unfortunately the difficulty today is lack of cement and iron. At one time we were suffering from a lack of Engineers, but now, although the engineering staff has not been much increased, and although some of them have gone away, there is greater effort put in by the Engineers and they are doing very much

[The Hon. Mr. Senanayake.]  
more work, and if we could obtain cement and steel some of the other works could be undertaken.

The trouble in that area is that the Public Works Department and the Railway had not in the first instance taken into consideration the effect of floods when they constructed the railway lines. In addition, there is the usual trouble of the wave-action and counter-action, which is receiving more attention now. I might say that this is one of my—

**\*The Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Minister of Local Administration):** One nearest to your heart?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Really it is inside my heart, not nearest! I am very much concerned about it for the simple reason that I feel, especially after the success I have had at Weligama, that it would be worth spending not a few millions but many millions in that area. As soon as I am able to do so, I shall certainly come here with a proposal.

**\*Mr. B. H. Aluwihare (Matale):** What about Matale?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The Matale area will never be neglected, Sir.

With regard to Gampola, I might say that although we have not taken all the gaugings and a complete scheme has not been evolved, there is a proposal which we intend undertaking today—to widen the river at the narrow bend between Primrose Hill Estate and the Experimental Station. You will find that there is a very narrow bend which accounts for the very large amount of flooding in Kandy, because the water does not flow fast enough. We want to deepen and widen that bend. Unfortunately the difficulties are there; otherwise we would have attended to it.

With regard to the Mahaweli-ganga and Gampola, it is not as if we can have one scheme and try it. Anyway, the matter is in hand just now. It is only this year that we have been able to start something.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** I wonder whether the Hon. Minister has considered the fact that all this stopping of soil erosion and that kind of thing must have an effect on these floods; and if some of these estates

on the hill-side, especially in the Up-country areas, were allowed to grow into jungle once again, a great deal of the troubles of the Member for Gampola anyway would be solved.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Remove the tea bushes and grow jungle!

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** And a certain amount of our other troubles also will be solved.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera:** In this connexion I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that owing to heavy clearing of jungle, floods are becoming more frequent down in the south. Formerly when the Deniyaya area had ten inches of rain, it took about a week for the floods to reach Matara. But this year I find that we have had floods two days after heavy rain in Deniyaya. One of the things I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister is that a scheme was prepared for Polatugama—the Polatugama Scheme—for the protection of an area of about 3,000 acres. The money was voted in the Budget before the last, but the work has not yet been taken in hand.

With regard to the Nilwala-ganga Flood Protection Scheme, I may say that the scheme is not now progressing as fast as I expected, but we have protected about 3,000 acres, and the Hon. Minister himself was surprised, when he went down to examine the scheme, to see 3,000 acres under paddy and the unprotected area all covered by floods. It took over six years to prepare one scheme for the Nilwala-ganga, and if schemes are prepared for Gin-ganga and the other rivers, I think this country will not need one grain of rice from abroad.

I think we ought to have more Irrigation Engineers and more money ought to be spent on irrigation works. It is by spending several millions more and having more staff and expediting the work that this country can be self-contained in the matter of food.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I realize, Sir, that it is necessary to strengthen the Laboratory Branch and the Construction Branch, and I am bringing proposals with regard to them. Even at this time of war we can make preparations with regard to these schemes.



Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

With regard to the other remarks of my hon. Friend, I only hope that I will be permitted next year to take up the estimates of the Irrigation Department before those of the Forest Department, so that there would not be so much clamour for the release of land from the Forest Department for clearing, because they realize that it does a great deal of harm.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana:** I am grateful to the Hon. Minister for his answer. Might I ask him whether some work will be started at least this year, because the cost of materials should not stand in the way? Think of the money that Government spends on relief alone.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** It is not the cost of materials. My hon. Friend will be surprised to hear that in the whole of Ceylon there are only a few tons of steel available. There is not sufficient steel to make implements for breaking metal for the roads.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana:** I hope the Hon. Minister will give prior consideration to this scheme.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** I wish to draw attention to the unsatisfactory state of the class of officers described as "Cultivation Officers".

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** It is a different class now, not the old class.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** There used to be a class.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** This item was included some time ago. Now we are recruiting men and training them in the Agricultural Department. We are not drawing them from the Irrigation Department.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** At the bottom of page 160 of the Estimates you will find "Cultivation Officers" under "Government Agent, Eastern Province", and the item is under the Irrigation Department vote.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** We have not come to that item yet.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** Four of them are described under "Government Agent,

Eastern Province", and the item comes under the Irrigation Department vote. Now this is very unsatisfactory. You will find that all four of them are drawing the maximum salary of their grade—Rs. 2,520—and they have been drawing it from the time they were appointed to those posts.

What has happened is that these officers come under the Irrigation Department and they make the appointments from among the class appearing on page 159, "Field Assistants, Rs. 1,200-2,520". When they reach the top, the Department assigns them to Government Agents as Cultivation Officers. They draw the maximum salary and go on drawing it till the end of their lives.

Now, if they were in the Department they would become senior officers and rise to a higher grade Rs. 2,640-4,440. But these inefficient people are sent over to the Government Agent and they remain on the maximum of Rs. 2,520. The Government Agent cannot transfer them to any other place, and they are there. The evil is that these men have nothing to look forward to, and drawing the same salary for years, they begin to interest themselves in the place, buy up land and devote their time to their own interests rather than to cultivation in the area.

The whole system ought to be changed. The Government Agent cannot promote them. He cannot send them away to some other district. In Trincomalee and other places I have found such officers who have been there for years and years. There is a great deal of complaint about corruption, and it is so difficult to prove these things—that they charge so much for the issue of water. There was the case of an officer who had recovered so much per acre. The system is bad. I am glad the Hon. Minister says that a new system is going to be introduced, but the complaint is not against the Irrigation Department or the Agricultural Department: these men should not be kept stationed at the same place.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** That is right. What happened in the past was this. One of the ways of getting rid of undesirable men was to "shove" them on to the Government Agents, and they

[The Hon. Mr. Senanayake.] remained there. But, of course, I do not say that they were all bad, for the simple reason that even some good men have had to be removed. But now we are not following the same system; we have quite a different system now.

**Mr. J. H. Ilangantileke (Puttalam):** On page 161 of the Estimates under "Government Agent, North-Western Province" there is:

- "1 Cultivation Officer, Deduru-oya Scheme;
- 2 Village Cultivation Officers;
- 10 Wewa Lekamas (temporary) (who assist Village Tank Inspectors);
- 3 Village Cultivation Officers."

May I know from the Hon. Minister what provision has been made for the Tank Inspector? No provision appears to have been made for this officer.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I can give a general idea with regard to the Kurunegala District, although I cannot furnish full particulars. There the village tanks that used to be in the charge of the Field Officers under the Government Agent have been taken over by the Irrigation Department. The Irrigation Department attend to the masonry and irrigation work to-day. It is only the earthwork that is left to be done by the Government Agent and the people; and we are getting the new Cultivation Officers to do that work. Perhaps the ten temporary Wewa Lekamas have been appointed till such time as we can get the trained men.

**Mr. Ilangantileke:** But under the Government Agent, North-Central Province, provision appears for three Village Tank Inspectors and twenty-one Wewa Lekamas to assist the Inspectors. I should like to know from the Minister what provision has been made for the Village Tank Inspector under the Government Agent, North-Western Province, Kurunegala.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** There is no provision made for that officer for the simple reason that we have changed the system. There is a vast difference between the systems obtaining in the North-Central Province and that in the North-Western Province. In the North-Western Province, you have isolated village works while in the North-Central Province you find one or two big

schemes, like the one extending from Kalawewa to Anuradhapura. You will have to keep Inspectors there to look after that scheme. In the case of isolated village works, such as those found in the North-Western Province, I stated a little while ago that the masonry and engineering side of these works has been taken over by the Irrigation Department, and the rest of the work, namely, earthwork is done by Cultivation Officers, in place of whom these Wewa Lekamas are now appointed.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 4 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 5, Transport, Rs. 200,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Increase provision from Rs. 200,000 to Rs. 250,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 5, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 6 to 11 were passed without amendment.

Head 69, as amended, was passed.

**Head 70, Irrigation Annually Recurrent.**

*Sub-head 1, Major Works, Rs. 350,000.*

**Mr. H. L. Ratwatte (Kegalla):** Under this Sub-head, may I know from the Minister why the Advisory Board on the Minipe Scheme is not sitting? We understand that about 1,000 people went down to Minipe, stayed there for a few days and came back. This would involve much expenditure. I should like the Hon. Minister to make a short statement on the matter.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The work carried out there is considered to be unsatisfactory. I, however, do not know why the Advisory Committee is not sitting. All that I have been able to find out is that the progress made on that work is very unsatisfactory. I had to make arrangements to carry out the work myself. We are asking the Irrigation Department to do the clearing, ridging, and so on. We are carrying on that work now.

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1911

I was really surprised to find that two years after water was made available to that scheme, there were only seven colonists there. Even some of those colonists have not been provided for. I believe, we now have about 2,000 or 3,000 labourers working there, trying to put things in order. All this time the scheme was not properly worked and we are trying to do better now.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Who is the Chairman of the Advisory Board? He must be responsible for convening the meetings.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The Government Agent is the Chairman. I shall write to him, asking him to summon a meeting of the Advisory Board. [Interruption]. We can get the other man to do it.

**Mr. Ilangantileke:** Who is actually in charge of the Ridibendi-ela Scheme? The Engineer who was in charge of that scheme has been transferred to Vavuniya.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** There is a Field Officer there. As the engineering and masonry work has been taken over by the Irrigation Department, you do not want an Engineer there.

**Mr. Ilangantileke:** Is the Field Officer in charge of the whole scheme?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Yes.

**Dr. A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South):** May I know whether unemployment relief work is done by the Irrigation Department?

Sub-head 1 was passed without amendment.

Sub-head 2 was passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 3, Village Works, Rs. 50,000.*

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** You find that the provision made under Sub-head 2, during the year 1940-41, was Rs. 55,000; during the year 1941-42, it was Rs. 40,000; and that it is proposed to provide next year Rs. 50,000. The urgency of putting through village works this year and in the ensuing year is very much more than in any other previous year. The provision made for 1940-41 was Rs. 55,000, but for the ensuing year the figure put

down is Rs. 50,000, a reduction of Rs. 5,000.

I want to ask the Minister with whom I should get in touch to have a certain *ela* in my constituency cleared. I do not know with whom to communicate in the matter. There are certain village works, works costing at the most Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000, to be attended to in my area. There are some 12 or 15 such small works to be attended to. A little expenditure on these small works will prove of great benefit to the people in that part of the country. These are not such costly or extravagant works as those carried out at Minipe and Polonnaruwa, where it is difficult to get people to work owing to the virulent type of malaria prevailing there. If a little expenditure is incurred on these small village works, crops are assured.

There is a Committee that prepares a priority list of works to be undertaken in that area. All that is mere red tapism which results in the postponement of very necessary works. The Committee acts like a bottle-neck and impedes work. The Committee should be done away with. It is not feasible to adhere to priority lists now. Today the representations made by various Members in regard to their constituencies should be acted upon. In the Galle District there are three constituencies, and if you go and merge the requirements of all those constituencies into one priority list nothing will be done. There will, of course, be a priority list, but nothing would be done.

I should like to know from the Hon. Minister how small works in my constituency could be carried out. I can tell the Minister that there will be a good return by way of crops if those works are carried out.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** At present we have given definite instructions to Assistant Government Agents (Emergency) to carry out small village works that will increase output, and call for the money required, if such works do not require any engineering knowledge. We have asked them to do that. At the same time—I am not speaking of the Galle District at the moment—there are some places which want Government to do the work that the

[The Hon. Mr. Senanayake.] villagers themselves can do. Such works will not be carried out by Government. The hon. Member for Udugama (Mr. Abeywickrama) has shown me one or two places where small village works are desirable and the Assistant Government Agents (Emergency) can get them done.

**Mr. Ilangantileke:** Is the amount to be spent on a particular work limited? Is there a limit of, say, Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000 placed on any work?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The expenditure depends on the nature of the work.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** What is the limit of the discretion given?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Sometimes even Rs. 5 cannot be spent on a work if that work requires engineering skill. If it is the carrying out of a temporary amuna or so, it can be done. [Interruption.] Supposing an Assistant Government Agent is asked to carry out a work that would cost Rs. 1,000 per acre?

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Oh, no.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** That depends on the nature of the work and on the benefit we are going to derive from carrying out the work.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Will the Hon. Minister kindly send me a memorandum on the subject? We do not spend Rs. 1,000 on an acre. The Hon. Minister took an extreme case as an example. What I refer to are small village works which the older people had carried out for the benefit of paddy cultivation. Now those people have taken to planting rubber and tea and those small village works have gone out of repair. These works can be carried out at an expenditure of Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000.

The Minister says that wide discretionary powers are given to the (Emergency) Assistant Government Agents, but they are not using them, saying that they do not know what would happen to them if they used those powers. No engineering skill or experience is needed to carry out the works that I mentioned, and those works can

be carried out for a mere Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000. Instructions should be sent to the (Emergency) Assistant Government Agents to carry out such work without delay.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Their instructions are that they are at liberty to carry out those works. But they have to obtain funds, and to obtain funds they have to put up their claims to the Head of the Agricultural Department. Can I give them such a wide discretion as to spend any amount they like? I am doing my very best without committing myself and making the people extravagant and reckless.

The object of the hon. Member is to get these works done. I have said that some of the works he pointed out to me are works that we can do, but I cannot say that they may spend any amount on those works. I have some responsibility in this matter. His desire and my desire are the same. There is no difference of opinion between us in that matter.

**Mr. Freeman:** At our last Agricultural Committee meeting it was stated that there is power to spend up to Rs. 1,000 on a work that is called a "food-production work". May I have some light thrown on that point?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** In certain instances there were requests made to spend up to Rs. 1,000—[Interruption.] Usually, Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000 becomes the limit. Sometimes even for earthwork you require engineering skill. Where Engineers are available, we allow them to make use of their services. If they can secure the services of a retired Engineer, we allow them to carry on the work.

**Mr. Freeman:** I do not want to go on with that question as the hon. Member who wanted information (Mr. Abeywickrama) has run away.

**Mr. Siriwardana:** Cannot some money, for expenditure on these small village works, be given to the Village Committee Chairmen? Or, cannot a circular be sent to Village Committee Chairmen calling upon them to attend to these works? They know the country better than the Revenue Officers do. They

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

know what anicuts, for instance, are needed for the people to carry on cultivation. I know that at a meeting held the (Emergency) Assistant Government Agent informed the people that manure was given free—

**The Chairman:** We have nothing to do with manure under this Sub-head.

**Mr. Siriwardana:** The (Emergency) Assistant Government Agent was informed by the people that they wanted certain anicuts built, but he told them that he had no instructions with regard to the building of anicuts. The Hon. Minister said that instructions have been given to Revenue Officers.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** Under their own Ordinance, Village Committees have the right to attend to village works in their areas. The Hon. Minister of Local Administration informs me that he has called for a list of such works to be carried out for which grants are required. The Village Committees can apply to the Minister of Local Administration and get the money required to carry out those works.

**Mr. Siriwardana:** Is there any money given to them?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** As the hon. Member is also a Member of my Executive Committee, I can give him further information on the matter, either as Minister or as Chairman of his own Executive Committee.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** In my area all irrigation works have been stopped for very nearly the whole of this year.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** No; it was only during the last three months.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** That was done because of certain Defence works going on in that area. If you look at the Irrigation Extraordinary vote, you will find that most of that work is being done in other parts of that division, not in our division. I hope when the time comes adequate staff will be put on to hurry up with our works because I have been crying for the construction of works like the Duwa-oya Scheme and so on.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I am sure hon. Members realize that my hon.

Friend will have his own way when the time comes.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I want to know how this money is being spent. Is the work being done departmentally?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** This is for village works.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** The note reads:

"For maintenance and repair of masonry structures on village works (earthwork of which is done by villagers)."

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** It is spent by the Department; this money is required for maintaining irrigation works.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** The allocation for the Southern Province is Rs. 6,000. This is quite a small sum.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** The masonry works must be small.

Sub-head 3 was then passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 4, Agricultural Roads,  
Rs. 75,000.*

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to an item on page 163:

"Tamblegam-Kinniyai Road, Kanthalai Scheme (8.6 miles)."

**\*The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** This work is proceeding slowly.

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** The name implies that this is a road between Tamblegam and Kinniyai. You will remember that Mr. Subramaniam was very keen about this road for years. This work was started in 1930, but has not been completed yet. I happened to go through this village the last time I was in that district. At the 8th mile you come up against a stream; you cannot go beyond it in order to get to Kinniyai. They planned for a masonry bridge, a wooden bridge, an so on, but nothing has been done. There is some dispute between the officers who are engaged on this work. We are maintaining an uncompleted road which does not carry one to Kinniyai. I wish the Hon. Minister would call for a report on the work done, so that he may see what has been accomplished. This is scandalous on the part of the Department, and

[Mr. Tambimuttu.]  
this state of affairs has been going on for the last ten years. I have written to the Government Agent about this matter.

I had to go along this road in a small car. Although I was not upset, two poor carters were injured by their carts overturning.

\***The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Who went with you?

**Mr. Tambimuttu:** I do not know what the Hon. Minister is saying. Here is a work which has not been completed, and we call it the Tamblegam-Kinniyai Road. Kinniyai is some miles off Tamblegam with two streams in between.

\***The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** At one time there was a discussion as to whether this bridge should be put up by the Public Works Department. I remember calling for a report on the work done. I have not the papers with me just now, but I shall look into the matter.

Sub-head 4 was then passed without amendment.

Head 70 was passed without amendment.

### Head 71, Irrigation Extraordinary.

*Sub-head 1, Electrical Recording Gauges along Kelani-ganga, Colombo Flood Scheme, Rs. 14,000.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I want to make some general observations on this Head. You will see that the proposed expenditure is Rs. 1,455,263. There is an all-round under-expenditure of 50 per cent. The total is reduced to Rs. 727,632.

Take, for instance, an item like "Improvements and Repairs to Village Irrigation Works, Rs. 400,000". I take it that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands, in view of the questions raised today, will try his level best to spend Rs. 400,000. Taking it for granted that he would spend Rs. 400,000 and a further Rs. 40,000 for some other work, there will be left a balance of about Rs. 300,000 from the total vote for Irrigation Extraordinary. So I want to draw the attention of the House to this fact, that it will not be possible for the Hon. Minister to undertake all the

schemes proposed. We will be only passing these items in the hope that something will be done.

\***The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** As a matter of fact, you will find that almost all these items are either continuation or completion works. There are some new items. If we can get the material, I will certainly come to this House with a supplementary vote. That is the only handicap. If I can spend the money, I will certainly do so; nothing will prevent me from doing so.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** It is no use dealing with this Head item by item. I suggest that we pass all the 88 items at once.

Sub-heads 1 to 8 were passed without amendment.

*New Sub-head 8A, Three Crossings on Weerapitiya Maha-ela, Rs. 7,500.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*].

Insert the following new Sub-head:

"Construction of a Circuit Bungalow at Bopatalawa.

	Rs.
Estimated total cost	... 7,500
Expenditure to 31.12.41	... Nil
Estimated Expenditure to 30.9.42	Nil
Estimate for 1942-43	... 7,500 "

Amendment agreed to.

New Sub-head 8A, was passed.

Sub-heads 9 to 11 were passed without amendment.

*New Sub-head 11A, Improvements to Talagoda Amuna, Rs. 12,750.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*].

"Improvements to Talagoda Amuna:—A sum of Rs. 12,750 was provided in the 1941-42 Estimates for this service but work had to be deferred in view of other special works carried out in the District.

	Rs.
Estimated total cost	... 12,750
Actual Expenditure to 31.12.41	Nil
Estimated expenditure to 30.9.42	Nil
Estimate for 1942-43	... 12,750 "

Amendment agreed to.

New Sub-head 11A was passed.

Sub-heads 12 to 22 were passed without amendment.

Aug 27, 1942]

Debates.

*New Sub-head 22A, Restoration of Nabodagaswewa, Rs. 13,250.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Insert the following new Sub-head:—

“Restoration of Landejulana Tank.—The tank, when restored, will irrigate 80 acres for Maha.—

	Rs.
Estimated total cost ...	13,250
Actual Expenditure to 31.12.41	Nil
Estimated Expenditure to 30.9.42	Nil
Estimate for 1942-43 ...	13,250”

Amendment agreed to.

New Sub-head 22A, was passed.

Sub-heads 23 to 32 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 33, Raising Bund of Vavuniya Tank, Rs. 4,500.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Rs.

Alter details as follows:—

“ Estimated Expenditure to 30.9.42 ...	Nil
Estimate for 1942-43 ...	5,500”

Alter the legend from “For completion” to “A sum of Rs. 5,500 was provided in the Estimates for 1941-42 for increasing the storage by raising the bund, but as the work was not of vital importance, it was deferred.”

Add the footnote “a” in the Column “Estimates for 1942-43”.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 33, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 34 to 56 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 57, Completion of Nagolla-Kosgolla Road, Deduru-oya Scheme, Rs. 9,250.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Alter details as follows:

	Rs.
“ Estimated Expenditure to 30.9.42 ...	2,250
Estimate for 1942-43 ...	7,000”

Amend the legend to read “For completion”. Delete footnote “a”.

Make consequential amendments in the totals.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 57, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 58 to 88 were passed without amendment.

Head 71, as amended, was passed.

**Head 77, Minister of Local Administration.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 26,841.*

**\*Mr. B. H. Aluwihare (Matale):** We will take up these votes later.

**\*The Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Minister of Local Administration):** We can take them up now and go on till 12 o'clock.

*A quorum not present, and division bells rung. Later, a quorum being present—*

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya (Moratuwa):** I wish to raise a point with regard to the Municipal Council of Galle. I am referring to the Ordinance relating to the relief of the poor—Ordinance No. 30 of 1939—which Municipal Councils are expected to administer.

In the case of the Municipal Council of Galle, the poor law is administered without a poor rate. I think we are expected to levy a poor rate under the Ordinance. But owing to the fact that there will be an outcry if an extra rate is levied, the poor law is administered without a poor rate. I am sure the Hon. Minister is aware of the state in which the finances of the Municipal Council are.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana (Gampola):** Bankrupt state!

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** I must say that the finances have almost been depleted, and the Council is more or less heading for bankruptcy.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana:** It is already bankrupt.

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** I know that the Auditor-General has passed serious strictures on the finances of the Galle Municipal Council. The position is that there is a great demand for poor relief within the Municipal limits of Galle. So that as matters stand the Council finds it difficult to comply with the requests of the people for relief. The result is that certain people who are deserving of relief do not get any help at all; really urgent cases do not get sufficient relief.

[Mr. T. Amarasuriya.]

I remember, some time ago the Municipal Council of Galle made a request to the Commissioner of Local Government for a grant. The request was that the Municipal Council should be given, by the Central Government, half the sum that it voted for the administration of poor relief.

Section 5 (1) of the Poor Law Ordinance reads thus:

"The purposes for which an urban local authority may expend the funds at its disposal under any Ordinance regulating its powers and duties (including any sum which may, at any time, be voted by the State Council for the purposes of this Ordinance on the recommendation of the Executive Committee of Labour, Industry and Commerce) . . . ."

The point that I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Local Administration is that the Galle Municipal Council made an application under this Ordinance, because it was not able to administer the Poor Law Ordinance to the satisfaction of everybody.

I wish to inquire from the Hon. Minister whether he is in a position to comply with the request of the Galle Municipal Council. As a matter of fact this request was made to him some time ago and, as far as I know, it was turned down. I am now appealing to the Hon. Minister to consider this case in the present circumstances and grant the relief prayed for.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Will the hon. Member allow me to answer the question?

I am very sorry that the request of the Municipal Council cannot be granted, for the simple reason that the principle underlying poor relief is that the relief of the indigent poor is primarily, if not solely, a duty cast upon the local body. The Municipal Council, Galle, therefore, in order to give poor relief of the nature contemplated in the Ordinance, must levy a poor rate. They cannot come and ask for money from the Central Government to perform a function that is definitely contemplated as one coming within the purview of local bodies, merely because in the past they had not used ordinary caution in the handling of their finances. That is a different matter altogether.

Certainly, the Ordinance contemplates certain grants being made—that is not for ordinary poor relief—to local bodies for some new scheme, some big institution, orphanage, or something like that. Even in a case of that nature, the Central Government can consider making a grant of the total or a part of the cost. But in any ordinary administration of poor relief—

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** In that case, if the Municipal Council want to put up a Home for Vagrants I wish to know whether the Hon. Minister is prepared to recommend a contribution or grant towards the maintenance of vagrants.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I am prepared to consider a recommendation to the Ministry of Labour, Industry and Commerce, who are the authorities, under the Ordinance, for making a grant.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle):** With regard to this question, it is rather unfortunate that the Hon. Minister should take up this attitude. In a way I am not surprised that he has taken up that attitude because the finances of the Municipal Council of Galle have been badly handled. I am not so much concerned with the Municipal Council and its Members as I am with the ratepayers. After all, the object of the Ordinance is to confer a benefit on the poor of the various towns, and, unfortunately, owing to slackness and bad handling of the finances of the Galle Municipal Council, the poor are denied such benefits.

It is not possible for the Municipal Council of Galle, in the present circumstances, to impose a poor rate, because the people are unable to pay even the ordinary rates due to hard times caused by the war and general economic conditions. In view of all the circumstances, I wonder whether the two Ministers concerned will take a sympathetic view of the matter. They might be able to advise the Municipal Council of Galle as regards an adjustment of their finances in order to grant poor relief. I would like the two Ministers to investigate this matter further before they come to a definite decision.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Raise



Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1917

**The Hon. Mr. H. J. Huxham (Financial Secretary):** I must protest against the idea entertained by local authorities that their rates are fixed like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. In the last ten years the Central Government has been driven to raise taxation by practically 100 per cent. and I do not think any self-respecting local authority ought to come to the Central Government and ask for a subsidy which it is not obviously entitled to until it has doubled its rates.

**The Chairman:** The sitting is suspended till 2 P.M.

*Sitting accordingly suspended until 2 p.m. and then resumed.* MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER [MR. SUSANTA DE FONSEKA] *presiding as Chairman.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** With regard to the creation of a separate Local Government Service, I have on several occasions before this referred to the subject, and the Minister gave this House an assurance that the matter had been investigated and that he was framing the necessary legislation to give effect to the proposal. I do not know whether any legislation has been prepared. There is no need to impress on this House the urgent need for such a unified service. What is the present position?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Perhaps my hon. Friend realizes that the formation of a Local Government Service, the desirability of which I admit, is a matter involving many important changes. We have a scheme ready for the introduction of such a unified service, particularly with reference to the clerical service of local bodies, but no steps have yet been taken, for the simple reason that the scheme itself is rather complicated. It has to be worked out, and the present situation prevents any steps being taken with regard to big changes of this nature. I can give the hon. Member the assurance that the matter of a Local Government Service is not in abeyance and will be proceeded with as far as possible.

There was also the question of the final form that local bodies would take. There are many of these Sanitary Board towns in regard to which a final decision has been made, but action is being held up owing to present conditions, which place

difficulties in the way of the creation of a large number of new Urban Councils.

With regard to Provincial Councils, I have the whole scheme ready but it is not possible to proceed with any scheme involving any radical changes in the present system of Provincial administration at a time like the present. That scheme too is ready, and I shall proceed with it as soon as I get a reasonable opportunity of doing so.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Last year and the year before, the Minister promised us an amendment of the law which would enable pensions to be paid to employees of local bodies. Very grave hardship is caused by the inability of local bodies to pay pensions. I do not see that that, at any rate, is a matter that should wait, or could wait, for a number of years.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** As the hon. Member knows, there are various types of local bodies. The Municipal Councils have their own pension minutes. In the case of Urban Councils, some have pension rules, and in the case of Sanitary Board towns, there are no pension rights for the employees, who are provided for by way of gratuities. I do not think it is satisfactory to have a pension minute now with regard to Sanitary Board towns at a time when—

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Urban councils?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** My hon. Friend is particularly interested in Urban Councils. Some of them have pension schemes; others have not. There is no uniform practice among Urban Councils in the matter of pensions. But this is a matter where the initiative must come from the local body; in other words, it is extremely difficult for the Central Government to impose terms with regard to emoluments or pensions. Certain Urban Councils have schemes of their own, and if any other Council puts up a scheme, it will be considered.

With regard to a uniform pension scheme to be imposed by the Central Government on all Urban Councils, I do not know whether the hon. Member presses for it. Even in the case of Municipal Councils, they put up their pension minutes for sanction by the central

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The position put to the Urban Council, Matale, was that there was no legal provision under which they can grant pensions. That is the difficulty. If there was an enabling clause, there would be no difficulty about granting pensions—[*interruption*]: I challenge you to produce the legal provision under which pensions could be granted. Here is an ex-Commissioner of Local Government, and he is looking for that provision; I hope he will find it.

**Mr. H. E. Newnham (Nominated Member):** Yes, he has.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Will he read it out?

**Mr. Newnham:—**

“ the power of any district council to make by-laws includes the power to make by-laws with regard to the payment of salaries and provision of pensions and gratuities . . . . . to grant leave of absence to officers in service . . . . . ” and “ the provision of pensions or gratuities to widows, children, next of kin . . . . . ”

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The then Commissioner of Local Government, Mr. Kaufmann, informed our Urban Council that some legal provision was required, and the result is that our labourers and Sanitary Inspectors, and so on, and employees of that class, simply do not get pensions. It is a very great hardship.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I do not know the actual facts of the case to which the hon. Member refers, but probably the position that arose was that there was no by-law dealing with the matter passed by the Matale Urban Council. That is why there was “ no legislation ”, but as the by-law-making power is vested in the Urban Council, it must be made use of by each Council.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana:** The hon. Member is referring to the case of an officer who had served for many years and died, leaving his dependants utterly helpless. The Matale Urban Council did its very best to make provision, but no by-law had been framed at the time.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** It was a hard case.

**\*Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardana:** The power to make by-laws is there.

**Mr. Newnham:** Perhaps the difficulty arose over the fact that the officer referred

to was an officer of the previous Local Board, and the previous Local Board had no pension rules and had awarded him no pension, in which case there might be a difficulty in the Urban Council framing a regulation to provide a pension for somebody else's employee. That may be the case.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** That is exactly the case—because these were employees of the previous local Board, and they were taken over by the Urban Council.

I am thinking of that Inspector and also of another man, a labourer who had been in the employ of the Council and its predecessor for thirty years. This man did not know the distinction between the Local Board and the Urban Council and what not. Having worked for thirty years in the town, he is on the street, begging, when he is least able to do any work. It is a most pitiable case, and I do hope that the Hon. Minister will do something about it.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Now that the question has been raised, I do not like to give the usual type of answer and say, “ I will look into it ”. I can tell my hon. Friend that I will see what precisely, if anything, can and should be done. I do not know what particular by-law the Matale Urban Council has for dealing with pensions and gratuities, or whether any provision is made in those by-laws for dealing with prior service under a local body which has been superseded by an Urban Council. May I suggest to him that he might mention the matter to the Chairman of the Urban Council, Matale, and tell that the Council should put it up to me by a resolution of theirs—that they want the by-law passed, or, if they already have the by-law, that they want it amended to include provision for the cases referred to? The moment that comes up to me, I shall certainly deal with it. That is a practical step.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** I shall do that.

**The Chairman:** What happened was that certain Urban Councils drafted by-laws to make provision for the payment of pensions for service in bodies other than Urban Councils, but the Attorney-General, at the request of the

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1919

Commissioner of Local Government, held that Urban Councils have no power to make by-laws to provide for pensions for prior service. That is the position.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** If that matter comes up, I will see what can be done, and whether any special legislation is necessary on the point.

**Dr. A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South):** May I know whether the Minister contemplates taking up the question of handing over the management of education in these areas to the respective local bodies? We should not merely attend to the needs of the Clerks and other officers working in these local bodies. It is more important to look to the interests of the people in these areas. True enough there is the Education Department today, but I think more effective work can be done if the local bodies take up the work of education in the different areas. May I know whether the Minister contemplates any action in this direction?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The problem, shortly, is this: if local bodies are to deal with the question of education, they will, no doubt, be expected to meet the expenses involved. You have a fairly high educational rate in certain countries.

The position in Ceylon is that the local bodies find that even for their other more immediate functions it is difficult for them to raise the necessary money, and if in addition to that they are expected to levy an educational rate of their own to provide for the cost of education, I doubt very much whether it would be possible for them to do so for a very long time to come.

But if my hon. Friend has in mind the giving of some kind of a voice in the education that is given in the respective areas to them, I would point out that local authorities have it now; it is provided for in the new Education Ordinance. On the other question, I am afraid local bodies will not be able to raise the necessary money to meet the expenditure. The money would have to come from the Central Government. If the Central Government is prepared to provide the money, I do not think local bodies would object to taking over the responsibility.

**Mr. H. R. Freeman (Anuradhapura):** I asked a question in Council about two grown-ups riding in one rickshaw. I cannot find it anywhere in the Questions Notice Paper.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The Executive Committee considered the matter and came to a tentative decision—that the suggestion of the hon. Member should be given effect to. We are going into the matter with the Municipal authorities and the Police. Some steps will be taken with regard to that.

**Mr. Freeman:** The question of raising rickshaw fares is now ripe for consideration. To make a man a beast of burden at present rates is not quite fair.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I will consider the matter.

**Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel (Colombo Central):** What has the Minister done with regard to the resolution which the Colombo Municipal Council passed two months ago about the reduction of rates payable in respect of properties the rentals of which have gone down on account of the emergency arising out of the war? I understand that the City Fathers discussed the subject thoroughly and that they passed a resolution to the effect that relief should be given immediately.

Then it was found that there was some legal difficulty, as the Council had not the legal authority to put into effect its resolution immediately. The matter was referred to the Minister. At first I heard that the Minister was simply sitting on the resolution and not making any effort to pass the necessary by-laws to enable the Municipal Council to give effect to its resolution. But on going further into the matter, I ascertained that it was not clearly before the Minister but that two other dignitaries had come to loggerheads on this question.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Perhaps if my hon. Friend allows me to explain the situation it would be easier; I know the situation.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** I want to point out how easily the Minister can get over the difficulties that he is labouring under.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I would like the hon. Member to appreciate first what the difficulty is. Might I explain first what the difficulty is? Then he can make his suggestions.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** Will the Hon. Minister answer the question after I have finished? I want to explain what has taken place.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** That is wrong. The hon. Member does not know what has taken place.

**The Chairman:** Will the hon. Member please continue with his question.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** I understand that the Legal Draftsman had invited the Commissioner to come to the Law Library or some other place to discuss this matter, and that the Municipal Commissioner thought it was very undignified for him to go to the Law Library to discuss the matter, and had written in to say that if the Legal Draftsman wants to meet the Commissioner he ought to come to the Town Hall and meet him. So a sort of impasse has been created as a result of these two officials not being able to come to an understanding as to where they should meet and discuss matters. I only want to suggest to the Minister that he should take the initiative and invite these two gentlemen either to his house or some other place for tea and allow them to discuss the matter thoroughly and come to some understanding to that the resolution could be given effect to immediately.

There is a great deal of suffering at present because the Municipality is about to sell a large number of properties for non-payment of taxes. Furthermore, if this law is not passed and the necessary authority given to the Municipal Council before the end of the year, it would be practically useless because once the year is over the Municipality has the authority to reduce taxes.

I would like the Minister to take immediate action on this matter.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Well, Sir, if I had been permitted to explain matters perhaps we might have saved time. I will say straightaway now that

I shall not under any circumstances invite the Municipal Commissioner and the Legal Draftsman to my bungalow or for tea.

I consider that an utterly improper suggestion to make.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** On a point of personal explanation, Sir. It was suggested in a sort of improper way. It was suggested simply as a way of making these two people friendly.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Well, Sir, we are again unnecessarily wasting time, and I repeat what I said, after the hon. Member's explanation.

The position is this: the Municipal Council put up a suggestion to deal with the question of the reduction of the assessment in view of the present emergency. My Executive Committee agreed to that; and the matter was immediately put before the Legal Draftsman for drafting the necessary legislation. That was early in June. Now, the Legal Draftsman sent a letter to this effect, dated June 9th:

"As the proposed legislation gives rise to a number of doubtful questions, I should be glad if you would request an officer of the Colombo Municipal Council to see my Assistant Mr. S. Namasivayam in his Chambers at Hultsdorf, and discuss those questions with him. An appointment can be made with Mr. Namasivayam over the 'phone.'"

This was immediately conveyed to the Municipal Council, and finally on July 21st this reply was sent:

"Reference your letter . . . of the 15th instant, I have the honour to inform you that if any information is required from this office it is suggested that either the Legal Draftsman or his Assistant call at the Town Hall. An appointment can be made with the Municipal Assessor over the telephone."

Sir, I am not concerned with the petty bickerings and petty standings on dignity of the officers concerned. I have brought this matter to the notice of the Mayor of Colombo, and it is his duty to deal with it if that legislation is required. At an interview he had with me about various other matters, he undertook to go into this question. It is solely the duty of the Municipal Council and its authorities, wherever their dignity permits them to go, to go there and discuss the difficulties that arise with the Legal Draftsman. In the meanwhile I might say that I do

Aug. 27, 1942]

not consider it beneath my dignity or the dignity of any Heads of my Departments to go and discuss matters with the Legal Draftsman. The Commissioner of Local Government and other officials go and discuss matters with the Legal Draftsman. I merely mention that to explain the position.

**Mr. G. A. H. Wille (Nominated Member):** To go back to the important question of education rates. I do not know why the Minister does not make a beginning with the Colombo Municipality. It is no use saying that the Urban Councils are too poor to afford education rates, but some of the local authorities are in a position to levy an education rate. I think it was more than a generation ago that the Education Ordinance contemplated that the Colombo Municipality should make some provision for education, but it was not made compulsory and it was left to the Council itself which has not done its duty. If the Hon. Minister will have the Colombo Municipality area proclaimed as coming within the provisions of that Ordinance in regard to this matter, I think he will be setting a good example to the country in general.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Is not the Minister going to reply?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** It is a matter that needs careful consideration. I shall certainly bear in mind the desirability of starting with the Colombo Municipal Council if a start is to be made at all, but I do know that even in the Colombo Municipality, although it is the richest body we have, there is very strong objection to taking up duties of this kind involving added taxation.

**Mr. Wille:** So you see, Sir, how far behind the ideas which underlay this Ordinance the Municipal Council of Colombo is.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Great difficulty has been experienced by these local authorities in the assessment of their properties. I believe to get over this difficulty the Minister promised the country a Rating Ordinance and I want to know what the position is with regard to that legislation. I believe the question too has been raised practically year after year and promises have been held out

that the Bill was either ready or almost ready. It is rather unfortunate that that particular Rating Ordinance has not been placed on the Statute Book yet.

Probably the Minister may be able to give us good reasons, but I would like to know why there is such an inordinate delay.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** There are certain Ordinances which had almost reached completion, but owing to a very vast mass of work being thrust upon the Legal Draftsman, he has not yet been able to send them to me in final form. I can assure my hon. Friend that I entirely sympathize with his view which I hold myself. It is not only the Rating Ordinance that is held up; the Town and Country Planning Ordinance, which I believe is almost in final form now, and certain other Ordinances too are held up. I shall certainly try and get them expedited and brought forward as early as possible. I believe they are very nearly in final form.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 4 were passed without amendment.

Head 77 was passed without amendment.

#### Head 78, Commissioner of Local Government.

Sub-head 1 was passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 2, Travelling, Rs. 14,700.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Local Administration*]:

Increase the provision from Rs. 14,700 to Rs. 16,165.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 2, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 3 and 4 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 5, Grant-in-Aid to Village Committees for Construction of and Repairs to Village Wells.  
Rs. 125,000.*

**Mr. H. L. Ratwatte (Kegalla):** Some time ago the Hon. Minister promised to give a large grant for village wells. I should like to know whether he has a scheme ready for that purpose.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Yes, Sir. All the Government Agents and Assistant Government Agents were written to to prepare a full list of rural water schemes that were necessary and send them up with a view to expending a sum of money under the Loans Ordinance which provides a large sum of money in the Schedule for water schemes. The Government Agents, I am sorry to say, delayed a great deal; probably it was not their fault, because they were faced with other urgent and important work. I am glad to say that I have now received from most of them complete lists of all the water schemes that are required in rural areas. It will not be possible to provide some of them because pipes and so on are required—those are some of the rather ambitious water schemes—and there is a lack of such material. But a large number of them merely consist of wells which can be proceeded with very early and we shall now be able to get on with these schemes with the money provided under the Loan Ordinance.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Now that we are on Grants, may I ask the Hon. Minister whether he has considered the matter of a fresh grant to the Matale Urban Council for the extension of its water scheme? I understand that additional water is required for Military purposes and for the town, and a very inexpensive way of augmenting the water supply has been suggested by the Military. I wonder whether the Minister will consider the making of a new grant, because the Urban Council will not have the necessary money.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Yes, Sir.

Sub-head 5 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-head 6 was passed without amendment.

Sub-head 7, *Grants to Local Bodies for Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, Rs. 85,000.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I would like to know how many Village Committees have taken advantage of this provision. This is a very necessary service, and the Hon. Minister of Local Administration and his Committee should be congratulated on making this provision. It is a

very necessary social service, but I am not satisfied with the rate at which this vote has increased. In 1940-41 the amount spent was Rs. 67,774; and next year's provision is Rs. 85,000. I believe there are nearly 400 Village Committees, and now with a more progressive method of taxation under the new Village Communities Ordinance, I expect a larger number of Village Committees will be in a position to take advantage of this grant and provide maternity benefits in their areas. I would like to know how many Village Committees are in receipt of this grant now.

**The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I am sorry I am not in a position to give the exact number, but I can tell my hon. Friend that a very large number of Village Committees throughout the country have taken advantage of it and some of them have established more than one centre each. Then there are a certain number of Village Committees which have not got any such centres at all at the moment.

The number of centres has been restricted, not because of lack of money, but for this reason: all these centres have to be supervised by qualified Medical Officers. It is generally done by the Medical Officer of Health of the area or by the Field Medical Officers. There are a certain number of Field Medical Officers appointed, but they cannot find the time to supervise these centres, probably because there are too many centres evidently. There is a certain restriction, but the work is going on and more and more demands are coming forward as the House will see from the increase in the vote; and I will try to increase that number as far as I can. I also desire the co-operation of the Minister of Health who also realizes the value of this work. It would be very helpful in expediting the increase in the number.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I am glad that the Hon. Minister has mentioned the Health Department. I made inquiries in certain parts of the country and I find that although the Village Committees are in a position to establish these centres, they cannot get the Medical Officers of Health to give their

services. I would, therefore, like to appeal to the Hon. Minister of Health to see that these Medical Officers or Field Medical Officers pay more attention to this work and undertake this work in a public-spirited manner rather than as a matter of routine or as a matter of duty assigned to Medical Officers. I think this is a great service.

It was only the other day that the Hon. Minister of Health was priding himself on the fact that within a very short period he had been able to bring down the rate of infant mortality in this country. I am almost certain that if a progressive policy is followed he would be in a position, in another year or two to further reduce that rate of mortality. I would like the Minister of Health to take a particular interest in this matter and see that these Medical Officers take a little more interest in this direction.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva (Minister of Health):** I am very anxious myself to give all assistance possible in this matter, because I know the importance of it. I shall be glad if any matter is brought to my notice with regard to any help that I can give.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** What is the Hon. Minister's rate of production of Midwives? The trouble with regard to our clinics is that we simply have not got the Midwives, and so long as we have not got them, the Doctor refuses to come; there is nothing that the local authority can do to expedite this business of Midwives.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I can assure my hon. Friend that I am quite conscious that this is a very necessary service to be rendered, and I am doing everything possible to get as many Midwives as possible appointed. There is a little difficulty with regard to the Ministry of Local Administration and my Ministry, and I have asked for a joint meeting of the Committees in order to settle this question; once that is settled there will be no difficulty at all in regard to the matter.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Last year the Hon. Minister told us that he could produce 200 Midwives a year. What has been the rate of production?

**The Chairman:** May I suggest that this particular question be raised on the votes of the Health Ministry?

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Actually this comes under "Clinics" because the clinic is the institution that is directly connected with Midwives. How many Midwives did the Minister produce last year?

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I am training as many as I possibly can—in the neighbourhood of about 100 to 150—and employing them as quickly as they become available. As I mentioned to the hon. Member, the only trouble is that these Midwives do not want to go to Village Committee areas. I cannot compel them to go there.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The real reason for it is that they have one training centre in Colombo and they do not take in people from each area. If they will only make arrangements to train Midwives in each central hospital and take in people from each area, these Midwives will be ready to go back to their areas upon completing their training. You take a lady from the town who is always used to town life; you train her, and you ask her to go and accept employment in a malarial area. Well, she will not do it. The only thing is to get local people and then train them.

There is another aspect of the matter. The Minister takes in people from the towns, mostly from the Western Province and trains them here, and our women lose a source of employment. I have spoken to our District Medical Officer about the matter, and he says that it is quite possible to train Midwives at the local hospital. Why has that not been done?

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I can assure my hon. Friend that I am also interested in the same women as the hon. Member. So I will undertake to look after them.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The Minister gave us the same reply the last time.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I am not responsible for that.

**\*Mr. D. Wanigasekera (Weligama):** With regard to Village Committees, I want to bring the fact to the notice of

[Mr. Wanigasekera] the Hon. Minister that although some of them collect taxes and other rates they have not done any work. I know of two Village Committees in my area which have collected rates and taxes but have neglected the work of maintaining village roads and so on. They have receipts filed for work done when no work has been done. There should be some officer from the Audit Department sent round to check their work. On paper everything is quite all right, but if you go and inspect the work you will find that no work had been done. There must be somebody to supervise these matters.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** There is very close audit supervision and control over all the Village Committees at the moment, and no doubt Audit will deal with the matters which my hon. Friend has mentioned. But if the hon. Member will point out to me any works for which money had been budgeted but not spent, and let me have the details, I will certainly go into the matter myself.

**\*Mr. S. Abeywickrama (Udugama):** Regarding the question of midwives, I want to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister—

**The Chairman:** Would it not be better to bring it up under the votes of the Health Ministry?

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** No, Sir, I think the vote for Village Committees would be the better opportunity.

The position with regard to Midwives is that the Village Committees pay half their salary and the Medical Department the other half. Now, these Midwives are appointed by the Chairmen. Every three years there are the elections to the Village Committees, and the in-coming Chairmen remove the officers appointed by the outgoing Chairmen.

There is considerable trouble in the Galle District over that matter. Different stations are assigned to Midwives, and when the new Chairmen of Village Committees come into office, the stations are changed according to their whims and fancies. I am not mentioning this by way of criticism; this is the actual state of affairs, and it must be remedied.

I would suggest that these Midwives be appointed by the Medical Department. The Village Committees should have nothing to do with the place to which Midwives are appointed. The Medical Officer of Health is the best person to select the area to which a midwife should go; and the Midwives should be removed from the sphere of political squabbles and manoeuvres. In the case of the Galle District, you do not know where any particular Midwife is stationed; she is shifted from ward to ward. Very often—I do not know for what reasons—young women are taken on as Midwives and are shifted from place to place.

That is my complaint, and it is a genuine complaint; I am not exaggerating things. When a Village Committee recommends that a Midwife should be transferred from one place to another, the Medical Officer of Health says that there is no need for it; and a great deal of correspondence is exchanged between them. I would, therefore, earnestly request the Minister of Local Administration to consider a scheme whereby these Midwives could be placed immediately under the Medical Department so that they will be above petty village squabbles and Village Committee matters. That is the trouble in the Galle District. I could cite many such instances to the Minister. I want the matter to be noted.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** That is rather an important question. The point really arises as to the security of tenure of office, the question of appointment, and so on, of these various officers. The trouble that the hon. Member mentioned does not arise only in connexion with the appointment of Midwives—they may be young in the Galle District—and their transfer to other parts and their suffering as a result of it.

But apart from that, take the case of the Village Committee Clerks who were employed under the previous Chairmen. The whole question is concerned with local-government service. As a matter of fact, I have framed rules now for all officers of Village Committees, and these rules should prevent this kind of trouble arising in the future.



I shall deal with the Minister of Health as to the proper status which these people should occupy.

**Mr. E. R. Tambimuttu (Trincomalee-Batticaloa):** With regard to the employment of Midwives, I understand that more attention is being paid to educational qualifications than to the character of the woman. Recently there was the case of a woman who was transferred from the Batticaloa hospital who was found to be carrying away in a box half the linen of the hospital. Somebody suspecting her stopped the woman and examined the box to find linen in it. I would, therefore, suggest that the rule relating to educational qualifications be relaxed and that instead an examination of character be insisted upon.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** That is exactly the point that I was going to raise. Into these villages are sent people who have passed examinations and who are in search of professions. They get the profession; they get the salary; but they have no idea of any fellowship with the people in the village or that rustic kindness which makes life tolerable and pleasant. I would, therefore, beg of the Hon. Minister to relax this rule as to examinations and to concentrate on getting people from each group of villages to serve that group, because they have a loyalty and a kinship to the people which creates a fellowship in all their sufferings and a desire to be of service. I am afraid that that side of these services has not been sufficiently stressed; examinations are the only things that are looked at. The result is that you create a "woodenness" and an unsympathetic atmosphere which make people hesitate to go to these persons.

Sub-head 7 was then passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 8, Grants to Local Bodies for Slum Clearance and Housing Schemes, Rs. 50,000.*

**Mr. H. de Z. Siriwardana (Negombo):** With regard to this scheme, the local bodies contribute half the amount and they put up buildings after the plans have been approved by the Central Government. We at Negombo became

aware of this scheme and built about twenty houses, but in my opinion the type of houses that have been put up at Negombo are too expensive. We spend about Rs. 2,000 to put up a house, and we are expected to rent it out for Rs. 6 per month. That kind of building will not help to solve the slum problem because in Negombo those poor people live in small huts paying a rent of Re. 1 and Rs. 2. I think the Hon. Minister should evolve a scheme whereby houses could be so built that they could be rented out for Re. 1 or Rs. 2.

**Mr. Wille:** I hope the Hon. Minister will not forget to prepare a scheme for a national planning of slum clearance. We hear a good deal today about the new world order that is to be ushered in, and I only hope that one of the substantial things in this new world order will be some decent houses for people to live in. During the last war people said that the world was going to be made a place fit for heroes to live in. I shall be satisfied with houses where human beings can live in.

This cannot be regarded as a local matter. The last speaker pointed out the poverty of some of the people in his district, and I am afraid the local authorities cannot tackle this scheme. There must be a real national planning; and it will be one of the most remunerative undertakings, as I have so often pointed out.

In connexion with the last vote, there was a great deal of emphasis laid on maternity and child welfare centres. As I have asked before, what is the good of bringing children into the world and looking after them during their infancy if after that they are to live in unhealthy surroundings? This is a very important matter, and I trust that the Hon. Minister, now that he has some breathing time, owing to the fact that he cannot take action during the war, will plan out something that would prove valuable to the Island and redound to his credit.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Negombo (Mr. Siriwardana), I may say that the plans for the houses put up at Negombo were actually drawn up by the Urban Council of Negombo in consultation with the Town Planner,

[The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike.]  
and the houses have already been put up. If the objection is that the rents of these houses are rather high and therefore they are not within the reach of the poorer classes, I hope the Urban Council of Negombo will put forward in the further portion of their scheme—it is a progressive scheme and it is a very good one—plans for more houses for the poorer classes, at lower rents. I quite understand and sympathize with the desire for more houses of that kind, and that matter will be borne in mind. I have no doubt that the hon. Member who is a Member of the Executive Committee of Local Administration will keep an eye on the matter and will bring up his proposal when an opportunity arises.

With regard to the point raised by my hon. Friend the Nominated Member (Mr. Wille—he brings it up every year—I think it is a very important subject. Quite apart from the King Charles' head aspect of the question, I must say that I consider the matter to be of great importance. It has not been neglected at all by my Executive Committee, although we cannot go on putting up large schemes at this time. The Town and Country Planning Ordinance which has been drawn up by Mr. Holliday and which is ready but is held up because the present Chief Secretary wished to go through it himself, will, I hope, be now released. As a matter of fact, I am very anxious to get on with that Ordinance and introduce it in this House. Probably that can be done now without delay. That is one of the necessary legislative steps towards achieving the object in view.

Then, I should like to tell the hon. Member that with regard to Colombo there is already a full scheme—an elaborate and excellent scheme—for slum clearance and new housing. It is going to cost many millions of rupees. As a matter of fact, a few months ago I had a discussion on it with a deputation from the Municipal Council; and as soon as they provide part of the cost—the Central Government will contribute the other part—that excellent scheme will be started. I trust that most of the other towns will avail themselves of the present Town Planner's services.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I should like to know whether any of these moneys will be given to Village Committees, because I feel that these bodies too can do some work in improving sanitation, and so on, in their areas. We know that most of the houses in rural areas are deficient in air and light and they can easily be improved by the addition of a few windows and doors. I do not think that Village Committees can undertake very big schemes, as the Municipal Council of Colombo can, but if something can be done to give them a start, the houses in these areas can be greatly improved. The houses in some village areas are nothing more than hovels. I should like to know whether Village Committees, if they apply for a grant from this vote, will be given a portion of this money.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** This vote is intended for Village Committees also. A certain number of Village Committees, though very few, have taken advantage of it. I have particularly in mind Talahena in the Negombo District and Haliela in the Badulla District, which have put up housing schemes.

The trouble is, in rural areas the position is complicated. Unlike in the towns where you can have a large block of houses put up, in the villages each villager has more or less a small plot of land where he will want a house put up. That means that we have to put up houses here and there, on their properties. That is the position; I have gone into the matter. In the meanwhile Village Committees are putting up houses in certain boutique areas and certain urbanized areas.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I do not know whether the Hon. Minister knows that in certain places villagers live on other people's lands, and they are certainly at the mercy of these landowners.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** In such cases it can be done.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I do not know why in the case of the District Road Committees communal representation is encouraged. We find Burgher Nominated Members on these bodies. Is it not time to abolish such communal representation?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The only delay in dealing with that matter is that I am considering the abolition entirely of bodies like District Road Committees and Provincial Road Committees. I do not think it is advisable to make small amendments in view of the Provincial Councils that are going to be established.

**Mr. Wille:** There seems to be rather a sentimental objection to the presence of these communal members on these bodies. I wish to know what harm has been done to these bodies by their presence. They are an acquisition in outlying districts.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** On which vote can we discuss the new Provincial Councils?

**The Chairman:** It should have been done under Sub-head 1. But I will allow the hon. Member to raise it now.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** It can be taken up at the end of this Head.

Sub-head 8 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 9 to 12 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 13, Destruction of Dogs,  
Rs. 58,361.*

**Dr. de Zoysa:** I should like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the destruction of dogs is necessary, in the first place, and whether this money could not be used for providing a home for stray dogs. I think the Hon. Minister is aware that some of these dogs are better than human beings, and they have better instincts. I need not describe it; I think it is well known. Merely because a dog strays out of a house, it should not be taken to a Police Station and destroyed. We ought to take measures as much as possible to prevent the destruction of dogs.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** My objection to this vote is not on the ground that the destruction of dogs should not be carried out, but on the ground that this encourages fraud.

About Rs. 7,000 is allowed to the Galle District. The procedure is that the dog-seizer has to produce the tails of the destroyed dogs, at the Police Station and

the Police Inspector has to certify that so many dogs had been destroyed; and the man is paid according to the number so certified as destroyed. But what happens is that the Inspector certifies that 200 or 300 dogs have been shot whereas not even a dozen had been shot. The money is simply shared between the Police and the dog-seizer. I would certainly say that not even a quarter of this money is utilized for the purpose for which it is voted.

This is a hidden subsidy to the Police, and I want the Hon. Minister to make some other arrangements in regard to this matter. Let the Minister withdraw this vote for a year and see what sort of a menace we would have. I know to a certainty that the Police are drawing illegally on this vote.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Cannot you make a present of this money to Mrs. Bartlam?

**Mr. Wille:** There is a bigger vote than last year's provided for next year and it looks as if the dog population is increasing in this Island. Cannot some sort of propaganda be carried on in the villages in regard to uncared for dogs?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I do not want to enter into any discussion upon the relative merits and instincts of human beings and dogs. But I would like to say, on the general question of the destruction of dogs, that in our rural areas these dogs are in almost a wild state and they breed prolifically. Apparently they have no masters and are not looked after, and they are a source of spreading rabies. There was a very serious outbreak of rabies, and we have found that the destruction of dogs keeps down that terrible disease. As a lover of dogs myself, I say that it is unfortunate that dogs have to be destroyed, but in the particular circumstances where these dogs are semi-wild, one is simply forced with the unavoidable necessity for destroying them.

With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Udugama, (Mr. Abeywickrama) with regard to collusion between the dog-seizers and the Police, I shall be glad if he will draw my attention to any case that comes to his notice when I will see how far it can be stopped. The

[The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike.]  
hon. Member does not say that dogs should not be destroyed under the circumstances, but he says that the Police take bribes, or whatever it is, or come to some arrangement with the dog-shooters. I will go into the matter if he will bring any cases to my notice. As far as I am aware, my attention has not yet been drawn to any irregularities of that nature.

I do not know what the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Wille) wants—

**Mr. Wille:** I said that the dog population, like the human population, is increasing, and I thought that some propaganda was necessary in the villages with regard to the care of these village dogs by their masters. Year by year this vote is increasing.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** The best person to be in charge of that propaganda is the hon. Nominated Member, because his community is fast disappearing!

Sir, whatever it is, the Hon. Minister wants me to detect these cases and bring them to his notice. I cannot act like the C.I.D. by detecting the frauds that are being committed.

This is how one case came to light. When a certain Sub-Inspector of Police was at Baddegama, no vouchers were sent to the Galle Kachcheri in respect of payments to dog-seizers. But when another Inspector came there, it was found that every month vouchers were being sent for payments to dog-seizers. A man petitioned; and the Inspector-General of Police held an inquiry, but the case could not be proved because the dog-shooter said that he had shot the dogs and the Inspector said that the man had produced so many tails.

I think some scheme should be introduced whereby the Police would be able to see the whole carcass of the dog shot. Otherwise this vote will always remain as a hidden subsidy to the Police. I say that 75 per cent. of this money is going as a hidden subsidy to the Police.

**\*Mr. Dudley Senanayake (Dedigama):** In order to avoid the so-called fraud mentioned by the hon. Member, some other method should be adopted in paying out this money which clearly

amounts to a reward for killing dogs. We should have a method by which indiscriminate killing would be avoided. As it is, the more dogs you kill, the more you get. According to that method, you either kill those dogs indiscriminately or you adopt the fraudulent method.

**Dr. de Zoysa:** I move the deletion of this vote.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** I do not think any person who has seen a child die of hydrophobia can forget the quick working of the poison. What you want is to stop the spread of rabies.

**Mr. Wille:** May I know what steps the Hon. Minister proposes to take? I see that the number of uncared for dogs that require to be destroyed is increasing. Surely something can be done to educate the villagers?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I do not know what type of education the hon. Member is referring to. He wants to educate the villager, and then he wants to educate the dog in birth control! I do not know how that is to be done. But these dogs that are more or less in a semi-wild state will breed on their own without any assistance from the villagers. Whether he believes it or not, I do not know, but that is what happens, and I can assure him that this destruction is having a good effect in reducing the dog population.

**Mr. Wille:** I do not mind dogs increasing in number if they are of the right quality. But these dogs seem to be uncared for ones and they get into this condition owing to the negligence of their owners.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** We will allocate this vote to the Hon. Minister, but will he suspend its operation? If the Hon. Minister says that he will suspend this vote and make the necessary inquiries, we will be satisfied.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I cannot suspend this vote, but I will go into the question and see what steps can be taken.

Question put, "That Sub-head 13 stand part of Head 78".

The Committee divided (under Standing Order 68): Ayes, 15; Noes, 6.

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1929

Sub-head 13 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 14 and 15 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 16, Rent of Office of Town Planner, Rs. 1,200.*

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** Sir, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister of Local Administration whether the services of the Town Planner are available to the Municipalities, because a motion has been moved by me in the Galle Council on the subject. I wish to tell the Hon. Minister that we have not been able to obtain the services of the Town Planner still. That is why I want to know whether he is available even now.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** There is a Town Planner who has been functioning for years, and his services are always available.

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** Is he here now?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** There is Mr. Holliday, but he is engaged on the Anuradhapura Preservation Scheme. Besides him, there is a permanent officer who is available to all services.

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** Mr. Holliday came before the Galle Municipal Council and expressed certain views. After that I have not heard of him.

Sub-head 16 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-head 17 was passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 18, Preparation of Scheme for the Preservation of the Sacred City of Anuradhapura and for the Transfer of the Business Part of the City to a New Site, Rs. 13,000.*

**Mr. Freeman:** Sir, the Bill for the political invasion of Anuradhapura by the Sinhala Maha Sabha is held up; so this might be deleted.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** That Bill is going to be assented to by the Secretary of State and it will come before this House very soon.

**Mr. Freeman:** There are other reasons, why at Anuradhapura nothing can be done just now or for some years—

**The Chairman:** Is the hon. Member moving an amendment?

**Mr. Freeman:** I am moving the deletion of this vote.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** This money is for the services of a town-planning expert who is going on with the work. He has more or less prepared the whole scheme. It will be examined by us, and in due course it will come before this House. This vote is only for the balance of the fee that the House has agreed to.

**Mr. Freeman:** There were two large payments on account of the fee.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** This is the balance of the total sum agreed upon.

**Mr. Freeman:** Then it must be an excess on the Estimate.

Question, "That Sub-head 18 stand part of Head 78", put, and agreed to.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** My main point in wanting to raise a discussion on the question of a unified local government service is this: I hope it will not create a centralized transferable service under which the outstations will lose the chance of giving employment to their young men. Every scheme of this kind takes away chances of employment from the smaller towns which are without the same educational facilities as the bigger towns. I think one would not object to a scheme where the Hon. Minister demanded that employees of each Urban Council, Municipal Council or Sanitary Board reached a certain standard of education. But I think the creation of a centralized service would just mean a "show down" for a good many people in the provincial areas.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** It is a difficulty, but it goes to the very root of the idea of a general local government service. I have not altogether lost sight of this difficulty, and I will consider how the two can best be reconciled. This point will receive careful consideration before any plan is brought forward.

**Mr. Aluwihare:** I do want to place before the Hon. Minister the fact that all these reforms—all these centralized services—merely apply to Colombo or to Jaffna and that provincial towns like Anuradhapura, Matale, Ratnapura and

[Mr. Aluwihare.]

Kurunegala and Provinces like Uva are left more and more hungry whilst it is our land that produces the tax to run the whole Government.

\***The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The matter will receive the careful consideration of my Committee.

Head 78, as amended, was then passed.

### Head 79, Valuation Department.

Sub-heads 1 to 5 were passed without amendment.

Head 79 was passed without amendment.

### Head 80, Commissioner of Motor Transport.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 160,335.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Sir, you will remember the motion which was passed the other day with regard to the formation of bus companies. I would like to know what action the Hon. Minister has taken with regard to that motion.

\***The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I hope to place the necessary legislation before the House at a very early date.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 6 were passed without amendment.

Head 80 was passed without amendment.

### Head 81, Salt Department.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 141,632.*

\***Mr. Aluwihare:** What are the results of the Hon. Minister's new salt scheme? I believe there was a motion before this House in which the Minister proposed to introduce a new form of administration in regard to salt.

\***The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I believe my hon. Friend is referring to the new scheme whereby we established a number of salt stores in important towns and Government conveyed the salt there to be sold direct to large holders as well as to retailers, in place of the previous

system where the big holders bought from supervisors and transported the salt. That scheme is working quite well. It has enabled us to stabilize the price of salt, particularly to the consumer, and also to make the supply of salt more regular, with this proviso, of course: unfortunately at the present time owing to transport difficulties certain other difficulties have arisen. That is to say, we have not been able to get the regular supply of salt to various centres solely because the Railway which undertook the contract to convey the salt was unable to supply the required number of wagons daily at the various centres, which are Hambantota, Palavi, Puttalam, and so on. We are trying to deal with the situation as best as we can; but the scheme as a whole is working quite well.

\***Mr. Wanigasekera:** Sir, at a time like the present, may I know whether the Hon. Minister contemplates introducing some scheme under which by-products of salt could be produced to supply requirements in the way of manure? If such a scheme could be evolved at the present time it would be of great help to agriculturists.

\***The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** That matter is receiving consideration.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 15 were passed without amendment.

Head 81 was passed without amendment.

### Head 82, Department of Mineralogy.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 36,796.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Local Administration*]:

Post of Additional Inspector of Mines (temporary)—

(a) For 1942-43 include financial provision of Rs. 7,080.

(b) Increase the item for rent allowance from Rs. 2,312 to Rs. 3,872.

(c) Amend footnote "b" to read as follows:—  
"Difference between retiring salary and pension of the officer holding the post."

(d) Add the following:—

Additional Staff for Emergency Services.—  
One watcher at cents 75 per day ... Rs. 276.

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1931

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

*Sub-head 2, Travelling, Rs. 6,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Local Administration*]:

Increase the provision from Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 9,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 2, as amended, was passed.

Sub-head 3 was passed without amendment.

*New Sub-head 3A, Mica Branch,  
Rs. 5,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Local Administration*]:

Insert the following New Sub-head:  
"Salary of Mica Grading Officer at Rs. 150 per month, salaries of workmen, rent, purchase of accessories, incidental expenses, &c."

Amendment agreed to.

New Sub-head 3A was passed.

Sub-heads 4 and 5 were passed, without amendment.

Head 82, as amended, was passed.

### Head 83, Department of Fisheries.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 67,905.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Local Administration*]:

Add the following:—

Additional Staff for Emergency Services—

Three Fishery Inspectors on scale Rs. 864—60 & 960—1,584 ... .. Rs. 2,592.

Temporary Clerical assistance ... Rs. 2,708.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Sir, I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the great difficulties fishermen are experiencing owing to the lighting regulations. I believe representations have been made from various parts of the country to the effect that the fishing industry has been greatly interfered with and that the very existence of the fishermen has been greatly threatened.

Apart from the question of the fishermen themselves being thrown out of employment, I think, particularly at a time when food is greatly needed in this country, fishing is a valuable means of providing food. I think the people of this country are also losing a very healthy diet by being deprived of supplies of fish.

I do not know why these regulations should be enforced. I think these regulations should either be relaxed, or the fishermen should be given some compensation for the loss of their occupation.

Sir, I know that several Government Agents have reported this matter to the authorities concerned, but they do not seem to have taken a very serious view of it. They seem to be very light-hearted over the matter. So I would request the Hon. Minister either to relax the lighting regulations, or, if that is considered to be not in the best interests of the defence of this country, to reconsider the question of paying compensation to these people for the duration of the war, for loss of occupation. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what his policy is in regard to this matter.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Sir, the lighting regulations have been relaxed as far as is consonant with Defence needs. The House will realize that this is a very important aspect of Defence, namely, the prevention of boats with lights sailing off the coast, which might create all kinds of trouble into the details of which I do not think I need go now. We have obtained a relaxation of these lighting regulations as far as possible, though there is no doubt still a great deal of hardship caused in many areas by these lighting regulations.

I do not think that further relaxation of the lighting regulations is possible except in a very few instances. Certainly the question of paying compensation, where any regulations or war conditions have caused any serious dislocation of trade, will be considered; in certain cases the question has already been dealt with.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera:** With regard to this vote, I might say that in normal times we used to import into this country over Rs. 10,000,000 worth of fish. The fishing season is just starting, and if there is no relaxation of the lighting regulations we will not only lose the large quantity of fish that we obtain from the various fishing banks in Ceylon, but several thousand people will be affected. In most cases you will find that it is the most hard-worked and poorest people who are engaged in this trade.

[Mr. Wanigasekera.]

I requested, by means of a motion moved some time back, that the Naval authorities should be approached and a system of patrolling enforced around the areas where these fishing-boats are engaged in the trade. If you do that you will prevent fishermen from giving information to the enemy, and on the other hand, if enemy vessels are about, the patrolling craft can give information to the Naval authorities here.

That will be a double benefit. Whilst allowing the fishermen to continue their legitimate trade of supplying food to the people of this country, you will be preventing the enemy from approaching these shores without our knowledge. The fishermen will be in a position to pass on information to the authorities, because men engaged in deep-sea fishing go at least twenty to thirty miles out, and if an enemy fleet or enemy submarines are about, they will be in the best position to give information to the authorities here, as you will be having thousands of fishermen right round the coast of Ceylon, which will in itself be a sort of patrol.

Instead of having rigorous laws which prevent these people from carrying on their legitimate trade, which affect the food-supply of this country, every encouragement should be given to these fishermen, and I hope the Hon. Minister will consult the authorities and see that the regulations are relaxed and a system of patrolling adopted.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I am obliged to the Minister for the assurance he has given us, but unfortunately I know of an instance where the Director of Fisheries himself went down to my own constituency, and went there without informing the Government Agent or anybody concerned about the visit. He just went to the seabeach and made some inquiries, and I do not know whether he has submitted a report on the lines he had indicated to some of the people there.

But I can assure the Hon. Minister that a very large number of people are affected, and these lighting regulations have caused a great hardship to the people. In the Koggala area a complete ban on fishing has been imposed. Now

this area extends for several miles, into the constituency of my hon. Friend on my right (Mr. Wanigasekera).

I hope the Hon. Minister will take this matter up seriously because, as has been pointed out, the fishing season is just starting and these regulations must be so relaxed as to enable these men to fish. Otherwise compensation must be paid to them for loss of occupation. If compensation cannot be paid, they must be found other work.

Therefore, I hope the Hon. Minister will make the necessary investigations, and we shall be very pleased to help him in arriving at a satisfactory arrangement. If he does make investigations, he should inform the proper authorities—the Chairmen of the Village Committees, the Government Agent, and the Member of the District concerned—about the matter so that representations may receive proper attention. I know several petitions have been addressed to the Government Agent of my district, who is very sympathetic, and if I mistake not he has already made a recommendation to the effect that the lighting regulations should be relaxed or these people should be given compensation. So I would like the Hon. Minister to go into this matter as it is of the greatest urgency.

**The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Yes, I shall do so.

**Mr. Siriwardana:** I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister another difficulty experienced by the Negombo fishermen. Representations have been made to the Chairman of the Urban Council that they find it difficult to obtain raw rice. Raw rice is necessary for their nets, and they find it very difficult to get it. In fact, I saw the Director of Fisheries yesterday about the matter and he said that we do not import raw rice. At least we might give them country raw rice, because after all these men are engaged in producing food.

Another complaint is that the rice ration allowed to them is not sufficient. After all, these fishermen are labourers who consume double the quantity of rice that we consume, and if we expect them to produce food, we must see that they are well fed. I hope the Hon.



Minister will direct the officers to give them raw rice, because it is essential for their work.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Well, that matter has received consideration in another connexion—with regard to rice supplied to fishermen who have gone to various areas. I can explain it in more detail when we come to that item.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera:** Another aspect of this question that I wish to place before the Council is this: there are many tanks and rivers and places where fresh-water pools are found in this country, and the Fisheries Department should have a scheme for setting up a hatchery for fresh-water fish. Several millions of rupees worth of fish could be reared in the village tanks and the bigger irrigation works, and that will be of the greatest benefit to the people at a time when there is an acute shortage of food. I hope the Fisheries Department will see that some steps are taken to see that the breeding of fish in fresh water can be taken in hand.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** That is an important point, Sir. As a matter of fact, the hon. Member for Balapitiya (Mr. Kularatne) has also mentioned that matter to me before. I consider it. I will not say quite as important as salt-water fishing, but as an important problem.

The position is this: we secured some land at Narahenpita for the purpose also, among others, of having hatcheries for the breeding of fresh-water fish. That matter was unfortunately delayed owing to certain difficulties of the Public Works Department; but finally the work was completed. A certain number of these ponds were completed and we have fresh-water fish breeding there, particularly I may say the *gorami*. We have on order now from India certain types of fresh-water fish, such as carp, and another species which is a very popular fresh-water fish in India. I hope to do this work, which I must say has not been done to any great extent, of stocking our rivers and tanks with suitable fresh water fish; the work is proceeding.

With regard to *gorami*, in the swamps of Manampitiya in the Polonnaruwa region, I am informed that the fish caught there was put on sale even in the Colombo market, which shows that there is great scope for the undertaking. That matter will be pursued.

**Mr. Wille:** The Department is now staffed with a good many scientists—there is a Director of Fisheries, a Naturalist, a Biochemist, a Hydrographer, and so on—and I wish to know whether all these officers have taken up duties and whether the position of the fishermen themselves has improved.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The trouble is that we have not yet been able to appoint the Naturalist and the Biochemist because they are highly specialized officers—we have not yet been able to make these appointments; nor were we able to get an expert from abroad as we expected. So that the Department is by no means stocked with experts, as my hon. Friend imagines. But we hope to fill these posts as soon as possible. Perhaps with regard to the general steps taken quite recently and the results in improvement of the industry, I shall give the details under "Special Expenditure" when we come to that item.

**Mr. Wille:** I am not depressed by the news the Minister has given; in fact, I am rather glad. My fear is that it might turn out like the Department of Agriculture: a large number of specialists but nothing done for the improvement of paddy cultivation.

I think we should have an economic survey of all fishermen of the Island and a report from time to time as to how they are faring under the new measures for which we have voted money. I was looking at the last report of the Director of Fisheries, and he writes a great deal about window-pane oysters, whales and crocodiles, and so on, but very little on the practical side of the fisherman's work.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** I would like to tell the hon. Member that the Agricultural Department is suffering from the legacy of his administration when he was in power and in the councils of the Government. He filled the places with duds, and we cannot get them out.

**Mr. Wille:** I was never Governor of the Island, Sir.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Sir, in these Estimates you find provision made for "Officers and Crew of Research Vessel". I wish to know where this vessel is operating, whether any fish is caught—certain Members say that the hon. Deputy Speaker ought to know because he has been operating around the Island—what type of vessel is used, and what type of fish is caught. You find a Marine Superintendent and Hydrographer, Master, Mate, Quartermasters, Lascars, cooks and all kinds of people. So I would like to know where this vessel is, and whether the Minister would take us round in this vessel.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Well, Sir, if he gives me a drive in his dog-cart at Baddegama I will consider giving him a ride in this research vessel. The point is we have not been able to secure the research vessel that we expected to obtain. But one of the other vessels is being used for the inspection of the pearl banks, and these officers are put in here in the expectation that their services will be made use of if we can obtain the research vessel. We have not been able to obtain one. Thornycroft's of Singapore were asked to construct one, but unfortunately the whole transaction fell through.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I wish to follow up the question. This is entirely a wrong picture that is being given to us in the Budget estimates. There is no vessel, but we are budgeting for officers and crew.

**The Chairman:** But there is a vessel, the "Hercules".

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The "Hercules" is used for pearl-bank inspection.

**The Chairman:** As part-time work.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** But has it ever been used for this work?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The "Hercules" is not used for fisheries work; but this is a provision we made last year and the year before, and we hope to obtain this vessel and—

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Are these new appointments also continuing from last year?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Some of the people provided for under this vote are functioning as part-time officers on the "Hercules" when it makes the annual inspection of the pearl banks.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** The other part?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** The other part will be supplied when the research vessel is obtained.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Till then are we justified in paying these officers?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** They are not paid.

**The Chairman:** All these people are working in the C.N.V.F. and draw their mobilized salary and are paid from that vote. All these men are engaged at the moment in certain work.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I want to draw attention to the point made about fresh-water fish. There is nothing done in the Galle District. On paper it is all right, but we do not see any work done.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera:** May I make some inquiries with regard to the pearl banks—whether there is any prospect of any pearl fisheries?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Last year there were certain hopeful signs but, of course, in these days I do not know whether we can hold a pearl fishery or not. Certainly, last year there were parts of the pearl bank that showed signs of development.

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya:** Apart from the fact that fishermen are deprived of the opportunity of fishing at night owing to the lighting regulations, I find that in certain parts of my constituency, along the sea coast, the Military authorities have started erecting a barbed-wire fence. Fishermen are prohibited from fishing in those areas. I should like to know whether the Hon. Minister is aware of that fact. I understood from him that he was prepared to consider whether compensation should be paid to these poor people for being deprived of their means of livelihood. I know that

Aug. 27, 1942]

## Debates.

he will consider the matter, but I make reference to it now as nothing has been done to relieve these people so far.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I shall certainly look into the matter.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 9 were passed.

*Sub-head 10, Experiments in Fish Marketing, Rs. 10.*

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** I should like to make a few observations on this Sub-head, as I think hon. Members would like to have a few facts on this question although they have not raised any questions on it.

The Fisheries Department started a new scheme whereby they ran certain fish-stalls in the open market in Colombo. A commencement was made with the Kollupitiya Market, where a certain association of fishermen were permitted to bring their fish and sell it there. That scheme worked so successfully that we obtained stalls in the Wellawatte Market too for the same purpose. Though a start was made with fresh fish, dried fish was also sold at these stalls. The scheme is working extremely well indeed.

If I may give some details of the actual takings to this House, 135 cwt. of fish were sent to the Kollupitiya Market in the month of June, and 182 cwt. in July. The gross sales were Rs. 5,427 in June and Rs. 7,852 in July. The net sales—that is, the actual cash sent to the associations—were Rs. 4,848 in June and Rs. 7,014 in July. With regard to the stalls in the Wellawatte Market, 72 cwt. were received in June and 78 cwt. in July. The net sales in June amounted to Rs. 1,738 and in July to Rs. 1,884. I mention these figures because they are rather interesting.

Some of the associations that are engaged in this work are co-operative associations. We take the fish, pay the freight and the wages of those engaged in the sale of the fish. We sell the fish and, after making a deduction to cover the actual expenses, send the cash monthly to the associations concerned. We have already evidence to show that the fishermen have obtained certain

benefit from this scheme. At present two associations of fishermen in the Puttalam District are operating the stalls in the Kollupitiya Market and a fishermen's co-operative society of Pesalai are carrying on in the Wellawatte Market.

**Mr. A. R. A. Razik (Nominated Member):** Can the number of stalls be increased and the system extended to the other parts of the City?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:** Yes.

Sub-head 10 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 11 to 18 were passed without amendment.

Head 83, as amended, was passed.

#### **Head 84, Schemes assisted by the Colonial Development Fund.**

Sub-head 1 was passed without amendment.

Head 84 was passed without amendment.

#### **Head 85, Petrol Control.**

Sub-heads 1 to 5 were passed without amendment.

Head 85 was passed without amendment.

#### **Head 90, Minister of Health.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 31,992.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Health*]:

Increase provision by Rs. 301, for an extra peon.

**\*Mr. S. Abeywickrama (Udugama):** I do not want to take much of the time of this House on this Sub-head, but I must thank the Minister for giving Baddegama a Maternity Home, a project which has been held up for the last 12 years since the inauguration of the State Council. He has broken all the conventions of the other Ministers. He went to the place, selected the bungalow himself and gave us what we have been waiting for for the last so many years. The only obstacle in his way, so far as I can see, is the irate Director of Medical and Sanitary Services. I hope that before long the Minister will apply the administrative rod and put that officer in his proper place.

**\*Mr. D. M. Rajapaksa (Hambantota):** The hon. Member said that he has had one maternity home established in his constituency but I can say that the Member for Hambantota has been favoured with four Maternity Homes in his constituency. The Minister of Health has realized the awful conditions that obtain in the dry zone and has acceded to our requests to provide us with more maternity homes.

The late Minister of Health, the Hon. Mr. W. A. de Silva, raised the slogan that we should have 1,000,000 babies, and the present Minister of Health told me the other day that his slogan is to raise 2,000,000 babies and that in the dry zone of this country.

I should like to remind the Hon. Minister that conditions are really terrible in the Hambantota District. Our chief grievance is the lack of a sufficient number of Midwives. That need has not yet been fulfilled. According to the priority list prepared by the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, we should get another fifteen Midwives. I have no doubt that before the end of next year we will have all the Midwives that we require, so that we can give him all the help we can to achieve the object he has in view, namely, producing 2,000,000 babies in the dry zone.

**Mr. T. Amarasuriya (Moratuwa):** I am afraid I am not in a position to thank the Hon. Minister of Health, because I find that my constituency has been starved in respect of Health matters. My predecessor, who was the late Minister of Health, was not in a position to push the scheme of expansion through in his constituency, perhaps due to the fact that he was the Minister in charge of that subject.

I would like to inform the Hon. Minister of Health that Cottage Hospitals are very badly wanted in my area. I have mentioned that fact to him informally. Mine is a very large area, but at present there is only one Medical Officer in charge of the whole area. I personally know that the officer is very busy and is doing very good work. It was only the other day that I was told that he found it very difficult to cope with his work without an assistant. I believe he has made representations to the Minister on that matter. I trust the Hon. Minister will look into the matter.

and see that some assistance is given to the Medical Officer stationed at Moratuwa.

As things stand, even in an emergency, if the bridge that links Moratuwa with the Korale is blown up, or something else happens to it, serious inconvenience will be caused to the people who live on the other side of the bridge. I hope the Minister will take that fact into consideration. If he is unable to include provision at this stage—I do not know whether he can do it now—I trust he will bear in mind the position in which the people in my constituency are placed, and see his way to have a Cottage Hospital established there and also render some assistance to the Medical Officer of Health.

**\*Mr. B. H. Aluwihare (Matale):** Sir, I said during the second reading of the Budget that the policy of the late Minister of Health, which was to expand the health services, seemed to have been abandoned. I would ask hon. Members to turn to page 312 of the Draft Estimates where a list of new buildings to be constructed for the Ministry of Health is given. Hon. Members will find that, besides the completion of works started by the late Minister, the present Minister of Health has not adopted a policy of expansion in regard to either Maternity Homes or Cottage Hospitals. I should like to know from the Minister whether that is due to any neglect on his part, whether he has not planned for extending medical services to all areas in the Island, or whether that is due to the dead hand of the Board of Ministers on his estimates. I should like to know it.

The second point I should like to make is this: in regard to all these welfare schemes, especially Hospitals and Maternity Homes, the Minister should not let the fact that building materials are not available deter him from what he wants to do. Actually what is most important is not so much the buildings as the service. Today the Military people afford an object lesson in the type of temporary arrangements they make so that the services required may be rendered.

In the matter of Cottage Hospitals and Maternity Homes, I would submit to the Minister that wattle-and-daub buildings should take the place of

buildings constructed with cement and brick, because we may not have sufficient money always to put up expensive buildings. Such expensive buildings are not an absolute necessity, but it is essential that we should have the service.

I would like to show the Hon. Minister a letter from a gentleman of whom probably most of us have heard. He works in some of the villages in India. He says that you may talk of this war that is being fought away from your land, but a real and much more strenuous war is being waged, so far as India is concerned, in the villages, against disease, want and poverty. Those three things destroy much more life a year than the war does. It is the same in this country too. We cannot allow any diminution in the scheme of reconstruction.

I would therefore ask the Minister to answer particularly the first question I have asked him.

**Mr. A. R. A. Razik (Nominated Member):** Up to date, we Ceylon Moors have not got even one trained Midwife from among our community. But I am very happy to say today that, thanks to the energetic Minister of Health, we have been able to enrol two young ladies for training as Midwives. I do hope that during his regime he will give certain facilities to my community to enrol Ceylon Moor young ladies even as Nurses.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva (Minister of Health):** The hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare) asked me whether my policy is going to be a progressive one. The answer is in the affirmative.

With regard to the other question about Cottage Hospitals, I would ask hon. Members to bear with me for a short time. A number of Cottage Hospitals and Hospitals had to be removed from the list because the Public Works Department could not carry out the work on the ground that they did not have the materials required. I do not want to carry on a deception and tell the House that I am going to proceed with the work on these Hospitals, when I cannot possibly do so. I should like to tell the hon. Member that I would be

the first person to carry out a very extensive programme of buildings wherever they are necessary for the conservation of the health of this country if I am able to do so. But when you have not the materials, when you have not the help of the Department concerned—they say “We cannot do this”—I cannot go any further.

I am in entire agreement with the hon. Member. I do not want palatial buildings for hospitals. I am going to discuss this question with my Committee, and I am going to place before the Board of Ministers a scheme whereby we can have temporary buildings put up during this time of war. I have 1,500 beds in certain places outside the “target” areas, ready for any eventuality. If any hon. Member wishes to see those beds, I am perfectly willing to take him round and show them to him.

There are certain buildings that have been put up. They will last a number of years. The roofs, of course, will require re-thatching. All these matters can be settled later. If necessary we can replace the present roofs with tiled roofs.

We cannot get a move on in these matters unless the Public Works Department recommend the buildings as being up to standard. That policy will have to be changed. I can assure my hon. Friend that all these matters will be attended to. I do not want palatial buildings; I want buildings where the sick can be housed, fed, and given medical aid.

I know that the health of the people in the dry zone has suffered because they were not given medical facilities. If there is one person who is conscious of this fact, it is I, and I am not going to keep quiet. I am going to consult my Committee, and with its approval I will go before the Board of Ministers and say, “This is my proposal. Kindly help me, and I will carry on”.

With regard to the question of training Midwives, I will have to reorientate the whole policy that has been followed in the past and try and get young women trained in central areas.

As far as the health of the people is concerned, I will give the House this assurance, that during my regime I will do everything in my power to help in that direction.

**\*Mr. D. Wanigasekera (Weligama) :**

I wish to ask the Hon. Minister whether he has a sufficient stock of medicines to meet the needs of this country for some time to come. I hope the Hon. Minister has taken the necessary steps to see that we have an adequate supply of medicines for the country's requirements.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva :** I am thankful to the hon. Member for raising that question. I must say that for normal requirements I have sufficient medicines to last this country up to 1944. I might tell the House that when I found that there was going to be difficulty in obtaining medicines I, with the help of the Hon. the Financial Secretary, managed to cast aside red tape and buy medicines to the value of Rs. 100,000 from India. That stock, according to to-day's market prices, is worth Rs. 500,000 to Rs. 600,000 now.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera :** In view of the fact that there is likely to be a shortage of quinine owing to the fall of Java as a result of enemy action, I wish that some steps be taken to grow cinchona in areas where it can be grown.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva :** That is already being done. Not only is cinchona being grown, but also a plant called pyrethrum. That plant is being grown at high elevations, and a certain drug can be manufactured from it which can be used as a substitute for quinine.

The Hon. Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce met with a great deal of trouble when he initiated his scheme for the manufacture of quinine. He built a factory in Colombo, which was taken over by the Military. He had to go all over the country in search of another building and he could not find one for some time. He has managed to find a suitable place now, and I think he has started the manufacture of quinine.

With regard to the growing of cinchona, steps have already been taken in this connexion. But the delay has been due to the Agricultural Department. That difficulty has now been overcome by our taking the matter out of the hands of the Agricultural Department and handing it over to somebody who is capable of doing the job. We have an expert who is looking after this work. He is Mr. Ganjwar. He told me that he can look after the work of growing

cinchona, and we have handed the work over to him. Further, we have prohibited the export of cinchona bark. All that will now be available for the local manufacture of quinine. We might be able to manufacture quinine to the extent of about 2,000 lb. a year with the available bark.

There is another question that I have taken up, and that is regarding wild cinchona which contains a certain amount of quinine. I have had information from various parts of the Island to the effect that a large quantity will be available. That question too will not be forgotten.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle) :** I would like to invite the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that there is a great shortage of ayurvedic drugs. It is very difficult to obtain the raw material in this Island because people have been used to obtaining their drugs from India. Now that this source of supply has been cut off altogether, ayurvedic drugs are very expensive. It is difficult to secure the necessary freight and import these drugs from India.

I would like the Hon. Minister to take some steps in this matter so that these drugs might be made available to ayurvedic practitioners, because even to-day nearly 90 per cent. of the people of this Island resort to ayurvedic treatment. It is of the greatest importance, if we desire to conserve the health of the people, that these drugs should be made available to ayurvedic practitioners.

I would like the Hon. Minister to take early action and see that there is no dearth of supplies.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva :** I hope the hon. Member will pardon me for what I am going to say. The hon. Member himself is a Member of the Board of Indigenous Medicine, and the Chairman of that Board is the Hon. Minister of Local Administration.

It is true that it is an institution that has to be looked after. If the Board had applied to me and said that they wanted to import medicines from abroad the request would have received my attention. I have not been informed officially with regard to that matter. If that is done, I would investigate the possibility of importing these drugs from India and elsewhere.

I can tell the hon. Member that this question must be settled by the Board having an extensive acreage of land for the purpose of growing herbs. This is a matter that the Board must look into. If they apply to me, I shall try to obtain the land for them so that all the herbs required may be grown on it.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that a resolution in this connexion was passed by the Board. I believe it has been forwarded to the Hon. Minister. The Board recognized the fact that it is most desirable to have these drugs grown in Ceylon and that a herbarium should be established. Until that is done, drugs must be made available for the use of practitioners. This is an urgent problem which can only be solved by the Government of this country.

With regard to the establishment of a herbarium, I might say that it will be for the future needs of this country.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I will look into the matter.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The point I wanted to raise is about the temporary buildings. I do hope that if the Board of Ministers do not give the Hon. Minister of Health permission to put up these buildings, he will appeal to this House. It is such a vital matter that I am certain the House will give the Hon. Minister all the help that he needs.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 4 were passed without amendment.

Head 90, as amended, was passed.

### Head 91, Quarantine.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 193,315.*

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I would like to inquire from the Hon. Minister whether he is aware that there is much discontent prevailing among the senior Doctors regarding transfers and promotions in the Department.

**The Chairman:** May I suggest to the hon. Member that he raise this question under Head 92, Medical and Sanitary Services?

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 9 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 10, Water Service, Sewage Scheme and Electric Power Station, Mandapam, Rs. 25,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Health*]:

Reduce provision from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 22,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 10, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 11 to 13 were passed without amendment.

Head 91, as amended, was passed.

**The Chairman:** The sitting is suspended till 4.30 P.M.

*Sitting accordingly suspended until 4.30 p.m., and then resumed.*

### Head 92, Medical and Sanitary Services.

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,  
Rs. 8,449,898.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Health*]:

(a) Increase provision for Administrative Secretary, C.C.S., Class II., to Rs. 16,273.

(b) Increase of Hospital Stewards and Clerks from 85 to 86. Increase provision to Rs. 77,002 and the vote under Allowances to Nursing Staff, Hospital Clerks, Overseers, &c., to Rs. 15,480.

Include provision for 1 Supervisor, Civil Medical Stores, on the scale Rs. 600—20—900 and increase provision of Rs. 8,597 to Rs. 9,197.

Increase Daily-paid Labour (page 206) from 1299 to 1303 and the provision from Rs. 1,320,311 to Rs. 1,321,415.

(3) Include provision for an additional Cycle orderly on the salary scale Rs. 300—6—420—Rs.—300.

Include provision for—

(a) Fees for Lectures to Apothecary students ... Rs. 3,400.

(b) Remuneration to Examiners ... Rs. 4,450.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Is the Minister of Health aware that there is much discontent prevailing among the senior officers in the Medical Department in the matter of promotions and transfers? I think "I am voicing the sentiments of many Members who, though reluctant to make specific references, feel that there is great discontent in the department, particularly in regard to the attitude adopted by the present Director of Medical and Sanitary Services over transfers and promotions.

Further, the research side of the Medical Department has now been entirely closed down. The Director of Medical and Sanitary Services does not encourage Doctors to do any research work,

[Mr. Abeywickrama.]

or to write a thesis on any subject. The only Doctor who wrote one in recent times has been punished in some mysterious way for taking the trouble to do research work. His promotion has been held up on that account, by the concocting of various minor charges—enlarged into major charges.

With a progressive Minister like the present Minister of Health, we expect him to go into these matters. It is useless his pleading that there is the Public Services Commission and that he himself cannot do anything in the matter. The Minister is responsible to this Council. It is the Council that votes the necessary funds to run these departments. The Public Services Commission can play only a secondary part in the matter of discipline, and so on. The Minister must bring these questions to the notice of the Public Services Commission, if, after investigation, he finds that an injustice is being done to the senior officers of the department. We have nobody else but the Minister whom we can ask to bring these matters to the notice of the Public Services Commission. Individual officers cannot make representations to the Public Services Commission. Even if they do make representations, such representations do not have much effect.

I would like the Minister to say whether he is even aware of the great discontent that is prevailing. I would like to mention one instance. Let there be no misunderstanding; I have not been given this information by any Doctor, but I have heard it from a very reliable source. The present Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, Dr. Wickremasinghe, who is occupying the post held formerly by the officer now holding the post of Director of Medical and Sanitary Services finds that some of the duties formerly performed by Dr. Chellappa as Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services have not been handed over to him. The present Director of Medical and Sanitary Services has appropriated certain departmental duties which normally belong to the Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services.

In that way there is obstruction placed here and there in the matter of administration. What is the use of all this expenditure if you do not

Medical service to carry on the work? The senior Doctors might one day leave the Service, because they are thoroughly disgusted with the treatment meted out to them. I want you to inquire into the matter. I want an answer now as to whether you are aware—

**The Chairman:** The hon. Member should address his remarks to the Chair.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Before the Minister answers, I would like to raise another point regarding transfers.

You will remember that once I grumbled that the Dambulla Hospital had a lunatic in charge of it. That gentleman was transferred immediately I brought it to the notice of the Minister, and the Minister found that my complaint was largely true. This time, I believe there was a gentleman in the General Hospital whose administration of anaesthetic led to such "permanency" that it almost became a scandal. Now that gentleman, who was also supposed to be addicted to drink, has been put in charge of the Dambulla Hospital! That is the worst possible transfer to make from the point of view of the administration of the hospital. The Dambulla Hospital is far away from any central authority; there is no supervision, and the District Medical Officer is in sole charge. To send a gentleman who is addicted to drink, who is a drunkard, to be in charge of the Dambulla Hospital is merely to murder the patients in that hospital. I do not see why Dambulla has earned this fate.

With regard to the Civil Service generally, or any other Government Servant, surely the proper thing to do when a man is found inefficient owing to drink, is just to dismiss him from service. Why on earth should he be allowed to go to some provincial centre and there mismanage a hospital? After all, people round about Colombo and the provincial capitals are capable of creating some kind of a row if things go wrong, but people in Dambulla are afraid of everybody; they dare not say anything, and the only thing they can do is to avoid coming to the hospital. That is their only way of avoiding trouble.

I do not see why the Medical Department, when it has inefficient officers, must in the first place send a lunatic and in the second place send a drunkard to run the Dambulla Hospital.



**Dr. A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South) :**

The Director of Medical and Sanitary Services and his two Assistants are well-qualified Doctors, men with great experience. In a country like ours, where we have not many Doctors of experience, well-qualified Doctors, to employ even the few we have to attend to transfers, order drugs, sign papers—most of it perhaps very uninteresting work—to engage these men in such work when their services would be invaluable in hospitals, is a great loss to the country.

These Doctors, practically throughout their lives after they had passed their examinations, have been attending on patients and working as Doctors. All of a sudden you give them some administrative work, and they are like fish out of water.

It is time that in these departments we replaced them as much as possible by Civil Servants, or by those who have experience in administrative work. In the Civil Service the officers are trained to do administrative work, and they also develop that legal type of mind which is brought to bear on facts and matters impartially. But if you put in charge of the Medical Department a friend of the other Doctors, he will always be unpopular. He will sometimes favour one person against another, and there will be grumbling about promotions. Apart from that, even assuming that he would perform his duties quite properly, we must look at the matter from the point of view that this country cannot afford to spare these experienced Doctors for administrative work—to sign papers, and so on. We must make a special effort to get these Doctors out of administrative work in the department by replacing them by Civil Servants or by adopting some other method.

There is also the complaint by some of the younger Doctors that they are sent to the outstations and made to work for two years without being given permanent appointments after the period of two years' probation is over. That is not fair, and there is dissatisfaction in the department. I hope the Minister will look into the matter.

We have brought up in this Council on several occasions the necessity for a health insurance scheme in this country. The Minister seems to ignore it; or perhaps he feels that such a scheme cannot

be introduced in this country. But an effort should be made, to introduce health insurance even on a small scale so that it may develop into a full scheme.

A poor man finds it extremely difficult to get—

**The Chairman :** The question of insurance does not arise on this vote. It would arise on the vote of the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce.

**Dr. de Zoysa :** It is a matter coming within the purview of the Medical Department, and I am drawing the Minister's attention to certain defects of which he ought to be made aware. There should be a separate branch in his department to deal with this question, and some effort must be made so that a poor man, a labourer, would feel that in case of ill-health, there would be some means whereby he can become healthy again.

We have not made such provision. Sometimes, Sir, the poorer labourers take letters from us and other people, but they cannot gain admission to hospitals because the hospitals are full. Sometimes, when you go to a lying-in home you find children, like kittens, under the beds. There are not sufficient beds. Mothers sleep on the floor, and that is very unsafe.

These things should be attended to. I feel that, instead of having Doctors, if you had Civil Servants to administer the Department, they would have seen to those things. I therefore hope that the Hon. Minister will look into these matters and do what he can to relieve the poor people who cannot afford to spend for medical advice.

**\*Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel (Colombo Central) :** With regard to the criticism made by the hon. Member, with reference to health insurance schemes, I am in a position to inform this House that some time ago an attempt was made, both by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Independent Medical Practitioners in Colombo, to put forward a scheme of health insurance for the working-classes, the clerical hands and various other groups of people who do not come under the ordinary class of Government Servants. We had several meetings, and I think we even forwarded a memorandum on the subject to the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services.

[Dr. Kaleel.]

The ultimate result of that was that the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services—not the present Director of Medical and Sanitary Services but a previous one—put forward a health insurance scheme of his own before we proceeded any further. I have unfortunately not brought the papers with me, but that scheme of health insurance was entirely for Government Servants. He wanted to include even the private practitioners in this scheme, and it was to benefit only Government Servants. He said that he could not be responsible for including other classes—the mercantile clerks, and so on—that only the Government Servants could be controlled by Government and therefore the scheme was only for Government Servants. It was a very good scheme, Sir, but we could not countenance it because it ignored the vast majority of our clientele, that is the ordinary non-Government people, and the Independent Practitioners threw out the scheme.

I hope the present Minister of Health will give his mind to this subject and take the schemes already put forward by the Independent Practitioners, the Chamber of Commerce and the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, bring them together, and formulate a scheme of health insurance for the general public. I think it would be a great success.

The private practitioners themselves are willing to co-operate and do everything possible to make the scheme a success. The only trouble is that these Government Departments seem to think that they should not go beyond their own ambit of influence or the power which they can wield, and should confine themselves to dealing with Government Servants. They think that if they suggest any scheme which includes people outside the Government service class, they would get into trouble. I think it is high time a health insurance scheme was put forward by the Health Committee.

Then, as to the criticism of the present Director of Medical and Sanitary Services in regard to promotions, and so on, I know that there is a certain amount of difference of opinion between the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services and the Assistant Director of

Medical and Sanitary Services. I think if they put their heads together and work jointly they can do a great deal, rather than the Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services coming out with schemes in the absence of the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services and without consulting him, and the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services bringing forward his own schemes and suggestions without taking into confidence his own Assistants. These matters, I am sure, can be put to right by the present Minister if he calls into conference his Departmental Heads and Sub-Heads and sees that their respective duties are laid down.

With regard to the criticism of the anaesthetist of the General Hospital, I should like to mention that he himself, before he became anaesthetist of the General Hospital, was a District Medical Officer in some area. He suffered from attacks of malaria; the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services happened to visit him once when he was having a severe attack and I think out of sympathy he promoted this officer as anaesthetist of the General Hospital. He had no special qualification or special training to be the chief anaesthetist or to hold such a responsible post. His drinking habits which have been referred to, I think, were purely due to his attacks of malaria, like people who are run down or in trouble getting used to bad habits when they visit clubs like the Orient Club, and so on. If the bad habits of such people are to be removed, the proper thing is to transfer them to rural areas where they would not get into bad habits; generally they improve then, give up the bad habits and become very able men. One particular thing that ought to be done in such cases is to appoint the person concerned, for some time at least, as an assistant to another responsible Doctor; and if after some time he is found to be able to carry on on his own and gives up his bad habits, then I think he should be entrusted with responsible work.

There is another complaint, and a very serious complaint, that is made—that Government Medical Officers do not co-operate with general practitioners. The hon. Member for Moratuwa (Mr. T. Amarasinghe) told us that there were not

Aug 27, 1942]

## Debates.

1943

sufficient Doctors in that area, particularly for the purposes of health work. I can assure him that I know Moratuwa very well and that there are a good many very efficient and able Doctors in that area in private practice. If the Government will only consent to take these Doctors into confidence and co-operate with them, I think a great deal can be done.

For instance, you find in hospitals that the Doctors have not the time to cope with the work because the number of patients in some hospitals is so large. In each area you can find two or three able private practitioners, and they should be taken into the hospitals to do honorary work. The Department is not prepared to take them in, but if only these private Doctors are given a portion of the work in the hospitals, especially the outstation hospitals, I think a great deal of the work in the hospitals will be taken over by them and a larger number of people can be attended to with greater benefit accruing to the general public.

In all other countries, particularly in England, for instance, every cottage hospital, every general hospital, welcome them. In fact, almost all the Doctors are general practitioners of the area. They know their patients, and they know who the patients are who should be treated in hospitals and who should be treated in their homes. But in Ceylon general practitioners are not taken into confidence; in fact, they are not even permitted to visit their own patients who happen to be inmates of a hospital. When these patients require their private practitioners to come and see them, they are not allowed to visit them except, of course, during the normal visiting hours.

This is a very big question, and I hope the Hon. Minister will take the matter up and see that there is better co-operation between the Government Medical Officers and the general practitioners.

There is one more matter on which I would like to say just a word, and that is about the shortage of Midwives in the Island. Sir, the type of people who are taken into Maternity Homes for training is not really the type of people who ought to be taken in to be trained as Midwives. For instance, their educational qualifications are very poor; the class of women

who are taken in to be trained are not an educated and intelligent class. To attract an educated class of women who will make better-trained Midwives, I think, their conditions in life ought to be improved; they should be paid better salaries and their prospects ought to be made better by Government. Once that is done, I am sure a large number of women would be prepared to enter the service as Pupil Midwives, learn their subjects, and go into the country where they would be very useful in producing the large number of children that the Hon. Minister is thinking of.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** The question of medical insurance, which the hon. Member dwelt on and in connexion with which he asked for co-operation from Government practitioners as well as private practitioners is a matter that is very urgent. But I am afraid the Doctors who have been educated in the European system of medicine are rather a stumbling-block in this matter.

As the Hon. Minister of Health knows, the Select Committee on the Retrenchment Commission suggested a scheme of health insurance within their purview, that is, so far as Government Servants were concerned. They were faced with one fact, that is, that this Island is not covered with sufficient European-trained medical men, most of the people in this country having to depend on ayurvedic doctors. For any panel scheme to be worked out, you have to take into account this fact that a large proportion of the people in this country prefer ayurvedic medicine, to the European system, and they have more confidence in ayurveda.

Secondly, you have to take into account the fact that the Doctors are simply not available. Now, for instance, take a Headman in Dambulla or Nalanda. If he is ill, who is the Doctor he can go to?

Therefore, we worked out a scheme by which a person could choose either an ayurvedic doctor or a Doctor trained in English medicine; and each school could have a panel of its own. Copies of that scheme were sent to the Private Practitioners' Association of which, I believe, the hon. Member for Colombo Central (Dr. Kaleel) was either the President or the Secretary at that time. I regret to say, however, that the reply received was that the Doctors trained in the European

[Mr. Aluwihare.]  
system would have nothing to do with any scheme in which ayurvedic practitioners were concerned.

So that actually any panel scheme is hung up because these Doctors will not co-operate with us and work with ayurvedic physicians.

If you want to have a scheme for the whole Island, well, you have to take both systems into account, and I do not think that it will work any hardship. So far as the population is concerned, perhaps there may be certain prejudices of the Medical Association to be got over, but then in the circumstances that exist it is absolutely essential that we should get over those prejudices because, granted that the population would go to them, we cannot produce sufficient Doctors to render service to the Island as a whole. So that this whole scheme of medical insurance, whether for the whole population or for the Government Servants alone is made impossible by the refusal of the Doctors trained in English medicine to co-operate with us in any scheme that includes ayurvedic doctors.

I would beseech the hon. Member for Colombo Central (Dr. Kaleel) to change the policy of the Ceylon Branch of the British Medical Association and also the views of the Private Practitioners' Association in regard to that aspect of the matter, because that and that alone leads up to the whole scheme of medical insurance in this country.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** On a point of personal explanation—

**The Chairman:** Need we have a detailed discussion on health insurance, because it really does not arise?

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** There is one point I want to reply to, that is, with regard to my being Secretary of the British Medical Association.

**The Chairman:** I do not think it is really called for.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** I shall not take more than a few minutes, Sir; I merely want to explain that as far as private practitioners and other medical men are concerned we do not think along lines of English-qualified practitioner and Ceylon-qualified practitioner, or Australian-qualified practitioner. We have only one

system and that we call the scientific system of medicine, and in that system it does not matter what we practise. We can practise any form of medicine, but there is one condition laid down, and that is that every Doctor must have the minimum qualification that is laid down by the General Medical Council. That minimum qualification consists of a preliminary education and the passing of a qualifying examination, and if that condition is fulfilled we do not mind what the system practised is, or what kind of a Doctor he is—so long as the general public knows that he has attained a certain standard of education and obtained a certain amount of training and will not be a danger to the public. That is the only condition that we have laid down.

When we were, therefore, asked to co-operate with people whose qualifications were very doubtful, not only as regards medical education but as regards their preliminary general education as well, we found that we could not possibly accede to the request.

**The Chairman:** Need we go further into the matter?

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** I would only say that what the hon. Member said is true—that we refused to co-operate with unqualified practitioners, unqualified in the sense that they are not registered in the Medical Register and have not attained or do not come up to the minimum qualification required by the General Medical Council.

**Mr. P. de S. Kularatne (Balapitiya):** Before the Hon. Minister replies, I should like to draw his attention to a remark I made when speaking on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, in connexion with the policy of hospitals having paying patients and non-paying patients. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what his policy is in regard to the matter.

I am very glad that the hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare) drew attention to the scarcity of Doctors. I shall draw further attention to that matter when we come to social insurance later on. But the fact is that in my constituency at present we have all our Doctors concentrated at one or two places, that is, at Ambalangoda and Balapitiya, while in the rest of the constituency we have no Doctors at all.

Some of the people have to go eight to ten miles to come to a Doctor. A proper distribution of Doctors is, therefore, very important.

I also regret very much that although Doctors are scarce at present, the training of Doctors should have gone out of the control of the Minister. The Hon. Minister must see to it and take steps to ensure that the authorities who train Doctors produce sufficient Doctors for this country.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** First of all I should like to answer the question raised by the hon. Member for Udugama (Mr. Abeywickrama). He has raised a very difficult question for me to answer, that is, whether the Doctors in the department are discontented on account of the fact that their claims have been overlooked? I must say that as long as human beings desire to better their prospects, there is bound to be discontentment in various forms, whether rightly or wrongly, in every department. But I can assure the hon. Member that my Committee and I myself will always try to do justice by the people in our departments. I can give him that assurance, and I hope he will be satisfied with that.

Then, the hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare), made a complaint—that Dambulla had been singled out by us for sending unsatisfactory Doctors to be in charge of the hospital there. I must say that when he brought to my notice, when I was Acting Minister, that a certain Doctor was not capable of looking after an institution like that, I went there and I found to my horror that that Doctor should never have been put in charge of a hospital; I changed him immediately and wanted the Department to send another man. After that Doctor was sent away, the hon. Member says that another gentleman was sent there who was in the habit of getting drunk. Even if a man is in the habit of getting drunk, there are certain times when such a man can reform himself, in this case I do not know whether the officer is objectionable from that point of view. But I can assure my hon. Friend that I will take immediate steps to see that the Dambulla Hospital is placed in the charge of a capable medical officer.

Then, the hon. Member for Colombo Central (Dr. Kaleel) wants health insurance to be introduced in this country. I

have in season and out of season in this Council asked the Minister concerned to take up that matter. The question of insurance is outside the purview of my Ministry, and I want hon. Members to bear that in mind.

In regard to Health insurance, if the hon. Member thinks that we should copy the English Insurance Act, I must say that in Ceylon conditions are quite different from those in England; here the principle is that every hospital is run by the State, and anybody who wants treatment is at liberty to go to any hospital and obtain free treatment. So, to that extent there is a certain amount of relief provided unlike in England. But I must say that that is not sufficient. We must go further and have insurance effected. That is a subject, however, which comes under my Hon. Friend the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, and I hope he will tackle that question and give a satisfactory answer.

The hon. Member for Colombo Central, again, raised a very important question. He asked why Doctors should be in the Head Office? I must tell the hon. Member that that state of affairs has been going on for a long time. I will give the question my careful attention, and if I think that the present policy should be changed, I will bring the matter before my Committee, and if my Committee endorses that point of view I will take necessary action.

The hon. Member also said that some of the ayurvedic physicians are not educated. I must contest that point altogether, and I must also contest the other point he made, namely, that some of the Doctors practising the Western system are in a position to administer medicines on ayurvedic lines. We have at present an Ayurvedic College, and we are now training people in the ayurvedic system of medicine. It may not be that these people have the same standard of training as Doctors of the Western system, but they are being trained for a special purpose.

Before Doctors of Western medicine came to this Island, we had a well-organized system of ayurvedic treatment in this country, and for 2,000 years our ayurvedic physicians managed to conserve the health of the people without any aid from the West. I do not run

[The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva.]  
down the practitioners of the Western system. They are all scientific men and they are all learned men; and when you come to control learned men, you find that it is a very difficult task. I want hon. Members to bear that in mind. It is an extremely difficult thing to control learned men in this world, because every such man is a law unto himself, and he thinks that he knows everything under the sun and that nobody should interfere with his judgment and discretion.

So, Sir, when you have to administer a Department like that, you have to be very careful, and proceed very cautiously. But I can assure hon. Members that I am not going to run down the Eastern system of medicine. My father was an ayurvedic practitioner, and I, therefore, know the value of ayurvedic treatment. Before practitioners of the Western system came to be known at Nuwara Eliya, he was the one person who was respected and whose treatment was sought by all leading people in that part of the country.

So you must not run down the Eastern system of medicine. The ayurvedic system has its own value. If you say that we must not have anything to do with ayurvedic men, I must say that that is not the way to look at the question. We must try to get a system which would be beneficial to all people and not only to certain individuals. We do not have a sufficient number of Doctors of the Western system in this country. Therefore we have to conserve the health of the people by all the means available to us.

I can assure hon. Members that every point that they have made will be considered by the Executive Committee of Health, and we will bring up any recommendation that may be necessary to give effect to any decision that we may arrive at on those points.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I wish to inquire from the Hon. Minister whether he has made satisfactory arrangements for the evacuation of patients in an emergency, from the provincial hospitals. He said that satisfactory arrangements have been made with regard to patients in the Colombo hospitals. I want to know whether similar arrangements have been made in respect of patients in hospitals situated in what are called "target" areas.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** With regard to the various hospitals, certain provision has been made, but intensive provision has been made only in the case of hospitals in the most vulnerable areas. I am not inclined to say that the whole of the sea coast can be considered a "target" area. But to a great extent we have made provision for the evacuation of patients from the hospitals in dangerous places.

**Mr. Kularatne:** The Hon. Minister has been asked so many questions that he has forgotten to deal with the question I asked. I wish to know his hospital policy with regard to the question of paying patients and non-paying patients.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** The policy that is carried on now is the policy that has been going on from the time that the British Government came into power here. If I have my own way, I will say that these hospitals must be available to everybody, rich and poor alike, without payment, because taxation is the only criterion on which these hospitals should be run and every man should be treated alike. That is my private opinion; but I will have to put the matter before my Committee, and if my Committee subscribes to that point of view, I will faithfully implement that decision.

**\*Mr. U. Batuwantudawe (Kalutara):** I should like to bring the fact to the notice of the Hon. Minister that the new Kalutara Hospital, which he was kind enough to honour with a visit, has been taken over by the Military authorities and we are now using the old hospital which is very congested. I hope the Hon. Minister will get a new temporary ward erected with a water tank.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I will look into the matter.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was then passed.

*Sub-head 2, Travelling, Rs. 600,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Health*]:

Increase provision from Rs. 600,000 to Rs. 658,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 2, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 3 to 7 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 8, Transport, Rs. 90,000.*

Amendment moved [Minister of Health]:

Increase provision from Rs. 90,000 to Rs. 100,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 8, as amended, was passed.

Sub-head 9 was passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 10, Grants, Rs. 165,235.*

Amendment moved [Minister of Health]:

Item 7.—Increase the provision for the appointment and maintenance of midwives in rural areas to Rs. 58,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 10, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 11 to 15 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 16, Incidental Expenses, Rs. 12,500.*

Amendment moved [Minister of Health]:

Include provision for—

Training of apothecaries, pharmacists and midwives, &c., Rs. 150.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 16, as amended, was passed.

*Sub-head 17, Equipment for New Hospitals, Dispensaries, &c., Rs. 200,000.*

Amendment moved [Minister of Health]:

Reduce provision to Rs. 110,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 17, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 18 and 19 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 20, Twenty Maternity Homes (revote), Rs. 70,000.*

Amendment moved [Minister of Health]:

Include provision as follows:—

Revote	Rs.
.....	70,000
10 Maternity Homes and Mortuaries	73,000

143,000

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 20, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 21 to 26 were passed without amendment.

Head 92, as amended, was passed.

5.15 P.M.—

**The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake (Acting Leader of the State Council):** I move, Sir, that the Council do now resume.

*The Council having resumed—*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

**The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I move that Emergency Standing Order 2 (4) be suspended to enable the consideration of the Appropriation Bill, 1942-43, in Committee, to be continued beyond 5.30 P.M.

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

**The Hon. Mr. Senanayake:** I move that the Council do now go into Committee.

*In Committee—*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER presided as Chairman.

**Head 93, Indigenous Medicine.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 66,614.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Sir, with regard to this Head, I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister and the Financial Secretary that this estimate which was put forward by the Board of Indigenous Medicine is purely tentative. If you examine the salary scales you will find that they are certainly very low.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** With regard to the salary scales, the matter was referred to the Indigenous Board of Medicines for their recommendation. Their recommendations have just been forwarded to the Financial Secretary, and he is considering them. Those salaries are only tentative, until I can get the question settled between the Financial Secretary, the Committee and myself. So that these scales of salary are only tentative and I will bring the matter up after the vote is passed.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I thank the Hon. Minister for that explanation, but is it even now possible to reconsider this whole question?

**Dr. de Zoysa:** On the same question, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to certain facts. Some students are being taught in the hospital, but the unfortunate thing, if my opinion is correct, is that the type of training they receive is such a "mixture" that it is neither the Sinhalese system nor the Indian system nor the Unani system. It is a "mixture" of the English system and all these other systems put together, and the tendency is not to teach the pure Sinhalese system.

Sometimes when a person finds it difficult to get cured in the General Hospital he goes in for Sinhalese treatment, fully believing that he is going to get cured. So, with regard to the treatment itself, there should be different sections. Those who want to take treatment in the ayurvedic system should go to that section. There must be a Sinhalese section. If those sections are separated, and the doctors are asked to continue, there will be an opportunity for our own medical system to revive; whereas, as it is done now, there is the likelihood of the Sinhalese medical system being entirely lost in this country. So every effort must be made to safeguard the Sinhalese system of medicine.

With regard to the training of students also, there should be this separation. I do not mean that a student who goes to learn Sinhalese medicine should be ignorant of all other systems. But he must primarily and chiefly be grounded in the Sinhalese medical system and he should, by way of general knowledge, imbibe what is best in the other systems.

I trust the Hon. Minister will kindly look into this matter and make an effort to see that the Sinhalese system of medicine is revived in this country.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I may say, Sir, that that is the object. But again, as human beings progress and as time goes on, I cannot tell them where to stop, because, if I tell them where to stop—and you must not go beyond a certain limit—I will be blocking the progress of this country. So I must leave it to the people who come there and study to advance their cause in the best way they can. Can I control the prescription that an ayurvedic physician gives? I cannot do that. It is all controlled by a Board, and that Board must lay down certain principles for the education of students.

Primarily it was intended that ayurvedic medicine should be taught there, but again everywhere you find not only the Eastern system but also the Western system being borrowed by people. Why should not the Eastern people borrow some of the "Western" ideas?

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** There are three branches of study there. If my hon. Friend goes through these estimates, he will find that indigenous medicine is divided into three sections.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 8 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 9, Grant-in-Aid to Ayurvedic Dispensaries, Rs. 7,500.*

**Mr. H. de Z. Siriwardana (Negombo):** With regard to Sub-head 9, I would like to mention that we have a free ayurvedic dispensary at Negombo; we received a grant of about Rs. 400 some time back; last year we received Rs. 200; and this year we received only Rs. 140 which is quite insufficient. Last year the estimated total amounted to Rs. 7,500; this year also it is the same. In that dispensary about 1,000 people are treated. The poor people prefer to come to this dispensary, but the prices of drugs have increased. You have to obtain the drugs from India, as they are not available here. So that, with the small sum provided it would be very difficult to manage.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** I will look into that matter.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** There is one point about it. In certain villages there are ayurvedic physicians who render free services to about 90 per cent. of the village. There are just a few people who are able to pay for their medicines, and these physicians receive a little money from them. When they apply for a grant under this Sub-head, they are asked to certify that they do not charge fees from anybody at all. If they say that there are a few people who pay, then they do not get any grant.

I would suggest to the Hon. Minister that these grants should be available to people who are certified as rendering a good deal of their services free, at least free services to a good many patients. One of the cases that came to my notice was that of a physician who had treated hundreds of cases free during the malaria



epidemic. He was refused any aid under this vote simply because there were just a few people in the village who had paid him for services rendered. Now, if he had lied and said, "I never accepted any fees", he would have received some aid. I would ask the Hon. Minister to change the policy in regard to such cases.

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** This vote was originally given and the money allocated under a certain policy enunciated by this Council; so, that policy is still being continued. If hon. Members want that policy changed and an extension of facilities granted, I shall be very happy to alter it. If the hon. Member will give us all the details he wants us to consider, and on what further basis we should make grants, I shall consider the matter and bring it before this House.

Sub-head 9 was then passed without amendment.

Head 93 was passed without amendment.

**Head 100, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,*  
Rs. 34,421.

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

Insert "1 Temporary Stenographer at Rs. 2,50 per diem" immediately after the item "Clerks (General Clerical Service)", with provision of Rs. 912 against the item.

**\*Mr. S. Abeywickrama (Udugama):** Sir, yesterday in the course of my remarks on the transfer of "Food" to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, I made a statement regarding the transactions in India which the Hon. Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce has understood to be a reflection on him. I would like to assure him that I meant no reflection on him whatsoever, and that what I intended to convey was that the Trade Commissioner's transactions were now being investigated.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 4 were passed without amendment.

Head 100, as amended, was passed.

**Head 101, Registrar-General.**

*Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments,*  
Rs. 693,346.

**\*Mr. B. H. Aluwihare (Matale):** Will the Hon. Minister tell us where the Registrar-General is now?

**\*The Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea (Minister of Labour, Industry & Commerce):** At the moment the Office is in Moratuwa.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Cannot a skeleton Office or something like that be maintained in Colombo, because it is a very important Office?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I am considering the question of bringing it back. We removed it shortly after the air raid, because we had very valuable documents and we wanted to take them away out of the "target" area. We wanted to keep it as close to Colombo as possible, and considering the Railway facilities and other things, we decided to secure a house in Moratuwa for the purpose. I quite appreciate that that is causing difficulty, and I am considering the question of bringing the Office back to Colombo.

**Mr. P. de S. Kularatne (Balapitiya):** In connexion with this vote, Sir, I should like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages are not easily available to the public. In my own constituency there are certain areas where the people have to go as far as eight miles to get to their Registrar. It is true that he has an Office which he visits once a week, but people do not get married, Sir, only on that particular day; and they have to go quite a long way to get to the Registrar of Marriages. I am told—I do not know how far it is true—that in certain areas of my constituency 60 per cent. of the marriages are not registered.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** It is a very good thing, too.

**Mr. Kularatne:** I should like to appeal to the Hon. Minister to see that more Registrars are appointed to make it easier for people to get married. These people cannot spend a great deal of money. These days petrol and cars are very scarce, and even if they are available, poor people cannot afford these things. I know they get into debt sometimes to find the money for hiring cars—and all that sort of thing—to get to the Registrar's Office. It would be very much better if they had a Registrar who was accessible to them.

**\*Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel (Colombo Central):** With regard to this vote, I would like to ask the Minister what is happening to the Muslim Wakfs and Marriages Ordinance. It has been hanging fire for the last three years in the Registrar-General's Department. Sir, the Muslims in the whole Island are dissatisfied with this state of affairs; a Special Committee was appointed to go into this subject, and they made their recommendations a number of years ago, but the Ordinance has not been passed into law yet. A large number of Kathis who have been appointed to work the Marriages Ordinance find it difficult to carry on with their work.

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister when this matter would be put through so that the Marriages and Wakfs Ordinance might function smoothly. At present there is great dissatisfaction in the country. I may add that one of the reasons why the Muslims are very particular about communal representation is because their matters are ignored by the Ministers. They feel that matters peculiar to their community are being neglected.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** That Bill is not neglected at all; nor have we overlooked it. The Special Committee did go into this very complicated matter and make its report. The Committee's report was very fully considered by my Executive Committee and their recommendations have been sent to the Legal Draftsman for framing the necessary legislation.

**\*Dr. Kaleel:** But the Legal Draftsman is holding up the matter. If the Legal Draftsman cannot do it, he might at least get a temporary legal draftsman to put this matter through.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Balapitiya (Mr. Kularatne), our policy is to meet the needs of the public as far as is possible whenever our attention is drawn to them. There have been several cases where additional Registrars have been appointed in the past, and if there is any case with regard to the area mentioned by the hon. Member, I shall look into it.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-head 2, Travelling, Rs. 9,554.

Amendment moved [Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce]:

Increase provision by a sum of Rs. 500.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 2, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 3 to 7 were passed without amendment.

Head 101, as amended, was passed.

### Head 102, Director, Tourist Bureau.

Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 8,088.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Is it any use maintaining this Department? After all, do we get any value for this money?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Sir, this question came up only a few weeks ago on another vote, and I explained the situation very fully.

I quite agree that in the troublous times that we are going through, there is less work than can be done, and therefore we have reduced the money provision considerably. But this reduced provision is made to keep up the work that has been done, especially the work that has been started in India. There is very good publicity work carried out, and that resulted, before this war broke out and even after the war moved closer to the East, in great publicity for this Island. We have had very good results. The hon. Member himself will agree that after starting a campaign and obtaining certain results, if we drop it altogether, the resumption of it will be very difficult and costly. This is a very small amount, and I would ask the House to allow the vote to go through.

Sub-head 1 was then passed without amendment.

Sub-heads 2 to 5 were passed without amendment.

Head 102 was passed without amendment.

### Head 103, Director of Commerce and Industries.

Sub-head 1, Personal Emoluments, Rs. 580,469.

Amendment moved [Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce]:

1 Additional Assistant Director of Commerce and Industries. The provision of Rs. 4,650 in respect of this post to be amended to Rs. 6,200.

1 Commercial Assistant. The provision of Rs. 6,200 to be amended to Rs. 5,467.

Clerks (G. C. S.)

65 Clerks. The provision of Rs. 66,515 to be amended to Rs. 64,002 and the cadre of clerks described as follows:—

65 Clerks.

63 clerks (General Clerical Service).

Class II., 8 at Rs. 900—120—2,820.

Class II., 7 at Rs. 720—108—2,448.

Class III. 48  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Grade I. 1,440—45—1,800.} \\ \text{Grade II. 600—42—1,398.} \end{array} \right.$

2 Clerks (Survey Clerical Service).

Class II., 2 at Rs. 900—120—2,820.

Ceylon House in India (Bombay).

1 Trade Commissioner (temporary). The provision of Rs. 23,680 to be amended to Rs. 23,250.

Industrial Division.

1 Chemist Superintendent, Quinine Factory. Amend salary scale and provision to Rs. 4,800—420—11,520 and Rs. 5,283, respectively.

1 Leather Technologist (temporary). Amend salary scale to Rs. 7,200—480—9,600.

1 Chemist. Amend salary to Rs. 4,200—200—5,000, and alter provision to Rs. 4,823.

Coir Yarn Factory.

1 Foreman.

1 Assistant Foreman.

1 Dyeing and Printing Assistant.

2 Watchers.

1 Peon.

The provision of Rs. 6,009 appearing against these items to be amended to Rs. 4,209 and the post "1 Assistant Foreman" to be deleted.

Coir, Textile and Mat Demonstrations.

Between the item "Superintendent of Coir and Textile Demonstration (temporary)" and item "Supervisors Demonstration Parties (temporary)" insert a new post: "1 Supervisor of Cottage Industries" on a fixed salary of Rs. 1,800, per annum and provide therefor Rs. 1,800 for 1942-43. Also insert a footnote (f) in respect of this post as follows:—

"f—salary is personal to the surplus officer who is being appointed to it."

Ceramic Section.

1 Ceramic Chemist. Amend salary scale to Rs. 3,960—240 & 360—7,440 and the provision to Rs. 4,769.

Allowances.

Rent Allowance. The provision of Rs. 21,077 to be amended to Rs. 20,609.

Personal allowance to Superintendent of Coir and Textile demonstrations for supervising Industrial Schools at Rs. 25 per mensem.

This item and provision to be deleted.

\***Mr. Aluwihare:** Sir, I wonder whether the Hon. Minister can supply us with a statement of the results of the working of his various factories.

**The Chairman:** The hon. Member refers, I take it, to Sub-head 26 downwards—26 to 35?

\***The Hon. Mr. Corea:** We might take them up one by one.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 1, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 2 to 5 were passed without amendment.

Sub-head 6, *Contribution to the British Rubber Research Board, Rs. 135,058.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

The provision of Rs. 135,058 be amended to Rs. 162,070.

\***Mr. Aluwihare:** Sir, need we make this contribution to the British Rubber Research Board, especially in view of the fact that even at the present time this Board does not seem to assist us in starting rubber manufactures in this Island? Even from the point of view of the war it seems inexcusable, because we are told that shipping is very scarce and we are in the position of exporting our raw material and losing some of it on the way; then importing the manufactured articles, losing some of it on the way, and then not having sufficient rubber for our own use.

It is not good enough to be told that we are starting manufactures in India. We are today, I think, the biggest rubber producer in the British Empire, and I do not see why our country should not be helped to start any rubber industry of its own. I would suggest to the Hon. Minister that we cut this money out. What is the benefit we get out of this?

\***The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I wish to point out that we cannot cut this out because it is based on an Ordinance passed by this House according to which we have to levy a cess of 5½ cents on a lb. of rubber. Calculating on that basis, this is the amount we have to pay.

\***Mr. Aluwihare:** Yes, but what is the help we get?

**Mr. H. F. Parfitt (Nominated Member):** The help they give is not so far as starting rubber industries in other parts of the world is concerned. What they do really is to investigate whether and how far rubber is of use, shall we say, in a particular industry like the paint industry or the paper industry. They do all the research experiments and they give to these industries the information they have obtained through various experiments and research they make.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** But does not the hon. Member see that that is a thing for which the manufacturer should pay, not we? The manufacturers get the whole benefit out of it, and today especially, when the price of the raw material is controlled.

**\*Mr. Parfitt:** What they want to do is to get the various manufacturers to use rubber rather than some other material, and we are subsidizing this research to find out and tell the manufacturers how they can use rubber in the manufacture of paper or whatever it is, rather than use some other material that competes with rubber. That is the main object.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Surely then the time has come when this vote should stop, because to-day we have not sufficient rubber for the old uses. So why on earth do we want new uses for rubber?

**\*Mr. Parfitt:** Experiments take five or six years, and there is groundwork to be done, and it is going to be of good value after the war is over to the rubber industry.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Is the Minister receiving any assistance to start a rubber industry in this Island?

**\*Mr. Parfitt:** It has nothing to do with this vote.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Never mind. This is rubber research.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** The Board have not been appointed for dealing with manufacturing purposes, but the question may be taken up with them. At present we cannot cut this item out. I will make a note of the suggestion of the hon. Member.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Will this money be utilized for research purposes this year? Is the Rubber Research Board functioning now?

**The Chairman:** This is a contribution.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Yes, Sir, I know that it is a contribution; but I want to know whether the Board is still functioning. I want to know from the Minister whether the Board is still operating.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** The institute is operating.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle):** I want to know whether the local Rubber Research Scheme is doing anything by way of encouraging—

**The Chairman:** I am sorry that question does not arise on this vote. The question should have been raised on the vote under the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 6, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 7 to 10 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 11, Expenses of Administering Match Ordinance, Rs. 200.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

Increase provision from Rs. 200 to Rs. 500.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 11, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 12 to 15 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 16, Expenses of Administering and Developing Minor and Cottage Industries, Rs. 167,500.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

Provision of Rs. 10,000 under item (e) "Temporary Demonstrators and Assistants for new Cottage Industries" be amended to Rs. 20,000 and the total of the sub-head be altered from Rs. 167,500 to Rs. 177,500.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 16, as amended, was passed.

*Sub-head 17, State-aid to Industries, Rs. 110,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Agriculture and Lands*]:

Provision of Rs. 110,000 be amended to Rs. 150,000 and Note (1) be amended to read "Rs. 90,000 revote (Rs. 30,000 in respect of Moratuwa Carpentry Industries Society and Rs. 60,000 for Paper Factory of Youths' Social Service League Syndicate, Limited, Kokuvil)."

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** In 1940-41, only a sum of Rs. 8,000 was provided under this Sub-head and after that I believe Rs. 75,000—[*Interruption.*] Last year this Council voted a sum of Rs. 110,000 and this year too a similar sum has been provided. I should like to know from the Minister how much money has been spent to date during the present financial year on industries that have been started in this country. I want to know what State-aid has been given to industries during the current

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I can say that there were many industries started as a result of this vote, and gradually the expenditure under this vote has increased. I think the amount given out this year is Rs. 42,000.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** Out of the vote of how much?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** We have voted Rs. 110,000 in the current financial year. We had an enormous number of applications for grants. The grants asked for amounted to something like Rs. 870,000. Those applications had to be carefully scrutinized. We had to find out whether the grants had been applied for for useful purposes. After such scrutiny, the grants paid up to June amounted to Rs. 42,000-odd.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 17, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 18 and 19 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 20, Commercial and Industrial Scholarships, Rs. 15,000.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

Deleted the words "not exceeding" from the details of this Sub-head.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** May I know how these industrial scholarships are awarded?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** We propose to offer these industrial scholarships to B.Sc. (Hons.) graduates. We also made provision in the scheme we put forward to take into consideration the case of those in the Department who have shown promise. Deserving people will be selected and sent abroad, to India or Europe, to pursue specialized courses in certain industries. Fortunately, in the case of one particular man we have been able to select and send him. Owing to the disturbed times, it has not been possible to make full use of this provision.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 20, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 21 to 23 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 24, Machinery, materials, and accessories for promoting pottery, textile, and coir yarn industry (token vote), Rs. 100.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

Description of this sub-head be altered to Machinery, materials and accessories for promoting Pottery, Textile, Coir Yarn, and other Cottage Industries" and the limit of Rs. 200,000 given in the details of the sub-head be amended to Rs. 220,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 24, as amended, was passed.

*Sub-head 25, Running expenses of Coir Yarn Factory (token vote), Rs. 10.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

The limit of Rs. 20,000 given in the details of this vote be amended to Rs. 35,000.

**The Chairman:** May I suggest that the Hon. Minister make a statement, as requested by the hon. Member for Matale (Mr. Aluwihare) on Sub-heads 25 to 28? We will have the discussion after that.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** We shall have it tomorrow.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I can answer questions that hon. Members may raise on any point, or I can make a statement on all these Sub-heads if that is desired.

**The Chairman:** How does the Committee like me to take up these Sub-heads? Are they to be taken up individually?

**The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva (Minister of Health):** Yes.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** We can take them together.

**The Chairman:** What does the hon. Member for Matale want done?

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** One wants a general statement of what is happening under each of these Sub-heads.

**The Chairman:** Will the Minister take up the items one by one?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Yes, and answer any questions that might thereafter be raised.

With regard to Sub-head 25, Coir Yarn Factory, that Factory has now been removed from Colombo and is functioning in the Negombo District.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Its location is very vaguely described when the Minister says that it is now in the Negombo District.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** It is at Katunayaka in the Negombo District. The Factory is working full-time. According to the last balance sheet I have received, up to the end of June the Factory showed a net profit of Rs. 8,000.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** That is, for a year?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** No; that is for a period a little short of a year.

**\*Mr. D. Wanigasekera (Welligama):** It is a big yarn!

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** To some people it is a yarn, but it is a fact which cannot be refuted.

With regard to the Hat Factory, the House knows that it was started as an experiment, in a very small way. It has now expanded—

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** With regard to the Coir Yarn Factory, will the Hon. Minister—

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** Let the Hon. Minister complete his statement.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** He can take it item by item.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Where is the Hat Factory situated?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** It is not really a Factory. It is just a small experiment that is being carried on, to see whether we can make pith hats.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** But you have described it as a Factory.

**\*The Hon. Mr. G. E. de Silva:** All right, call it a Factory.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** The experiment has been very successful. We now propose to expand the work there and I shall shortly be submitting a vote to start a Factory on a large scale.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Where is the Factory situated?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Until recently it was located at the Railway Workshops but it has now been removed to General's Lake Road. I would ask hon. Members to pay a visit to it and see things for themselves. The hats made have sold readily. A very important discovery is in regard to a local pith we have found. It is an excellent pith and the new hats are made with it.

**\*Mr. Wanigasekera:** What is that pith?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I forget the word. It is a tree somewhat like the mangrove.

With regard to the Tannery and Leather Factory, as hon. Members know, the work on it has already begun. The Tannery is complete and the Leather Factory is working. Certain parts of the machinery are still due. They have arrived in Karachchi and are expected in Ceylon.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** That Factory is at Mattakkuliya?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Yes. When we get the full machinery, we will be able to increase the production. At present the full capacity of that factory is utilized to meet the very large Military orders that have been received. We are executing those orders now.

One point of interest is that the whole staff of that factory, except the Manager, is composed entirely of Ceylonese and everyone has been trained in that Factory. People who did not know anything of chrome tanning or manufacturing footwear are now engaged in that work.

The Quinine Factory has had very serious difficulties because the building in Mutwal that was bought by the Department for this purpose was requisitioned by the Military authorities. We consented to give it because the Military said that they would hand it back to us in two months. But they have not been able to do that, with the result that we have had to make attempts to find a building in another part of the country. We tried to requisition certain buildings in the Peradeniya District, but owing to local difficulties—the people concerned in the tea industry raised certain objections—we had to give it up. We have now obtained a building in Colombo; the machinery has all been made and is now being installed. The building is at Maradana in one of the old Railway Workshops. The Quinine Expert has told me that he would have the factory working in the next two months.

With regard to the Plywood Factory, there is only one difficulty. The factory is working and is manufacturing plywood. A good quantity of plywood has been sold in the market. There have been some difficulties at times. It was found, with regard to one lot, that some

insect was attacking the wood. The rest of the plywood that had been manufactured and sold to the traders was found to be very satisfactory. We have received no complaints whatsoever.

With regard to the plywood which had been attacked, we recalled all the timber that had been supplied in order to examine the reason for it. The other plywood was not affected at all and has been used for making chests. The factory is turning out large quantities of plywood for aeronautical use, and I am informed that the Air Force is quite satisfied with the article that is turned out.

There is one difficulty with regard to timber. We did not get sufficient timber to work the factory full-time. There was also another reason. We have not got the electrical power that is required for the purpose. The Municipal Council of Galle undertook to supply the power and they placed orders abroad for the necessary machinery. The machinery has not yet arrived. As a result, we have had to adopt the expedient of tapping some overhead wires which connect Boosa with the Galle Power Station.

With regard to the question of the increase of supply of timber, I have set up special parties to work in the forests, and at the moment our position is good. I have here, for instance—I do not want to weary the House—a weekly statement of timber supplied from the forests. We are drawing our supplies from two forests: one forest is Kanalay which has been earmarked for this purpose; the other forest is called Hiniduma. [Interruption]. Kanalay is also in Hiniduma. But there is another forest.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** There is no forest called Hiniduma. Kanalay is in Hiniduma.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** There are two forests which we have been trying to exploit.

**\*Mr. Aluwihare:** We will take your word for it.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I have a list here which shows that the output of timber has increased after the methods were tried. There was one difficulty. The method of felling was found to be wrong, because it damaged and destroyed the trunk when it fell down.

But we want more timber; and as a matter of fact I am discussing to-morrow the question of what we can ask the Forest Department to do for us; what forests in addition can be set apart or what timber we can ask the Forest Department to supply to us. I am meeting the Manager of the Plywood Factory to-morrow in Colombo, and I am going to deal with the question in order that we may settle definitely the question as to where we can get additional timber from. Of course, we are doing our best to exploit Kanalay fully.

There are satisfactory results being obtained from the new methods that we are adopting, and everyday shows progress. We have placed a special officer in charge of this work. He is working in the forest. He has taken along a large number of young people whom he is training. Apart from that, they are helping in the felling of timber and we already see better results. But I am sure that if we work out our full requirements and place them before the Forest Department, we may be able to get sufficient timber to keep the factory working up to full capacity.

**The Chairman:** Any questions on the Hat Factory? I want to dispose of the items one by one.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I wish to ask a general question on the four items. When are the balance sheets submitted? You are starting these factories on different dates. I wish to know whether the balance sheets are submitted at the end of the financial year or the calendar year.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Some are submitted half-yearly. Anyway, the accounts are kept from the date of starting.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Are we in a position to study these balance sheets? Can we have a copy each?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** The balance sheets are submitted to the Treasury. They are audited.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Are they printed balance sheets?

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** They are neither printed nor distributed; they are sent to the Treasury, and the accounts are audited.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** Surely if we vote the money we are entitled to know what is happening.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I shall be very glad to give information to any hon. Member who is interested.

**The Chairman:** Yes; he can call for it.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** What is the difficulty about giving each Member a copy of the balance sheet? Why should you give it only to the Hon. the Financial Secretary.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I do not give it to the Hon. the Financial Secretary. The accounts go to him; he scrutinizes them and I suppose there is an audit. Once the statement is ready, I am prepared to circulate it to every hon. Member.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** We are all very earnest about these matters and are prepared to give every assistance to the Hon. Minister. When we vote lump sums for various industries, we are entitled to have some information, and if the balance sheets are not submitted—

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** I can make them available.

**\*Mr. Abeywickrama:** I take it that the Hon. Minister will submit the balance sheets to hon. Members

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Definitely.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** With regard to the Hat and Coir Yarn Factories, I want to ask whether in the preparation of their revenue and expenditure statements the overhead charges are also brought into account. I think many of us feel that the overhead charges are not included. We should examine these accounts from a commercial point of view. It is rather important that when the State undertakes a new venture it should run it on model lines so that the individuals interested in such undertakings would be able to obtain the necessary data from Government and establish similar factories in other parts of the Island. If a private party wants to start a coir yarn factory, he should be able to come to the Government Factory and get the necessary information, find out costs, and so on.

I want to know whether overhead charges have been brought into account in preparing the revenue and expenditure statements.

**\*The Hon. Mr. Corea:** Yes, Sir.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 25, as amended, was passed.

*Sub-head 26, Running Expenses of Hat Factory (token vote), Rs. 10.*

Amendment moved [*Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce*]:

The limit of Rs. 5,000 given in the details of this vote to be amended to Rs. 10,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-head 26, as amended, was passed.

Sub-heads 27 and 28 were passed without amendment.

*Sub-head 29, Running Expenses of Plywood Factory (token vote), Rs. 100.*

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** I should like to make some observations on this Sub-head. I want to raise an important question with regard to the conditions of service of the people employed in the factory.

**The Chairman:** I believe the hon. Member can raise that point under the Labour votes.

**Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya:** This is the only vote under which I can raise this point.

Committee to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

**The Chairman:** The Council will now resume.

*The Council having resumed—*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Committee report progress; to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

*It being 6 p.m. MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the Council without Question put, pursuant to Emergency Standing Order 2 (3), until 10 a.m. on Friday, August 28, 1949.*