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5th August, 1948



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OFFICIAL REPORT

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APPROPRIATION BILL, 1948-49

[*Eighth Allotted Day.*]

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, 5th August, 1948

The House met at 10 a.m., MR. SPEAKER [THE HON. MR. A. F. MOLAMURE] in the Chair.

APPROPRIATION BILL, 1948-49

Considered in Committee. [Progress, 4th August.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair.]

Head 52.—Excise Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Excise Department, Rs. 2,570,229.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 1,600,831.

Mr. M. H. Peiris (Panadure): I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Excise Commissioner'."

I have brought forward the above-mentioned Amendment in order to draw the attention of the Government to the plight of the people who are engaged in the manufacture of sweet toddy. The present position is that, when a person is found guilty of illicitly tapping for toddy, the whole village is banned from manufacturing it. I do not know whether the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs is aware of that position. It is thoroughly unsatisfactory, because, while there is no harm in a man who is found guilty of illicitly tapping having his licence cancelled, it is very unfair that the whole village should be banned from manufacturing sweet toddy.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela (Second Badulla): Permit me, Sir, to mention a very grave matter. The Excise Department has a policy of expecting its Inspectors to submit a number of cases of illicit tapping, and so on, every month. That being so, the Department takes for granted that in every area where there are Excise Inspectors or where there is an Excise Station, the people are habitually committing offences against the Excise Regulations. Furthermore, the Excise Department does not realize that, even if certain people commit these offences, the number of such

offences would be reduced during the following months. All the same, they insist on a certain number of prosecutions by the Excise Inspectors, with the result that they are forced to concoct cases.

The Chairman: That is not a circular that has been issued to the Excise Inspectors.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: I believe it is a circular. The result is that the cases that are brought up are for possession of toddy or for illicit sale of toddy. The evidence is the same always, and there is no possibility of finding out whether a case is true or false. As an example, I should like to say that, where a person goes and tells an Inspector that he gave a man twenty-five cents for a certain quantity of toddy, he is prosecuted. This type of thing must be put an end to. Poor villagers are harassed, and very often they are dragged from distant parts of the country to attend Courts. I have known of cases where poor villagers from Moneragala have been brought to Badulla in order to attend Courts.

Mr. T. B. Subasinghe (Bingiriya): Mr. Chairman, I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary a peculiar situation that exists in certain parts of the North-Western Province. I can quite understand the anxiety of the Government to stop illicit distilling of arrack. But the Government seems to be starting at the wrong end. At the same time, they suspend the granting of new licences to quite honest tappers who tap trees for the purpose of producing sweet toddy to produce jaggery. While the Government is very anxious to prevent illicit distilling of arrack by not granting new licences, at the same time there have been very many instances where notorious culprits, who have often been punished in the Courts, have had their licences renewed and are continued to be granted licences year after year. In spite of all the representations made by the public about these men, the culprits seem to be receiving their licences regularly. I should like the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to take up this matter with the Provincial authorities and to go into the question thoroughly.

Mr. V. Kumaraswamy (Chavakachcheri): I should like to make a few comments with regard to the Excise Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors. It is very unfortunate that Excise Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, after they have remained at a station for six or seven years, get together with the dope dealers and make money.

The Chairman: Some of the Excise Inspectors!

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Yes, some of them. The result is that there is illicit transport of dope. The only solution to this, to my mind, is the frequent transfer of the Excise Inspectors instead of allowing them to be stationed in one place or area and becoming familiar with all the rogues, dope dealers and others. If they are transferred every year, then this menace will be considerably reduced.

With regard to Excise Guards, we must be very careful in selecting them. The best type of men should be selected. I have always insisted, even in the case of Fiscal Process Servers, that a minimum educational qualification be made compulsory. Sometimes these Excise Guards, for the mere fun of it, introduce dope on people and institute false cases. This is a very deplorable state of affairs.

There is also another point. If one travels from Vavuniya to Kankesanturai or from Kankesanturai to Vavuniya, one will find that these Guards try to enter ladies' compartments and create mischief. This sort of thing is due to want of education and to a lower type of Guard. It will not happen if you have an educated type of Guard.

Mr. Albert F. Peris (Nattandiya): There is great difficulty being experienced by villagers because Excise Inspectors are asked to submit reports before licences are granted. Some of these Excise Inspectors take bribes for such reports and the poor villagers are put to undue expense and inconvenience. Although representations have been made to Government Agents on various occasions, no action has been taken. I have received a number of complaints from the villagers in my electorate.

I think all this trouble can be put an end to, if authority is given to the village committees to grant these people the licences they require. There was a resolution that was passed recently to the effect that Government be requested to permit village committees to grant these licences. I think that is a matter worthy of the consideration of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary.

Mr. W. Dahanayake (Galle): Sir, I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary the conditions under which the porters and watchers work in the distilleries and warehouses. There are about twenty-five warehouses right round the Island, and the bulk of the work in these warehouses is done by 143 porters and watchers.

The first point to be noted about them is that they work under conditions which make them fall ill invariably. They keep on inhaling poison, and cases have been known of stalwart, well-built young men, who have taken up work as porters and watchers in these warehouses, falling ill within a few years of their taking up duties. I think it is up to the Government, as in the case of the Government Press, to see that these workers who inhale poison in the discharge of their duties, are offered some special diet, at Government expense, like milk and eggs. Otherwise, you will be sacrificing a whole body of men without taking sufficient precautions against their ill-health.

The second point to be noted about the conditions of service of these men is that these 143 persons are divided into two grades. In Grade I there are just 15 of them and the balance 128 are in Grade II. The salary scale of the Grade II people is a most niggardly one. It starts at Rs. 35 a month, and in ten years it goes up to only Rs. 45 a month. The bulk of the men who do such responsible work wind up on a salary of Rs. 45 a month. They do not have a chance of getting into the higher grade, because the number of men in the higher grade is limited to 15. That is about 1 in 10 of a chance of promotion whenever there is a vacancy in Grade I. What I should like to ask is that the number in Grade I be increased, so as to give as many deserving men as possible in Grade II, a chance of promotion.

I should also like to point out the lack of policy in the Excise Department. We see it very clearly when we discover that there are as many as 212 temporary hands in the Excise Department. There are 65 temporary Inspectors and 140 temporary guards in the Department. I ask, why should there be such a large number of temporary men? Is it not because the policy of the Department continues to be in the melting pot? There is no policy whatever. If you ask us what the policy should be, we would reply that if you want this work to be carried out properly, you must nationalize the industry.

10.15 A.M.

We do not want private distillers; we do not want private renters; we do not want the tapping to be done through private contractors. You must nationalize the industry, so that the workers engaged in this industry from the tapping stage to the ultimate stage of production, could become your workers, your employees, and looked after by you.

Today, Mr. Chairman, you hand over the sales to a private renter, and the private renter's one aim is to make a profit on his trade. The private renter will stand in the way of any real progress; a private renter will devise ways and means of enhancing his profits. If you want to carry on this industry at all, you must eliminate the private renter and do the work yourself. There is no reason whatever, except a sentimental one, why the Government cannot do the work from the beginning to the end.

Much is spoken about corruption that prevails in this Department. My diagnosis of the trouble is that this corruption is due to the lack of a clear-cut policy on the part of the Government. You, Mr. Chairman, as a back-bencher in the last State Council, took a good deal of trouble, spent a good deal of time, in going to the outstations and inquiring into the question of tapping, of licensing, and of the issuing of tapping licences, which practice is being followed in the North, and I remember that you issued a very illuminating report, but nothing has been done about it. If your recommendations, Mr. Chairman, could have been shelved,

I ask, what chance is there of our recommendations being accepted by Government.

We ask that the Government should not keep on marking time over this matter, but that it should define its position and lay down a clear-cut policy for the future.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva (First Ambalangoda-Balapitiya): I want to bring a certain matter to the notice of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary, that is, several thousands of people in my constituency, particularly in the Induruwa-Bentota area, find employment today as toddy tappers and generally in that industry, and I understand that the distillery owners intend terminating their contract at the end of this year. If this step is taken, it would cause a great deal of hardship to those several thousands in that area who are engaged in this industry. I would, therefore, ask the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to intervene in this matter and to see that the tapping is continued in that area in the future.

Mr. Rosslyn Koch (Appointed Member): Sir, I have just been informed that six Inspectors in the Excise Department have been acting as Superintendents since 1944, and that they have been performing the work of the Superintendents without any added remuneration. They have still not been told that they are either going to be confirmed in their acting appointments or that their services will not be required as Superintendents and that they will have to revert to their former appointments. I am also advised that the probationary period is usually two years, but today these six Inspectors have been acting as Superintendents for over four years. Cannot the hon. Parliamentary Secretary recommend to the Public Service Commission that these Inspectors be confirmed in their acting appointments?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva (Wellawatta-Galkissa): May I be permitted just three minutes to supplement an aspect of the matters that were raised by the hon. Member for Galle? It is a notorious fact that a Department like the Excise Department does get involved in

[Dr. Colvin R. de Silva.] general corruption and wherever, on the one hand, prohibition has been tried and, on the other, the Excise system has been tried, you will find, anywhere in the world, that corruption has proved to be unavoidably attendant upon the system. That should point to a conclusion, independent of our preconceptions and prejudices or desires or likes, that to prohibit completely, on the one hand, is to give room to the bootlegger, because drink in itself is something to which human beings are prone; and despite everything, there is no reason why if people desire to take drink, certainly at least in moderate quantities, it should sought to be prevented. In any event it is a matter of habit and custom. On the other side there is the effort of the Excise Department to permit the private production of drink, the private sales of drink, under appropriate controls subject to the payment of proper taxation. But, Sir, the source of corruption comes in just there.

When you have the so-called private production and private distribution, that is, the sale of spirits, you are saying that somebody or some group of people is entitled to make a private profit out of that, and the incentive of private profit leads, independent of all moral questions, to the maximization of sales and so on. If on the other hand Government takes over the production and the distribution, it can at least be presumed to balance its revenue needs with the moral help of the population.

Sir, it has been the experience, if I will be forgiven by the Front Benches, of a country like the Soviet Union, that while total prohibition fails and the excise system fails, under the system of nationalization, accompanied by correct propaganda the objects of temperance in relation to drink, that is, the object of achieving moderation in this habit among those who are prone to it, can be substantially achieved, starting from the angle of the necessity to prevent corruption in this department. I would suggest that the Government ought to take into consideration very carefully the question of whether the nationalization of the production of local spirits should not be taken up by it.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena (Kotte): Somewhere in 1937 the

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Council permitted people to tap, particularly kitul trees for sweet toddy. Now, most of these people, I find, have to go either to the D. R. O. or to the headman in that area, to obtain a licence for the tapping of kitul trees for sweet toddy. Particularly, in the hilly areas like Balangoda, Ruwanwella, Dehiowita and Niwitigala, quite a large number of the peasantry tap kitul trees for the purpose of manufacturing jaggery, treacle, and so on. A fillip was given to the manufacture of jaggery, particularly during the war period, when sugar was not only rationed but when the price of sugar went up, but now the policy of the Excise Department seems to be to restrict the production of jaggery, treacle, and the like. What happens now is that these Excise Guards, in order to avoid being penalized if they do not bring a certain number of cases before the Courts within a prescribed period, permit these people in places like Balangoda, Niwitigala, and so on, to tap kitul trees say, for a month or two, so that anyone who engages himself in illicit tapping beyond the stipulated period could be easily caught and prosecuted. That is how the Excise Department operates now.

Mr. Dahanayake: In the Balangoda area?

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: It has happened in the Balangoda, Niwitigala and Badulla areas. I feel that the poor peasant who wishes to tap kitul trees for sweet toddy should be permitted to tap them without any restriction.

Gate Mudaliyar M. S. Kariapper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs and Rural Development): The hon. Member for Panadure brought to our notice that, in regard to tapping for sweet toddy, licences were refused to whole villages. I might tell the hon. Member the procedure that is being adopted by the department in regard to the issue of licences. If in a particular locality it is found that illicit tapping is widespread, the Government Agent issues a notice, informing the villagers that illicit tapping is on the increase and warns them to stop it. If, in spite of the warning, illicit tapping is persisted in, then a second notice is issued at the end of, I believe, 6 months, and if that

warning repeated in the second notice also proves to be ineffective, then and then only it is that we withhold the issue of licences to particular localities. The hon. Member will, therefore, realize that more than one chance is given to these villagers to desist from this habit.

With regard to the remarks made by the hon. Second Member for Badulla, that the Excise Department expects a certain number of prosecutions from every Excise Inspector or Excise Guard, I can assure him that no such circular has gone out from this Department to the officers concerned enforcing such a condition.

The hon. Member for Bingiriya said that licences were being issued to culprits who had been convicted and re-convicted of offences under the Excise Ordinance. With regard to that, if the hon. Member will bring to the notice of this Department the particular instances he has in mind, I can assure him that the Department will certainly look into the matter.

The hon. Member for Chavakachcheri alleged that some Excise Inspectors become very friendly with dope dealers if they happened to be stationed too long in a place, and suggested that there should be frequent transfers of Excise Inspectors and Guards. He also told us that we should insist on a minimum educational qualification before we appoint these men as Excise Guards. These are, I believe, very valuable suggestions which the authorities concerned have already had in mind before making any of these appointments.

The hon. Member for Galle, as usual, prescribed a medical diet, such as milk and eggs as an antidote for alcoholic poisoning.

Mr. Dahanayake: To porters and warehousemen.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: He also touched on the question of salaries to these porters. In that connexion I have some very good news for him, and that is, on representations made to us by these porters, we, on our own initiative, have secured the sanction of the Treasury to pay these porters the same salary scale as office peons, and they are now quite satisfied.

Dr. N. M. Perera (Ruwanwella): What does that mean? What is the amount of the increase?

Mr. Dahanayake: Did they tell you that they were satisfied?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Well, we assume that they are satisfied, as nothing to the contrary has come to our notice.

10.30 A.M.

Mr. Dahanayake: What is the new scale?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: That is the scale for office peons. Please look at the Estimates for the scale. The Treasury has sanctioned the new scale.

A most valuable suggestion has come from the hon. Member for Galle, and that is the nationalization of the arrack industry. We have already started with it, and the State-owned distillery at Seeduwa is the first step in the direction of the nationalization of the arrack industry.

Mr. Subasinghe: What about distribution?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The same suggestion was put forward by the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa. By May next the State-owned distillery will be manufacturing 200,000 gallons per year. Today the annual consumption of arrack stands in the neighbourhood of 687,500 gallons. So that, by May next year, we will be producing one-third of the total quantity required for consumption in this Island, and we do hope that by gradual stages we would be able to realize the ideal that was suggested by the hon. Member for Galle.

Mr. Dahanayake: What about the unemployed at Induruwa?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In regard to the hon. Appointed Member's request that I should use my influence with the Public Service Commission in the matter of the appointment of some Assistant Superintendents of Excise, I am afraid that that will be the last place I would go to. The Public

[Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper.] Service Commission acts independently and will certainly not like any interference by Ministers or their Deputies.

Mr. Dahanayake: Why do you have so many, about 200, temporary men?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In regard to the employment of these temporary men, I might say that the Cadres Commission has made certain recommendations. The Commission has suggested that detective work in regard to excise offences in dry areas should be taken over by the Police, and we are considering this and other suggestions; and when we have made a final decision on these matters—these are things that will have to be decided at Cabinet level—suitable action will be taken.

The Chairman: The point made by the hon. Appointed Member is that certain Inspectors have been acting for years as Assistant Superintendents of Excise and Superintendents of Excise. It is true that these appointments are made by the Public Services Commission, but the recommendation must emanate from the Department.

Dr. Perera: The head of the Department must recommend.

The Chairman: It is true that the appointment is made by the Public Service Commission, but the Commissioner of Excise should recommend that these acting officers be confirmed. You cannot waive the responsibility for policy.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Our policy will be this. Officers who have served in a temporary capacity for a number of years and who are recommended by the Head of Department as deserving of promotion, will be promoted.

The Chairman: The complaint is that no such recommendation is made.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Now that this matter has been brought to my notice, we will certainly look into it.

Mr. Dahanayake: What about the unemployed at Induruwa?

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The Chairman: I think the real point made by the hon. Appointed Member is this. Instead of considering the claims of those who had been acting as Superintendents of Excise and Assistant Superintendents of Excise, the Department takes probationers from outside and does not give the acting men a chance. You do not promote your own men who are in the Department, but you take probationers. In the old Executive Committee of Home Affairs we fixed a certain quota—so many men to be recruited from outside and so many men to be promoted from within the Department. The point is that you are not adhering to that. That is the complaint.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: All I could do is to bring the matter to the notice of my Minister for action.

Fears have also been expressed that there would be a likelihood of unemployment as a result of eight distillers going on strike.

An Hon. Member: Lock-out.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva: The toddy contract is being terminated in certain areas.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Open tenders have been called, and these distillers have tendered; the matter is now before the Tender Board. I do not think these threats of distillers to terminate the services of the tappers will materialize.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want some clarification of the question of salaries and prospects of porters and watchers employed in distilleries and warehouses. The Parliamentary Secretary told us in vague terms that they had decided to place them on the scale of office peons. May I know whether it has been decided to abolish Grade II. and place all porters and watchers in Grade I?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake (Prime Minister): No.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The position is this—

Mr. Dahanayake: May I explain myself before the Parliamentary Secretary replies. The salary scale of an office peon is Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720. The

salary scale for Grade I. porters and watchers is Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720, and the scale for Grade II. is Rs. 420—12—Rs. 540. What the Parliamentary Secretary told us was, in effect, what I now suggested. Is it that Grade II. has been abolished and all officers in Grade II, have been placed in Grade I.?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I am afraid I have not been understood correctly. In the past, the porters were paid the same salary as peons. The Salaries Committee down-graded them and reduced them to the salary scale of labourers, and on representations made to the Ministry we have secured the sanction of the Treasury to put them back on the old scale of salaries that they received.

Mr. Dahanayake: That means all the porters and watchers, described in the Estimates as 143 porters and watchers in distilleries and warehouses, will be on the scale Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720. Is that correct?

Dr. Perera: You cannot understand the situation.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I can understand the situation, but you are trying to confuse the situation.

The Chairman: That cannot be correct. If that is correct, then the provision will be there in the Estimates.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have now secured the sanction of the Treasury.

The Chairman: What the Parliamentary Secretary means is this. Formerly Grade II. employees were paid from Re. 1.44 per day to Re. 1.84 per day. Now they have abolished that scale and put these men on a salary scale of Rs. 420—12—Rs. 540. That is what he means.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I have consulted the Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs and he has given me very reliable information. Formerly porters were on scales higher than that paid to peons. The Salaries Committee down-graded them and put them on the peons' scale. Now, as a

result of the Treasury decision, the porters and watchers will go back to the old scale.

Mr. Dahanayake: What is the old scale?

Dr. Perera: That is the point.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The higher scale.

Dr. Perera: While the Assistant Secretray is getting the correct information, may I point out to the Parliamentary Secretary that most of these points were brought to his notice last year also, and he said that he would consider them and that he was very grateful to hon. Members for directing his attention to them. But now we find that he has been merely grateful. He has not passed on to the stage of taking action and thereby seeing that his promises materialize in some form. In the case of temporary clerks and temporary Inspectors he said on that occasion also—

The Chairman: You mean the temporary staff?

Dr. Perera: Yes, Sir. On that occasion he said that the Ministry was considering the position of these temporary employees—

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I said that we were considering it, but I never said that we would comply.

Dr. Perera: The position of the Parliamentary Secretary is that he is still considering.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Now we have made some progress.

Dr. Perera: I am very glad to hear that; but what is the progress?

Mr. A. Reginald Perera (Dehiowita): “Pilgrim's Progress”!

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The recommendation of the Cadres Commission is that part of the work done by the Excise Department should be transferred to the Police Department. A decision has not yet been reached as

[Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake.] to what work should be taken over from the Excise Department and given to the Police Department. Till that decision is made we cannot make temporary men permanent, because we do not know whether there would be a reduction that would be caused by the change.

Mr. Dahanayake: What are the concessions that have been given to the porters and watchers? I have before me last year's Estimates. There also the porters and watchers are classed into two Grades. Similarly the entry in this year's Estimates is just the same. What is the change that has taken place?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We are now going to place them on the same scale of pay as peons. There is confusion between porter and watcher.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Yes.

Mr. Dahanayake: That means all the porters and watchers will be placed on the scale Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720. Is that correct?

The Chairman: If that is correct, then the Estimates are wrong.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is not correct.

Mr. Dahanayake: If that is correct, the Estimates must be amended.

Dr. Perera: Because that will remove the two Grades. The new scale is Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720 and the two Grades will vanish.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Baddegama): What I think is that if the lower Grade carries the scale Rs. 480—12—Rs. 720, the upper Grade will get a corresponding increase.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have secured the sanction of the Treasury. The new scale is not included in the Estimates. This increase will appear in the next year's Estimates.

Mr. Dahanayake: We will have to wait for 12 months more.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The decision was taken only very recently.

Mr. Dahanayake: What is the decision please? Kindly give it in figures—rupees and cents.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Write it in Arabic.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Hon. Members must remember that he is fasting.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The decision will be put into effect and these employees will be paid.

Dr. Perera: But you do not know what the decision is.

Mr. Dahanayake: If the Parliamentary Secretary will make a note of it and under-line it in red, we will be satisfied.

Dr. Perera: The Parliamentary Secretary will remember that last year we raised the question of the extension of the tree tax system and the Parliamentary Secretary promised to consider it. We would like to know what the present position is.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: At present the tree tax system is in operation in the Jaffna revenue district. We propose to extend it to Mannar and Mullaitivu, and we are now in consultation with the Members of Parliament of the respective constituencies in regard to that subject, and we expect a communication from them.

In regard to other areas, we have had no request and no desire was expressed by the people of other districts to have the tree tax system introduced in their areas.

Mr. Dahanayake: What have you done to the recommendation of the Select Committee that went into this question?

The Chairman: The recommendation was that you should make a trial and that the tree tax system should be introduced in Mannar and Mullaitivu immediately. That was two years ago.

Dr. Perera: That experiment should be extended to the South also.

The Chairman: The recommendation was that this experiment should be extended to the South.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Let the Southerners also enjoy the benefits of our experience.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Our position is this. There have been no requests from the people of other Districts for the introduction of the tree tax system, and we are not going to impose it on them.

The Chairman: What about Mannar and Mullaittivu?

Dr. Perera: A Select Committee of the State Council made a recommendation on this matter. They made that recommendation as a result of representations made. Do you want the people to go in deputation and see the Minister?

The Chairman: The House accepted the recommendation of the Select Committee. The Report was placed before the House.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The tree tax system is doing very well in the Northern Province. I am sure if we extend it to the Southern Province—

The Chairman: The Parliamentary Secretary says that there has been no demand except from Mannar and Mullaittivu. They are waiting for the demand.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: If we extend it to the Southern Province, I am sure the Hon. Prime Minister will be the first person to see that it is abolished within the shortest possible time.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is a demand from the North to abolish the tree tax system.

The Chairman: Only a certain section.

The Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Minister of Health and Local Government and Leader of the House): Anti-Tamil Congress section

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Even the Tamil Congress section is demanding the abolition of the tree tax system.

Dr. Perera: I am afraid the attitude taken up by the Parliamentary Secretary in regard to the tapping of sweet toddy is not quite satisfactory.

10.45 A.M.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary made us understand that the Government Agents act on information supplied to them by the Excise Inspectors and Guards in the matter of closing whole areas against the granting of permission to tap for sweet toddy. Now, I think it is also in the interest of the Excise Guards to do away with this prohibition, because it is a nuisance to them to give these licenses, to check them and to go about and see whether the people are strictly adhering to rules, and so on. I do not think that a recommendation made by these officers should be sufficient to prohibit entirely tapping for sweet toddy. These are the very people who are becoming a nuisance to the villagers in carrying on the peaceful occupation of manufacturing jaggery. This is all the more regrettable, particularly at this time, because the price of sugar is now so high.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Only a small quantity of sugar is manufactured.

Dr. Perera: I do not know about any other areas, but in Maniyangama in right throughout the Kitulgala areas in the hilly districts and in the Three Korales a considerable amount of jaggery is being made.

By following this system an extra burden has been placed upon the villagers—a burden that has not been sanctioned by this House. The decision to which the Legislature came to last time was to grant the right of tapping for sweet toddy without a permit. That is a decision which the hon. Parliamentary Secretary has no right to reverse.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I believe the sanction to which the hon. Member is referring was given for some area in Balangoda. I am speaking from memory, but—

The Chairman: Yes, that was so.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Not in other places.

The Chairman: Does the hon. Member for Panadura press his Amendment?

Mr. M. H. Peiris: Yes, Sir.

Question, “That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item ‘Excise Commissioner’” put, and negatived.

Sub-head 11.—Anti-Malaria equipment to Officers stationed in hyper endemic areas, Rs. 500.

The Chairman: Sub-head 11. There is an Amendment in the name of the hon. Member for Chavakachcheri.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to know from the hon. Parliamentary Secretary how these officers spent their time all these days. Now that D.D.T. has been introduced and malaria has been greatly reduced, I do not think it is necessary to incur this expenditure on anti-malaria equipment.

The Chairman: This is a small vote.

Mr. Dahanayake: The vote is too small, Sir. I would disagree with the hon. Member for Chavakachcheri. When the vote is so small as Rs. 500, what can you do with it? How many officers are going to be benefited by this?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: All the officers will be benefited. There are other increases as well. We have selected special areas—

Mr. Dahanayake: What are the areas?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The areas are Mannar, Mullaittivu, Elephant Pass, and so on. We have given the officers D.D.T. spraying units, boots, and so on.

Mr. Dahanayake: How many officers are going to be benefited?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: All

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Mr. Dahanayake: Minor staff as well as Inspectors?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Yes.

Mr. Dahanayake: In that case what can you do with Rs. 500?

Question, “That the sum of Rs. 2,570,229 for Head 52, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule”, put, and agreed to.

Head 52, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Purchase, transport, storage and bottling of arrack, Rs. 553,815.

Sub-head 1.—Bottling of arrack and purchase of bottles, Rs. 315,000.

Mr. S. A. Pakeman (Appointed Member): I would like the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to let us know why the vote under sub-head 1 “Bottling of arrack and purchase of bottles” has increased by over Rs. 112,000. Increase in the price of bottles alone could not have accounted for this, and I wish to know whether there has been an increased consumption of arrack this year as against the previous year, especially because of a certain amount of restriction that has come into operation on foreign liquor.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to raise a very important point under this sub-head. I suggest the closing of arrack taverns six months before a General Election. We know the evil effects of drink on poor voters and how some candidates try to influence the voters by giving them unlimited quantities of liquor, thus preventing them from exercising their free choice.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: That is what the Tamil Congress Members do.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The more arrack our opponents gave, the more votes we got.

I suggest, as a general rule, that all arrack taverns in the whole Island should be closed from six months before a General Election.

An Hon. Member: What about by-elections?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: That is a very difficult matter. But I make this suggestion in all seriousness.

The Chairman: How are we going to get six months' notice of a General Election?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Then make it the maximum possible notice in the circumstances, and apply the rule to all arrack and toddy taverns, wherever they are. This will prevent a lot of impersonation in which some of our people have specialized.

Dr. Perera: We would like to know what the Department has done. Last time we asked the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to consider the question of having the Department to take over the bottling of arrack. That work is now—being given out to contractors. The Hon. Minister made a statement on that matter and promised to give us his considered opinion about it.

Major Montague Jayewickreme (Weligama): I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary what he has done in connection with the proposal made by me during the Committee stage of the last Appropriation Bill for the appointment of a full-time chemist to undertake the chemical analysis of local alcoholic beverages.

Mr. M. H. Peiris: I would like to know what the Department has done in regard to the process evolved by an officer of the Department for the manufacture of a better type of arrack known as the "Mendis Special".

The Chairman: A full answer was given to that question in this House a few days back, I think a couple of weeks ago, on a question raised by the hon. Member for Kalutara.

Mr. Pakeman: I have an Amendment on sub-head 4.

The Chairman: Let the Parliamentary Secretary reply on sub-head 1.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: With regard to the increase in the vote for the purchase of bottles, I might tell the

hon. Appointed Member (Mr. Pakeman) that it is due to the increased consumption of arrack. In 1946-47 we had an output of 636,000 gallons, and in 1947-48, the figure is 692,000 gallons. It is, therefore, obvious that consumption of arrack has been increasing.

With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Chavakachcheri for the closing of taverns six months before a General Election, I might ask him—I myself am no expert in it—whether it takes six months to get over the effects of intoxication.

The Chairman: What about the question of bottling?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The system that obtained during last year is being continued.

Mr. Dahanayake: The system of contractors.

Dr. Perera: So that you do not propose to take over the bottling of arrack?

The Chairman: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary might give a reply to the question of analysis.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have so far not taken a chemist into the Department, but I think the Ministry has given a reply to the representations of the hon. Member for Weligama. If he will discuss the matter further with the Ministry, we will be very pleased to look into it.

The Chairman: I will put the Question to the House.

Dr. Perera: Not the whole of Vote 2, Sir. There are some further Amendments.

*Sub-head 4.—Transport of Arrack,
Rs. 257,500.*

Mr. Pakeman: My question regarding sub-head 4 is on the same lines as the question on sub-head 1.

The Chairman: Yes, the increase is due to increased consumption.

Sub-head 5.—Provision of Arrack Stock Advance A/c. (Token Vote), Rs. 100.

Dr. Perera: I have two Amendments, Sir.

The Chairman: Yes, under sub-head 5.

Dr. Perera: Under sub-head 5, regarding the token vote for the "Provision of Arrack Stock Advance A/c." may I know our commitments in this matter, what the situation is, whether it is a profit or a loss?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: This work is done on an Advance Account. We have not met with any loss.

Dr. Perera: Let us have at least a rough idea of the present position.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I think this is an Advance Trading Account.

Dr. Perera: Are you making a profit?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Certainly not a loss. Yes, we are making a profit. This is the third largest revenue producing Department in the country.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 553,815 for Head 52, Vote No. 2, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 52, Vote 2, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 3.—Working of a State-owned Distillery, Rs. 8,010.

Sub-head 1.—Establishment of a State-owned Distillery (Token Vote), Rs. 10.

Sub-head 2.—Temporary storage accommodation, etc., for State-owned Distillery Plant, Rs. 8,000.

Dr. Perera: I have Amendments under sub-heads 1 and 2, referring to the State-owned Distillery and Plant.

The plant is still stored in a temporary place for which you are paying Rs. 8,000. In this case also, would you hand over the process of bottling to contractors, or will you do it yourself?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It will be undertaken by the Government.

The Chairman: The complete process will be done by Government. Digitized by Noolaham Foundation
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Mr. Kumaraswamy: Surely, Sir, there are better industries for the Government to finance than arrack. That is my point. This will create a bad impression, particularly on the section of people whom I represent, namely the Hindus.

The Chairman: This is a matter which has been decided upon by this House as well as the previous State Council.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I am trying to influence this House to revise their opinion on the "nationalization" of liquor.

The Chairman: The hon. Member cannot do it on an Amendment in the Committee stage. He must bring up a substantive Motion in the House for that purpose.

Mr. K. Kanagaratnam (Vaddukkoddai): May I make a few observations on this subject, Sir?

I have already touched on the question of prohibition and the policy of Government—particularly that of a National Government—in regard to the sale of liquor in this country.

But, Sir, with regard to this Vote which provides for the manufacture of arrack by Government, I think it is high time that a definite decision is taken in regard to the Excise policy of Government. I am not referring to the policy as between prohibition or otherwise, as I am afraid that policy cannot be given up now, but as far as I can see, there are two aspects to this question. One is the revenue aspect so far as the manufacture of liquor by Government is concerned; and the other is the control of the demand for liquor by the people of this country.

I found a significant statement in the Cadres Commission Report, where the Commissioners—

The Chairman: Under what sub-head are you speaking?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: Under "State-owned Distillery." You see here is a Government manufacturing liquor for supplying it to the people.

This is what the Cadres Commission said.

" We accept the view that the Excise Department exists primarily for the purpose of earning revenue ". . .

And this seems to be confirmed by the statement—may be a casual statement—of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary that this is the third largest revenue-producing Department in the country.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: That is the truth.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I did not dispute that; but I find, Sir, from the Statement of Revenue in the Budget proposals, that the Government has imposed such heavy duties on the import of foreign liquor that the revenue from that source has gone down considerably. You will see that the actual revenue earned in 1946-47 on foreign liquor tavern rents and license fees was Rs. 170,000. The estimated amount for 1947-48 was Rs. 300,000, subsequently revised to Rs. 200,000; and the estimate for 1948-49 is only Rs. 85,000.

11.0 A.M.

I am glad that the consumption of this class of liquor, mainly used by people of " high " social status, has been considerably curtailed as a result of the imposition of heavy duties. I do not know whether the object of Government in imposing those heavy duties was to encourage the local liquor industry (toddy and arrack). If that was the object, I can only express my sorrow that we should begin the new era with an attempt to encourage the manufacture and consumption of articles which will ultimately destroy the whole fabric of the nation.

Government proposes to undertake the manufacture of arrack. In other words, while on the one hand it proposes to inaugurate a series of activities for the welfare of the people, especially in the rural areas, on the other, it proposes to encourage the consumption of alcoholic liquor by making it available at low prices. That is an undertaking which will ultimately nullify all the good intentions of the Government.

The Chairman: On a vote of this nature, can the hon. Member discuss a Resolution passed by the House? The hon. Member is canvassing a decision which we arrived at—

Mr. Kanagaratnam: There is provision in this Budget for the manufacture of arrack by Government—

The Chairman: In accordance with a Resolution of this House.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: A Resolution passed by the old Government, which is no longer in existence.

The Chairman: A supplementary estimate was passed by this House some time ago. The original Resolution was passed by the State Council, but the supplementary estimate came before this House.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: In 1947-48.

The Chairman: The supplementary estimate?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I am not quite sure.

I am now suggesting that this question be considered by Government in the light of existing circumstances.

The Chairman: You must bring in a substantive Motion to rescind the Resolution, or something to that effect.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I can move the deletion of this vote.

The Chairman: Yes, you can oppose it. You cannot move its deletion because you have not given notice of such an Amendment. You can vote against it.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: He need not speak.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I am merely drawing the attention of the Government to this evil. In my speech in the Second Reading Debate—

The Chairman: You could have brought this up when the Excise Commissioner's salary was being discussed.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I did not want to move a cut in his salary. I am not against the existence of this Department. I am only suggesting that, while Government is asking for funds to

[Mr. Kanagaratnam.] start a new distillery for the manufacture of arrack, it might take into account the fact that the excise policy of the Government will have to be considered, revised, by a National Government.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: To satisfy my hon. Friend, may I say that if the consumption of arrack goes down, which we hope will be the case, Government would be only too willing to scrap this plant.

Mr. Pakeman: With regard to this State-owned distillery, we have been informed that by next May this distillery would be in production. I do hope that, when that happens, the State-owned distillery will not issue immature arrack. A great deal of harm has already been done in the country by the issue of immature arrack or spirits. I feel quite sure that the Minister of Home Affairs and the Excise Department will see to it that, from the State-owned distillery at least, no arrack is issued until it has been fully matured, so as not to seriously harm those who consume it.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 8,010 for Head 52, Vote No. 3, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 52, Vote 3, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 53.—Department of Prisons and Probation

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Prisons and Probation including grants in aid, Rs. 4,445,922.

Mr. Dahanayake: I move my Amendment.

The Chairman: Your Amendment is "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Commissioner of Prison and Probation Services'".

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Can I move my Amendment also?

The Chairman: Your Amendment is covered by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Galle.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: On the question of the Government's attitude towards Prison administration in this country, I have often crossed swords with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs. Last night I moved a "cut" in the salary of the Parliamentary Secretary, but, owing to unfortunate, unforeseen, circumstances, I was denied the opportunity of speaking on it.

Yesterday, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, in defending the policy of his Ministry, told us about his travels in the country, how he visited the various Court houses in the Island. By reason of his apathy, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs must accept a certain share of the blame for the condition of our prisons today. He has not visited a single prison in the country—

Dr. Perera: Is that true?

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: I say this very reluctantly—

The Chairman: You are not moving a cut in his salary?

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: No, Sir, I lost that opportunity. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs has developed a form of "defence reflex" against all kinds of cuts! I am moving a cut in the salary of the Commissioner of Prisons, because I feel that this gentleman has not sustained an agitation for a radical alteration in the system of prison administration. He is still following an antiquated, obsolete, barbarous policy in the Prisons of this Island. His attitude towards crime and its punishment is antiquated. To him a prisoner is not a man who has to be reformed and returned to society as a useful citizen—

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I rise to a point of Order: There is a substantive Motion before the House in the name of the hon. Member, on Prison administration—

Dr. Perera: That Motion asks for a Commission. That is quite a different matter.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: It deals with Prison administration.

Dr. Perera: It asks for a Commission.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Is the question he is now referring to outside the terms of that Motion?

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: For the entire—

Dr. Perera: That Motion deals with the whole question of penal reform.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: It deals with Prison Administration.

The Chairman: Can you give me the wording of that Motion?

Dr. Perera: It asks for the appointment of a Commission.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Yes, Sir.

I maintain that one of the primary pre-requisites for the correction of a prisoner is that the prison should have facilities for the isolation, classification and segregation of prisoners. Our prisons are over-crowded. I have drawn attention to this more than once before. In a room meant to accommodate 18 prisoners, 32 prisoners are forced to crowd in.

Absolutely no facilities are provided to the prison officials to segregate the hardened, incurable type of criminal from the first offender. There is, however, a loose form of segregation which does not even pretend to tackle the problem.

There is another evil in the prisons of this country which the present Commissioner has done nothing to remove. I refer to the class distinctions observed in the prisons. There are what are known as "Star" prisoners and "Ordinary" prisoners. If this distinction were made purely for purposes of dieting, I can understand it, and we can even accept it, but—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: "Star" prisoners are not so classified for purposes of diet. The hon. Member is thinking of first and second class prisoners. "Star" prisoners are so classified because of good conduct—

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: No.

Dr. Perera: "Star" class prisoners get a different diet.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: I have been assured that it is entirely a question of diet.

Think of two men, one an ordinary worker and one a "gentleman" from the "higher" classes, sentenced to prison for the same offence. At 5 in the evening, the ordinary, working class prisoner is locked up, and from his cell he can see the "Star" class prisoner in the garden, playing volley-ball—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The "long-trousered" man!

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: That is perpetuating class differences in the Prison.

Coming to the question of medical facilities, I find that, for the 600 prisoners in the Kandy jail, there is not even one full-time medical officer. The Judicial Medical officer, Kandy, visits the prison, but on certain days he is unable to visit the prison at the appointed time. He comes late in the evening because he has been called away to a scene of murder. Six hundred prisoners without any medical attention! That is the situation in Bogambara Prison.

Then, there is the problem of the prison officers themselves. The Commissioner of Prisons has carried on a sustained agitation for the increase of his own salary. We know that, but he has not moved in the matter of getting an increased salary for the subordinate officers, or in the matter of obtaining a reduction in the number of hours these men are called on to work.

I know what reply the Parliamentary Secretary will give on this point. He will state that he has already asked for an increase in the number of guards and overseers. I maintain that that increase is quite inadequate, because the heavy increase in the prison population will nullify the effects of the small increase in staff. The additions to the staff will just meet the minimum demands brought about by the increase in the prison population, but it will not effect a radical reduction in the volume of work expected from the prison officers.

Then there is the other question which I have brought up times out of number. I refer to that rankling wound—the treatment of our remand prisoners.

[Mr. A. Reginald Perera.]

For 16 hours in the day they are kept in a lock-up. They are treated worse than the convicted prisoners. The remand prisoners are locked up like animals, taken out for their ablutions, and then put back in their cells!

I make these charges against the Commissioner of Prisons, not in any personal sense. Even the blame that I lay at the door of the Parliamentary Secretary is not laid in any personal sense, as the result of any personal animosity. I feel very strongly on the subject, and the Parliamentary Secretary must address himself more seriously, more energetically, to the condition of our prisons today.

11.15 A.M.

Mr. Pakeman: It is not very often, Mr. Chairman, that I find myself in agreement, as I do on this occasion, with the views expressed by my hon. Friend, the Member for Dehiowita. He has criticized the attitude taken up by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary in regard to the administration of the prisons. I do not believe that anything I shall say will shake the attitude of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary, but I wish to endorse certain points made by the hon. Member who has just spoken. I cannot speak with that considerable experience of prisons that the hon. Member has had. My experience is rather an external than an internal one, and what experience I have is furthermore confined to one prison only, which should be the star prison, according to the Ceylon Year Book, of the whole Island.

I fully understand and sympathize with the Commissioner of Prisons in the difficult task he has to perform. I am very well aware that he spent a considerable time of his leave in studying prison systems in the United Kingdom, and possibly elsewhere. I do not think that I should dwell at length on that point, because there is already a Motion in the name of the hon. Member for Dehiowita on the subject of the appointment of a Commission to inquire into prison administration. I do hope, however, that some time or other an expert, not necessarily a Commission, will come out to take an objective external view of our prison system.

I also wish to endorse what the hon. Member for Dehiowita said—not that I wish to give any blame to the hon.

Parliamentary Secretary for not visiting the prisons. I would like to mention that my information is that the three last Ministers of Home Affairs, in this Parliament and in the last State Council, never succeeded in finding time to visit even the Welikada Prison. I do hope the hon. Parliamentary Secretary will draw the attention of the newly-appointed Minister of Home Affairs to the desirability of visiting, at least the Welikada Prison, and possibly some others. I do think he would then be able to learn for himself, in many ways, the existing conditions of the prisons.

I do not think that I can condemn the prison staff. In my opinion, the prison staff have an extremely trying and difficult occupation, and they try to perform their duties to the best of their ability. It cannot be denied that there are defects, but, as far as I can see the prison staff are doing their best. The fact of the matter is that, under existing arrangements, they have to work—the jailers, wardens and overseers—sometimes for 10 or 12 hours a day; and they are also labouring under a sense of grievance with regard to the matter of stand-by duty at night. What I would like to have from the hon. Parliamentary Secretary is an assurance that the increase in cadre—which I believe all together is 5 Jailers, Class II., 34 Overseers and 112 Guards—will be enough to secure to the prison staff at least a 52-hour week, considering the trying nature of their jobs, and the fact that many of these Overseers have as many as 200 prisoners to look after at once. My personal opinion is that the increase in the cadre will bring down their working hours to 52 a week, and I do hope that the question will be considered, in the next Budget, of a still further increase in the cadre in order to bring the working hours down to 48 a week.

Very correctly, the prison staff are not allowed to form themselves into a trade union. I quite appreciate the reason why they are not allowed to do so. But I do sincerely hope that the prison staff will be given every opportunity of voicing what I consider to be their very legitimate grievances.

There is just one further point I wish to make, and that is with regard to the prison buildings. I have seen the prison building at Welikada, and I doubt whether many other

prison buildings in the Island are very much better. I went to Welikada prison on one occasion, and I noticed that the accommodation was extremely poor and the number of buildings appallingly few. I put it down to lack of labour and building material. I do sincerely hope that the whole question of the conditions of the prisons, prison jailers and other staff, and prison buildings will be taken up at the earliest possible opportunity. I hope I am not infringing on the private Member's Motion when I emphasize the great necessity for a study, by the heads of the Prisons, of the best methods of penology, in consultation possibly with leading experts on the subject.

Mr. P. G. B. Keuneman (Third Colombo Central): There are one or two remarks which I would like to offer, Mr. Chairman, on the question of Prisons. Before I go on to the general question of policy of the Prison administration as it works out in detail under the charge of the Commissioner of Prisons, I would like once again to reiterate the point made by the hon. Member for Dehiowita, and that is, that one of the most urgent problems in the prisons today is the problem of the lack of accommodation and the overcrowding in prisons.

The hon. Member for Dehiowita complained about the barbarous conditions which some of the prisoners have to undergo. But even those regulations which are already in existence for the purpose of looking after prisoners cannot be observed because the question of accommodation has not been tackled. I am very sorry to say that nowhere in the Estimates is there any provision for a radical improvement of this want.

The hon. Member for Dehiowita stated that five, six or eight prisoners were sometimes huddled in a single cell. I think the hon. Parliamentary Secretary should go to Welikada Prison and see for himself those huge, long enclosures, the "L" wards, where one cannot even find a place to sit and talk—in fact one is not allowed to do so because a hundred people are sleeping there—where everybody has to be locked up, where you cannot have proper guards, and where all the prisoners after 5 o'clock are just treated like slaves—no better than that—and are not able to move.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary, when the question of the abolition of racing was brought up, took the opportunity of going to the racecourse to study matters. I hope he will now take the opportunity of going to the prisons and seeing for himself the conditions in the "L" wards, and press on his Minister and the Cabinet the need for immediate provision being made for the purpose of improving the accommodation in the prisons.

There are also certain other points I wish to raise. The hon. Member for Dehiowita very correctly raised the point that still the main drive and aim of Prison administration in this country seemed to be not to reform the prisoner and try to convert him and make him a decent citizen. The old punitive methods, purely punitive, are still prevalent. If the hon. Parliamentary Secretary goes to the prison, he will see that there are still those archaic and barbarous institutions known as "Pingo Parties". Every citizen who goes there for a certain period of time is made to perform the utterly senseless task of beating husks, carrying rock stones from one place to another, or sweeping or cleaning up something, instead of straightway teaching him some trade or useful occupation which will equip him, once he gets out of prison, to be a decent and useful member of society in the future. I think the hon. Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister should go to the prison and see that the system of Pingo Parties is abolished; it is a mediaeval system which should have been thrown out long ago.

Even after the problem of overcrowding is solved, there are certain ordinary human comforts which should be given to the prisoners. No prisoner in our prisons is allowed to smoke—

Mr. Pakeman: Why should he?

Mr. Keuneman: I do not see why. No one has been able to give a reason why prisoners are not allowed the privilege of smoking.

The Hon. Sir John Kotelawala (Minister of Transport and Works): Otherwise, where is the punishment?

The Chairman: It would be a luxury.

Mr. Keuneman: It is hardly a luxury, Sir. Those who earn money buy sweets.

[Mr. Keuneman.]

There is a huge illegal trade in beedi and ganja going on in the prisons. Everybody knows that. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary knows that. There is absolutely no reason why a prisoner who earns his money by doing work in prison should not be allowed to spend it on cigarettes.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: What about a drink for the prisoners?

Mr. Keuneman: The Hon. Minister's touching concern for one's alcoholic thirst I can appreciate. But I think it will be dangerous. Alcohol can cause a great deal of trouble. By alcohol you can make anybody intoxicated, but not by tobacco.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Why not provide the prisoners with drinks and give them all comforts?

Mr. Keuneman: Then with regard to a matter like shaving. Prisoners are allowed to shave only once a week. When even the "Star" class of prisoners make an application to be allowed to have a razor blade more often than once a month or even provide their own razor blades, their applications are rejected. This type of petty annoyance is going on in the prisons, without the slightest regard for the feelings of the prisoners, nor is any attempt made by Government to put things right.

Then I take the question of newspapers. The "Star" class prisoners are allowed to have newspapers, but the non-"Star" class, who happen to be the bulk of the prison population, are not even allowed to go to the library and read in the newspapers what is going on in the outside world. They are not even allowed to get a book.

I say that it is not overcrowding or anything of the sort, but the complete callousness on the part of the Government which is responsible for the indifferent treatment of these people. I hope that the hon. Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister will take immediate steps to put an end to this state of affairs: it is nothing but a scandal.

There are one or two further points, Mr. Chairman. The last time the question of handcuffs was ^{Digitized by Neelam Foundation} brought up, noolaham.org 100 per cent.

the hon. Member for Kotte made a very memorable speech. It is my information that handcuffing is still going on. I remember the great shock and indignation shown by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary himself on the last occasion. I hope he will really see to it this time that the primitive system of handcuffing on all occasions is stopped.

An Hon. Member: What about the handcuffing of patients?

Mr. Keuneman: I am informed that patients are still being handcuffed in spite of the assurance given by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary. I would urge that the system of handcuffing be abolished, particularly in regard to patients.

One other point. I would like the hon. Parliamentary Secretary, if he can, to make a statement to the House on the working of the Borstal Institutions and the Probation Services. These, I believe, are institutions which have been introduced by the Commissioner to deal particularly with young prisoners, or youthful offenders, as they are called. We should like to know from the hon. Parliamentary Secretary how this system of Borstal Institutions is working and whether they are a success.

I do not know whether the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs and his Parliamentary Secretary have exercised their minds on the question of the death penalty. There has been a certain amount of discussion in the newspapers and in public on the question of the abolition of the death penalty since the recent decision of the British Government, and I do not know whether the Government have considered this matter. If they have, I would like the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to make a statement to this House with regard to that subject.

Mr. Dahanayake: May I suggest, as an immediate solution of the problem of overcrowding, that a select number of long-term prisoners should be prematurely released? I understand that the extent of overcrowding exceeds 50 per cent. of the capacity.

Mr. Keuneman: In Welikada it is

11.30 A.M.

Mr. Dahanayake: Fifty per cent. on an average, and unless something is done immediately, conditions will continue to become worse and worse. An immediate solution would be to release prematurely a large number of selected prisoners. That has been done in other countries, and there is no reason why it should not be done here. As a matter of fact, when a man is sentenced to a long period, there should always be a watch kept on him to see whether it is not desirable to release him much earlier than the period for which he was sentenced. That should be the spirit in which the prison regulations should be worked out. Simply because a man is sentenced to a period of ten years, should he remain the entire term? I say he should not. I say that it should be possible for him to make amends within a few years and to obtain a conditional release. Now, that may be a suggestion through which this problem of overcrowding may be set right.

I also want to touch on the question of the Probation Services. At the last Budget Debate, when this matter was raised, we were told that steps would be taken to enlarge the scope of the existing Probation Service. Now, take the Southern Province, for instance.

The Chairman: Will the hon. Member wait till we come to Sub-head 12 on that?

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir; we are dealing with the "Commissioner of Prison and Probation Services".

The Chairman: That is true; but there are too many points for the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to answer at once.

Mr. Dahanayake: What I want to point out is that there is no provision for an increased number of Probation Officers. There were 20 last year, and there are going to be 20 in the coming year also. Take the Southern Province, for instance. There is a Probation Officer at Galle and that Probation Unit, I know, is doing very good work. But its scope is limited to the Judicial Division of Galle. Youthful offenders from Matara do not get the chance of

serving as probationers. We ask that this Probation Service, which has proved successful, be immediately extended to cover up all parts of the Island.

I also wish to refer to the question of the 8-hour working day, which has been denied so long to the minor employees in our jails. Some time back I reminded the hon. Parliamentary Secretary that these minor employees were even threatening to go on strike, and he very solemnly assured the House on that occasion that he would immediately look into the matter. How has he looked into the matter? By increasing the number of guards by a paltry hundred, he may be reducing the hours of work of each minor employee, according to my calculation, by about thirty minutes. When is this 8-hour working day to be given to the minor employees in our prisons? It seems to me that the whole policy is to make prisoners of these minor employees. There are prisoners and prisoners. On the one side are the prisoners, and on the other side are the minor employees who are treated sometimes worse than the prisoners themselves.

They have nobody else to tell these things, except the Commissioner of Prison and Probation Service, who, I am sorry to say, is thoroughly indifferent to the welfare of the minor employees. I have seen the conditions under which these minor employees live. There are no proper houses for them. In the Police Department, as a result of my agitation, there is today a scheme of housing for the policemen. Do you find a similar scheme of housing for the minor employees of our jails? We demand that there should be such a scheme. They live in most appalling conditions. Their grievances are not heeded by the Head of the Department. Several cases have come to my notice in which there has been harsh treatment accorded to these minor employees by the Head of the Department. That is why we support a cut on his salary.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I wish to make a few remarks. The medical facilities obtaining in the prisons are far from satisfactory. I think the hon. Member for Dehiowita (Mr. A. Reginald Perera) mentioned the fact that the Medical Officer is not on the spot for many hours of the day. Further, there

[Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena.] have been several complaints regarding the medical treatment itself. When an able-bodied prisoner in a cell speaks a few harsh words, he is sent to the hospital on the following day and there he is given a certain type of injection. I had a complaint from a certain prisoner who refused to have that injection. He said there was nothing wrong with him. But he was given a certain type of iodine injection, after which he felt completely paralysed. He had written several letters about this, but those letters had not been sent out. This is a general complaint made by the prisoners.

There was another person with one leg—a prisoner sentenced to twenty years, of which he had already served six or seven years. He is an old man of seventy-six. I cannot understand why an old man of seventy-six, who had already served seven years of his sentence of twenty years, cannot be released.

Mr. Dahanayake: He should be released.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: Then, at the Bogambara Jail, there is no proper place for the prisoners to have their meals. The prisoners come out of their cells, and even in rainy weather they have to sit outside and eat their meals.

As regards recreation, "Star" class prisoners in most jails have volley-ball courts and other things provided for them, but the poor sections—the working class people and the peasants who fill these jails—have no recreation at all. They should be provided with at least a volley-ball court and the necessary equipment.

I wish to draw attention to the long hours of work the minor employees are compelled to put in, and the harsh treatment they receive from the higher officers, their bosses. I am referring particularly to the jail guards and the lower ranks. They are very harshly treated.

Then, as regards prisoners who are brought to the General Hospital and who are constantly guarded while there, I must say that they receive callous treatment at the hands of the

higher officials who come round to see them. I am referring particularly to one officer. He comes round at dead of night to the bed where the prisoner-patient is chained by the hand or leg, and while the patient is fast asleep, pulls the chain hard. Such brutalities are perpetrated by certain officers. I would like to mention to the Parliamentary Secretary the name, if necessary, of a particular officer, because I have had experience of it, and have also had several complaints from other prisoner-patients. A patient may have a high temperature, say, 104 or 105 degrees, in a case of typhoid, or malaria, or dysentery. And yet he is chained to the bed and the officers harass him by pulling the chain when he is fast asleep. There is a certain officer at the Welikada Jail who is a terror to the poor prisoners there.

Mr. Dahanayake: He should be jailed!

Mr. S. A. Silva (Agalawatta): I wish to make a few remarks about long-term prisoners. What I have observed during my visits to these jails is that the long-term prisoners who have been kept in one jail for ten and twelve years are suffering from a nervous breakdown. They are always sick. From their personal files I found that they had been sent before the doctors for out-door treatment, but the doctors had reported that they were not sick. The fact is that they are suffering from a nervous breakdown. I would like the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to see that these long-term prisoners are transferred periodically from one jail to another.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: We will have a jail in Nuwara Eliya!

Mr. S. A. Silva: We want one at Pussellawa!

When we discussed this Sub-head last time and referred to overcrowding, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary told us that Rs. 125,000 had been provided for additional prison buildings, and Rs. 50,000 for a new prison at Welikada.

The Chairman: That is the Remand Prison at Welikada. That is almost completed.

Mr. S. A. Silva: A new one?

The Chairman: Yes, a new one.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Do you like to go and see it?

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to the overworking of Jail guards, provision has been made for 114 guards this year. Although the Parliamentary Secretary promised that he would accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa (Dr. Colvin R. de Silva) to give minor employees only 8 hours' work a day, that has not been done. We say that mere promises will not do; they must act.

Then, I would like to point out that the Mahara Jail, though close to Colombo, is not provided with electricity. The officers there complained to me that they find it very difficult to guard the prison at night because there is not enough light provided in that prison. With this efficient Minister's electric scheme, I hope even this year the Mahara Prison will be provided with electricity [Interruption]. I hope he will do it soon, because he also might go there soon.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Is that remark permitted, Sir? I protest against it.

The Chairman: I think what the hon. Member meant was that the Hon. Minister might go there on a visit.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Visit him?

The Chairman: Order, please!

Mrs. Florence Senanayake (Kiriella): Sir, may I say that when I visited the Welikada Jail I found two prisoners who were paralytic. They were thoroughly sick. These prisoners have been given special attention. I would like to know whether there is any purpose served in keeping them there. I would appeal to the Hon. Minister to consider the question whether such prisoners should not be released in the world.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I appreciate the many valuable suggestions placed before the House, but I must, however, confess that the effect of some of the suggestions is lost because the Members have over-drawn the picture.

Mr. Dahanayake: You have never visited a jail.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The hon. Member has time and again repeated that the Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs has never visited these jails. In fact, in the past it was not my hobby, but now that it has been—

Mr. Keuneman: But you go to the Racecourse!

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In fact, I was taken to task over this matter by a comparison with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice as regards travelling all over the Island. I may assure hon. Members that I shall endeavour during the coming months to visit some of these prisons.

11.45 A.M.

Dr. Perera: See that you are not locked up.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Come back also.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I must say that this allegation that the Prison administration has remained the same as in mediaeval times is not correct. Since 1922 many reforms have been introduced into the Prison administration in keeping with the march of penal science in other countries. For example, the theory of deterrence based on solitary confinement has been given up, the Silent Rule and many other features of a repressive system have been done away with.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Tell that to the marines.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Many humiliating features of imprisonment which tend to lower the self-respect of an individual have been given up, and today Prison administration in this country compares very favourably with that obtaining in most of the countries in the world.

[Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper.]

It has been stated that there is over-crowding in our Prisons. I must remind hon. Members that, during the war years, building operations could not have been proceeded with. But now that the war is over, we are making provision year by year for the construction of more Prison quarters. But the fact must be borne in mind that today the Prison population has increased by 50 per cent., and I invite the co-operation of all hon. Members in the effort that is being made to reduce crime, by various Societies in the Island.

Mr. Keuneman: Where is your scheme to reduce crime?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In regard to the increase of salaries for the staff, I must say that that is a matter for the Salaries Committee, and for my Ministry.

The hon. Appointed Member wanted an assurance from me that we were taking adequate steps to provide a fifty-two hour week for the minor staff of the Prisons. I may assure the hon. Member that we have made provision in the Budget for this purpose, and we do hope to increase the cadre by stages in order to ensure that all Prison officers had a fifty-two hour week.

The hon. Member for Galle said that adequate housing provision has not been made for the minor staff of the Prisons. If the hon. Member will refer to the Estimates he will find that, under sub-head 20, we have a proposal to acquire all the Services quarters in Mahara, which will cost nearly Rs. 500,000.

Mr. Keuneman: Go to Welikada first.

Mr. Dahanayake: What about Jaffna, Bogambara, and Welikada?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: There is a token vote for Rs. 10. That is for the purpose of acquiring the buildings I mentioned and housing the Prison staff.

The Chairman: Page 175.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: With regard to the question of the Library, I may assure hon. Members that we are offering increased facilities to prisoners to spend their leisure hours usefully.

Mr. Keuneman: Ninety per cent. are forbidden to go to the Library.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The question of allowing prisoners to smoke is one where opinion differs.

In regard to the Remand Home, the Chairman has brought to the notice of hon. Members that it is nearing completion. We have launched upon the second stage of the expansion of the Borstal Scheme. We have found from our experience that this Institution is a very useful one, particularly for juvenile offenders, and figures last year show that one out of seven convicted persons come from that age group, 16 to 21. That is the reason why we have made provision for the second stage expansion of the Borstal Institute.

Mr. Dahanayake: No, you have not. Last year you had 20 Probation Officers, this year also there is the same provision.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have created two new posts—Warden and sub-Warden. I am mentioning this in reply to the question raised by the hon. Member for Galle.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is for the Watupitiwela institution.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Under "Probationers" we have provision for a Warden and sub-Warden.

Dr. Perera: No, look at the footnote. It says, "New posts in connection with establishment of Remand Homes under Ordinance No. 48 of 1939".

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have provided for the second stage.

Mr. Dahanayake: You have provided for two House Officers for the Watupitiwela institution.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: That is a different provision.

Mr. Dahanayake: The number of Probation officers has not been increased. You have not taken on more judicial officers to enlarge the scope of the Probation Service.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: With regard to the suggestion to release long-term prisoners, that is a matter on which we cannot make any statement.

I believe I have dealt with all the points raised.

Mr. Dahanayake: We are not satisfied.

The Chairman: There is the question of the three paralysed prisoners in jail.

Dr. Perera: I will explain.

On this question of Probation there are two aspects. At the present moment, apparently, a prisoner has to be on probation, at the original stage, on the orders of the judge. We are asking that it be extended in the other way also; that is to say, that if a prisoner has been condemned for 15 years and is found to have put in satisfactory service—his conduct and behaviour have been good and his whole record shows that he has reformed, has atoned for his crime—he might be released after a period of years. That is a system that is obtaining in America and in other countries where the Probation Service has been extended.

The Chairman: Ticket of leave.

Dr. Perera: Yes. You cannot do that with your 20 Probation officers.

The Chairman: Is there not provision under the Criminal Procedure Code for that?

Dr. Perera: There is, but it is not being utilized.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Long term prisoners get a remission of sentence—so many weeks—

Dr. Perera: I know that remission is only for quarter of their period.

The case brought forward by the hon. Member for Kiriella is this. There are patients. Some of them are long-term prisoners—17 years, 18 years, and so on. After a long-term they get old and they are merely a burden on the jail authorities. You have to find extra men to carry them about. Surely, these people can be released and a lot of living space can be saved thereby.

There is no conception of these things; there is no looking into these questions and understanding the difficulties, studying the problems in the jails and working them out. The other day hon. Members would have read the remarks of a Puisne Justice who went on his trip of jail delivery. In very strong terms he condemned the Remand Home at Kandy. What effect has it had on the Parliamentary Secretary or his Minister? No effect at all. It is like pouring water on a duck's back.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have taken notice of the suggestions.

Dr. Perera: All you do is to take notes like last time.

Mr. Keuneman: The trouble is that he loses his notes after taking them.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Nothing is lost and everything is given due consideration.

Dr. Perera: With regard to this question of a fifty-two hour week the present system you have introduced is much worse, from the point of view of a few jail guards, than the old system. On the pretence of changing hours of duty the guards on night duty have to be at their posts for nearly 14 hours. And this is not an improvement on the old system.

Mr. Keuneman: Much worse.

Dr. Perera: Yes, particularly in the case of the night duty officers. And the Parliamentary Secretary says that he has gone into the question. Fifty-two officers or a hundred officers are not going to save the situation. A radical change is wanted and a complete change of hours of work, and I do hope that, with the co-operation of the Jail Guards' Association, this matter will be put right and that your present scheme will not be merely imposed on them. That is what we want.

Mr. Dahanayake: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary has a very hazy notion of what the Probation Service is.

Mr. Keuneman: He does not know what it is.

Mr. Dahanayake: Last year there were 20 officers. One was stationed in Galle. Whenever there was an accused in a case within a certain age limit—16 to 20—this youthful offender, when convicted, instead of being sent to jail, was handed over to the Probation Officer, who thereafter started supervision over the boy who was allowed to remain in his home. I have seen copies of the records of the Probation Officer which show that the entire work is extremely well done. And year after year I have pointed out that this Probation Service should be extended. Have they extended it? Not at all.

Take the Southern Province. It is only the judicial division of Galle that is being served. Why is not this service extended to other parts of the Island? Last year provision was made for 20 Probation Officers. The provision this year remains the same, which shows that the Government is not concerned in the least in extending the service which is doing really good work.

It is very difficult to get some praise from Members of the Opposition. But we say that the Probation Service is doing grand work. And you are not prepared to extend it. Is that the way you ought to behave?

Mr. Keuneman: I do not think this House can be at all satisfied with the attitude taken up by the Parliamentary Secretary on the question of Prison Reform. A large number of serious matters have been brought to the notice of the Parliamentary Secretary, and all that he can merely say is that these are matters of opinion. At least he could try and give us an assurance that the Government would go into these matters and remove any anomalies that exist. I think this is a light-hearted way of treating these serious matters. It ill becomes the Parliamentary Secretary.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I am treating these matters with the utmost seriousness. All points worth while considering are considered and all action considered necessary are taken.

In regard to the number of Probation Officers, the present number is 20, and at the moment we consider that number sufficient. For the second stage of expansion—

Mr. Dahanayake: Last year it was 20, this year it is 20.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: At present we consider the number sufficient. For the second stage of the expansion, if the number is not sufficient we are prepared to increase it.

I thank the hon. Member for Galle for having admitted that we are doing useful work.

Mr. Dahanayake: Praise alone is not enough.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: I want to ask the Parliamentary Secretary whether he is aware that a specialist was sent to the Prisons to make a psychosomatic survey of the prisoners. Has that survey been made or is the hon. Parliamentary Secretary aware that such an officer was sent?

Mr. Dahanayake: What is the meaning of psychosomatic?

Mr. Keuneman: My question about the death penalty was not answered.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: That is outside the scope of the Home Ministry.

The Chairman: That is a matter for the entire Cabinet.

Mr. Keuneman: The Parliamentary Secretary is supposed to give us information under this Vote. Executioners also come under him. I am asking whether he can make a statement on policy.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We are carrying out executions, it is true, but that is in compliance with orders.

Mr. Keuneman: I want to know whether he cannot make a statement on policy.

Dr. Perera: We are proposing an Amendment.

Question put, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Commissioner of Prison and Probation Services'".

The Committee divided (under Standing Order 48): Ayes, 29; Noes 40.

The Chairman: The Sitting is suspended till 2 p.m.

Sitting accordingly suspended until 2 p.m., and then resumed.

The Chairman: Any further Amendments?

Dr. Perera: We have finished sub-head 1.

The Chairman: Are there any Amendments to Vote 1, sub-head 2?

Dr. Perera: The only point is the increase in the vote in sub-head 2. There is a big increase of Rs. 60,000. Will the Parliamentary Secretary tell us why?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The increase is due to increased railway fares and increased staff.

Dr. Perera: There is a complaint by the Guards on the matter of uniforms, particularly with regard to rain-coats. The rain-coats that they are getting are rather unsatisfactory. The quality is inferior and they do not serve the purpose for which they are intended. I will be satisfied if the Parliamentary Secretary gives me the assurance that he will look into the matter.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: There has been a deterioration in the quality of textiles due to world conditions. As time goes on, the quality will improve.

Dr. Perera: I wish to raise a question on sub-head 18, Purchase of Motor Vehicles. We seem to be buying motor vehicles for the Prisons Department every year. Why?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: To meet increasing requirements. The staff has been increased and a Remand Home has been established. We have also undertaken the expansion of the Borstal Institute.

Dr. Perera: One more point. Why is a token vote included under sub-head 1? If you have estimated Rs. 51,000, you might have included that in the estimates.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: That is for the acquisition of Service buildings. The acquisition of service buildings is a matter for negotiation by the Ceylon Government with the Imperial Government, and that will take a number of years.

Dr. Perera: Why must you acquire from the Imperial Government?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Because they are Service Buildings.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 4,445,922 for Head 53, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 53, Vcte 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Prison Industrial and Agricultural Undertakings (Token Vote), Rs. 100.

Mr. V. T. Nanayakkara (Matale): May I ask the Parliamentary Secretary whether there is a plan of co-ordination between the Industries Department and the Agricultural Department on the one hand and the Industrial and Agricultural Section in the Prisons on the other? Has the Parliamentary Secretary a plan to get down modern machinery for the Industrial Section of the Prison so that the prisoners may be trained in modern methods? If this is done the prisoners, when they are discharged, will be fit for absorption into the community as a result of such modern vocational training.

I would also ask the Parliamentary Secretary whether he has a plan to give industrial training to prisoners in the smaller prisons like Anuradhapura, Galle and Badulla.

I understand that an order was placed by the Public Works Department for a large number of baskets and that the Government Stores got these baskets from outside sources, thereby depriving many prisoners of employment. That is a violation of the Financial Regulations. I would request the Parliamentary Secretary to look into this matter.

I would also like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary whether there is any organization taking a sufficient interest in the absorption of these prisoners when they are discharged.

Dr. Perera: There is another aspect of this matter to which I would like to draw the attention of the Parliamentary Secretary. In the past there has been much corruption in the department in regard to this item of Industrial Undertakings. I remember some time back there was a shortage of timber, and some of the officers concerned were severely reprimanded. I would like to know the nature of the check that the department has in respect of these industrial undertakings, particularly in regard to the obtaining of timber from outside, and the sale of timber. We are working on a token vote and we do not know the precise position, in regard particularly to the Industrial Section. I would like to know from the Parliamentary Secretary if he can give us any information about this particular section.

Mr. Dahanayake: What was the output of this section last year?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: These undertakings are run on a token vote and they are paying. The Government has never suffered any loss.

In reply to the hon. Member for Matale, may I inform him that the chief object we have in mind is to give these prisoners a vocational training, so that when they are discharged they will be fit to carry on a vocation. We also have what are known as Discharged Prisoners' Aid Associations, which are ever ready to give any assistance that discharged prisoners may require.

With regard to the shortage of timber referred to by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella, strict instructions have been issued to the officer in charge of these undertakings, and I can assure the hon. Member that there need be no fear of such shortages in future. The Forest Department supplies the timber; the timber is purchased from the Forest Department, and things are looked into very carefully.

Mr. Dahanayake: Can you tell us what was the output of this section last year?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: This is a sort of trading account.

Mr. Dahanayake: If you made brooms, let us know how many brooms you made; or if you made mats, let us know how many mats you made.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: If the hon. Member wants a detailed balance sheet I am prepared to supply him with it.

Mr. Dahanayake: This is operated on a token vote and we would like to know how the business was carried on during the past year.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Very successfully and without any loss.

Mr. Dahanayake: Those are vague terms.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: They are very definite. I am very happy to be able to tell the hon. Member that last year's turnover was 6½ lakhs.

Dr. Perera: One point about the assistance given by the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Associations is that it is given so late that it is useless. Aid must be given promptly before the man slips back into his old habits. If he is to be established in life he must be given aid promptly. I am personally aware of this, because I intervened in the cases of one or two people and I found there was a delay of some months in giving assistance. I would like the Parliamentary Secretary to look into this matter and see that aid is given promptly.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I quite agree with the remarks of the hon. Member and I will look into the matter.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 100 for Head 53, Vote No. 2, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 53, Vote 2, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 54.—Government Analyst

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Government Analyst, Rs. 254,637.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 157,160.

Dr. Perera: There are some small questions to be settled. First of all, I would like to know something about this 'Additional Temporary Staff' referred to at the bottom of page 179. Why are

these two Assistant Analysts and one Assistant Clerk on the temporary list. This is not an Emergency Department.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The officers have just been taken on, and if their efficiency and usefulness is proved they will be confirmed.

Dr. Perera: I would like some information about the "Higher Training of Senior Chemists Abroad"—sub-head 6. Is it the policy of the Department to send one or two people abroad every year?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: It has been the policy of the Department to get senior men trained abroad. The Executive Committee of the previous Ministry of Home Affairs had laid it down that at least 3 of the Chemists employed in the Government Analyst's Department should have the F.R.I.C. qualification. At present only the head of the Department has got this qualification. We propose gradually to get qualified analysts. We have already sent one of them abroad. He will be returning during the course of this year. After he returns, we propose to send another.

Sub-head 7.—Training of the Probationary Assistant Government Examiner of Questioned Documents in Document work in England, Rs. 5,000.

Dr. Perera: It is proposed to increase sub-head 7. Will the Parliamentary Secretary explain the necessity for this increase?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: It is for the training of the Probationary Assistant Government Examiner of Questioned Documents.

Dr. Perera: Why are you increasing that vote?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: It is not an increase.

Dr. Perera: Your amendment seeks to increase the vote by Rs. 3,000.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The reason is this. Pending a decision by the Treasury we provided Rs. 5,000 in the

original estimate. Now that we have got the necessary sanction we are asking for another Rs. 3,000 to meet the cost of the training of this officer.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 560 in respect of sub-head 1, 'Additional Staff (Temporary)', Item 'Laboratory Attendant'."

Question put, and agreed to.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 3,000 in respect of sub-head 7."

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. T. Ramalinkam (Point Pedro): May I suggest that the services of the handwriting experts should be made available in civil cases also? I make this suggestion for two reasons. Firstly, there is a dearth of handwriting experts in the private field and it is often difficult to get experts to give evidence in the Courts, thereby shutting out very material evidence in civil cases. Till recently it was possible to obtain the advice of the Government Handwriting Expert, but a ruling has now been made that his services would not be made available.

Secondly, most of these cases come to the Criminal Courts in due course when the Government Analyst's Department comes in. I would, therefore, suggest that the services of the handwriting experts should be available even in civil cases. There are only one or two experts available in the private field and their charges are exorbitant. Besides, the public has lost confidence in them.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 258,197 for Head 54, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 54, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 55.—Zoological Gardens

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Zoological Gardens, Rs. 176,616.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 44,491.

2.15 P.M.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I move, "That the Vote be increased by

[Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper.]
Rs. 4,000 in respect of sub-head 1,
'Allowances', New item: 'Extra
clerical assistance and overtime' . . .

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: I notice that the Ministry is very generous when it comes to animals. I only hope that they will be as generous when it comes to human beings. Hon. Members are aware that three or four weeks ago there was a very instructive article in the "Times of Ceylon", comparing the living conditions of people in a part of Colombo, namely Wanathamulla, who were living in dingy hovels, with the almost palatial cages provided for the animals in the Zoo. One can only hope that the Hon. Minister will be as solicitous for the welfare of the workers as he is for the welfare of the animals.

Mr. Pakeman: The hon. Member for Ruwanwella compared the living conditions of animals in the Zoo with the living conditions of some people at Wanathamulla. I would point out that while the people at Wanathamulla are free, the animals at the Zoo are shut up.

Dr. Perera: Therefore, human beings should starve!

Mr. Pakeman: Human beings are not shut up although that does sometimes happen when they go to jail.

The reason why I rose to speak was to ask for certain information. The Zoological Gardens, to my mind, is a very great asset to the public of Ceylon as well as to tourists. I do not wish to speak too much about tourists, although, of course, from a revenue point of view, it will be a very great help if the tourist trade is maintained. I am specially concerned at the moment with the general public. I do think that a good deal more should be done by publicizing the Zoological Gardens. It will be noticed from page 181 of the Estimates that, although the expenditure is Rs. 145,000, very nearly Rs. 80,000 has been received by way of entrance fees. If the Zoo is publicized a little more it might even be made a paying proposition, though, of course, that

intention. I do not know if the Parliamentary Secretary or the Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens in conjunction with the Department of Information can do something more in the matter of publicity.

Now, Sir, my impression is that the vote for the Zoological Gardens has been cut down very severely. I have been informed that it is partly due to some administrative error. I do not know whether the Amendments amounting to Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 10,000 respectively will put that right. But I do feel that certainly much more can be done. For instance, I do not know why the Superintendent is not given more minor staff. With more minor staff the place can be properly looked after.

I would like to mention that I do think that, since the present Superintendent took over, very great improvements have been effected in the institution. However, I think that there are still certain defects which could be put right with not very much expenditure.

I believe a number of animals suffer from malaria.

Dr. Perera: What a shame!

Mr. Pakeman: If a certain amount of spraying is done in the Zoological Gardens and its environs, I think it will prevent the spread of malaria.

I think one or two animals imported at considerable expense died from snake bite. Again, that is not a difficult thing to prevent. With better enclosures and so on, it is possible to prevent any unfortunate thing like that happening again.

There is one other point. I hope the Parliamentary Secretary will consider the matter of extension of the Zoo. It is rather a pity that not very long ago there was the possibility of getting another $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, which is adjacent to the present grounds, which was not taken advantage of. I believe the price of that land has now risen. An extension of that kind will greatly add to the amenities of the Zoo and enable the collection to be housed rather more satisfactorily than at present. The addition of a little more ground I think will make a great difference.

Mr. Dahanayake: May I point out to the Parliamentary Secretary that the feeding of an animal on an average costs about Rs. 250 a year, while the salary paid to a gardener or labourer is Rs. 420 a year? While the Parliamentary Secretary looks after the animals, cannot he also look after the animal-keepers?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I am very grateful to the hon. Appointed Member for the very valuable suggestions he has made, for which I thank him. I would also associate myself with him in paying a tribute to the present Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens. After his appointment, the Zoo, the popularity of of the Zoo has gone up and we are receiving today at the rate of two visitors per minute, and the collections by way of gate money amount to about Rs. 10,000 a month. With a little more improvement and publicity, I am sure we can make this a great national asset of this Island.

With regard to the much lamented death of the giraffe, that was due to the fact that the P.W.D. could not construct a shelter in time. We have this year taken the precaution of giving the Superintendent a good amount of money, so that shelters may be erected almost overnight.

Mr. Dahanayake: Have you visited the place?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: As regards elephant-keepers, you do not want me to prove that elephants eat more than the elephant-keepers.

Mr. Dahanayake: The keeper has a family to maintain.

Sub-head 7.—Purchase and exchange of animals, Rs. 10,000.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 10,000 in respect of sub-head 7".

Question put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 190,616 for Head 55, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 55, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 56.—Registrar-General

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of the Registrar-General including cost of administering the Muslim Marriage Ordinance, Rs. 1,551,517.

Mr. Pakeman: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item, '375 Clerks'".

All I want to ask is the reason for the increase in the number of clerks from 305 to 375. That is the only reason why I move this Amendment. When there is a considerable increase in cadre, I think hon. Members are entitled to know the reason.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: On the face of it, that looks a tremendous increase, but when I explain the facts to the House, the position will be very clear. To begin with, it is not sufficiently appreciated that this so-called Registrar-General's Department is really the social barometer of the country. Every birth, every death, every marriage and every change of ownership of immovable property, gives increasing work to the Department. If there is any Department where we are very definite that we are getting 8 hours' work for 8 hours' pay, it is the Registrar-General's Department. The work in this Department is measured in terms of units. Every clerk has to complete a certain number of units before leaving office, and if he leaves the office without completing the allotted number of units, that number will be treated as arrears and he will have to complete that number as well on the following day.

In 1939 we had 378 permanent clerks and 42 temporary clerks. Then the depression set in and there was a lull in the change of ownership of land. We had also to carry out stringent retrenchment measures. Now better times have come and we find that the Registrar-General's Department is not able to cope with the increasing volume of work. For example, in 1939 we had 482,615 units of work while in 1946

[Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper.] the number rose to 674,270 units. This increase represents the work of 40 clerks. So that in respect of that item alone we are in need of 40 clerks.

The second reason for that increase is that the consolidation of the index to land registers, which was temporarily suspended in 1939 due to lack of staff, and which is an important function of this Department, has been resumed. We need 35 clerks for that work.

Again, in the Provinces the work of Provincial Registrars has increased to such an enormous extent that it is the general complaint of the public that work goes into arrears. The various Provincial Registrars have made representations and we propose to give them relief by allowing them 22 clerks.

Then, Sir, the clerical staff at the Head Office is very inadequate and we want 42 clerks. When we add up all these requirements the total number of clerks required is 139, but the Treasury have sanctioned only the number for which we have made financial provision. I am sure the hon. Member will now be more than convinced that in order to bring this Department up to date we require the number of clerks provided for.

Mr. Pakeman: I withdraw my Amendment.

Mr. Dahanayake: I would like to draw attention to the representations made from time to time by Registrars of Marriages in regard to their conditions of service. They have outlined fully their case and even the previous Minister went into the question thoroughly and held out certain promises, but nothing has been done. These men are honorary workers more or less, and whatever concessions they have asked for—they have not asked for much, Mr. Chairman—should be granted. I hope the hon. Parliamentary Secretary will be able to give some definite reply now.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: My replies are usually definite but in this case it will be more so. I agree with the hon. Member that the former Minister did

go into the representations made, but I disagree with him when he says that the Minister held out certain hopes. No hopes were held out. The answer given was that these jobs were advertised, and it was made very clear in the advertisement that only men with private means should apply. That was one of the qualifications. They knew the conditions of service when they applied. We have, notwithstanding those facts, increased their commission. We now pay 40 cents for a birth or death and 75 cents for a Kandyan marriage registration.

Dr. Perera: What was the previous amount?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: 25 cents. An increase to 40 cents is a good jump.

2.30 P.M.

Dr. Perera: What is the necessity for this Third Assistant Registrar-General—a new person?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: He is not a new person. Formerly the work was done by an acting person. But because work has increased, we submitted our request to the Treasury and they, after carefully looking into the matter, have sanctioned the appointment of this Third Assistant Registrar-General.

Mr. Ramalinkam: Now that a separate District Court has been established at Point Pedro, may I suggest that a separate Land Registry also be established there? I would like to see this done, particularly because lawyers and notaries find it difficult to go to Jaffna to attend to this type of legal work. At present the Land Registry is twenty-two miles away. I make this proposal as it will be a great convenience to the people of Point Pedro.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I will not be able to explain anything because I have not heard a word of what the hon. Member for Point Pedro said.

The Chairman: The hon. Member wants a branch of the Jaffna Land Registry to be established at Point Pedro.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: At the present moment we have a Land Registry established in every provincial town. In the past, the District Courts were established in the provincial towns. Today we have nineteen Land Registries and there are two more in Negombo and Chilaw. The question of having additional Land Registries is governed by the expenditure they would entail. There will be additional staff that will be required, and there will also be the expenditure in removing the records from the Head Office and so on.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: May I draw the attention of the Government to the under-expenditure of Rs. 172,390 which is provided in the Estimates? I am sorry I have to refer to this matter again in spite of the explanation which was given by the Hon. Prime Minister in the case of a previous Vote. The vote of the Registrar-General is a simple and straightforward one. That is why I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the under-expenditure. You will find from the Estimates that the total Vote amounts to Rs. 1,723,907. Included in this sum, there is sub-head 1, "Personal Emoluments," which amounts to Rs. 1,107,785. Now, practically the same amount provided under Personal Emoluments will be spent throughout the year.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
Why?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: With regard to the cadre provided, you will find that it is practically the same as for last year, except perhaps that there is an increase of 70 clerks, one book-binder and one peon. During the year the Department will have to spend the amount provided in respect of staff and allowances. So that only a sum of Rs. 616,122 will be left in respect of expenditure under sub-heads 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Out of this sum, too, sub-head 9, "Cost of Living Allowance" alone amounts to Rs. 500,496, with the result that only a sum of Rs. 115,626 will be left to cover the expenditure of Rs. 172,390. Even if you anticipate some under-expenditure during the year, I submit that this cut will practically force the Department to

come again to this House for supplementary provision. I merely draw the attention of the House to this fact, because it is not only in this case but in the case of practically all heads you find under-expenditure recorded to the extent of about Rs. 50,000,000.

Obviously, this method of budgeting is not quite correct, because the Department itself will find it difficult to know how to make this cut under the various items. This same state of affairs existed last year and I drew the attention of the Government to it and stated that, as far as possible, the Department should be made to budget its requirements as accurately as possible. I shall be very glad if the Hon. Minister of Finance and the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs will agree to remove this statement of expenditure. I say so, because I am perfectly certain that the department will come for a supplementary vote later on. Hon. Members will see from the 1947-48 Estimates that the cut then was Rs. 122,730. They will also see that, after deducting the amount of Rs. 1,072,505 under sub-head 1, "Personal Emoluments", from the total Vote of Rs. 1,636,411, there remains a sum of Rs. 563,906 to cover the expenditure from sub-heads 2 to 9. But you will find that sub-head 9, which amounted to Rs. 459,900, was more than the amount left for the expenditure, namely, Rs. 441,176, which is meaningless. I merely want to draw the attention of the House to this fact.

Mr. Dahanayake: On the same point, Mr. Chairman, we were informed by no less a person than the Auditor-General, that in no other part of the world has any Government resorted to this method of balancing its Budget. When the Auditor-General and the Treasury officials were closely questioned by Members of the Public Accounts Committee, we found that the real reason for this cut. . . .

The Chairman: Is it the last Public Accounts Committee?

Mr. Dahanayake: Yes. We found that the real reason for this cut was the anxiety of the Government to balance the Budget. They had no way of bridging the gap between the revenue and the expenditure except by an

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

artificial method not resorted to in any other part of the world. Now, what could be the result of this cut? The result would be that the Head of the Department would have to apportion the amount of the cut under the various sub-heads, excluding the sub-head "Personal Emoluments". What we are anxious to point out is that in the case of certain Heads the apportionment may fall heavily on votes that affect the welfare of the workers and peasants in this country. Take, for instance, the Vote for social services. If the cut operates. . . .

The Chairman: We are only dealing with this Vote now.

Mr. Dahanayake: I am taking an analogy. If the cut operates on a sub-head for which there is a great and urgent need, then we contend that we, the Members of this House, have been deceived by this method of budgeting. We voted. . . .

The Chairman: By whom were you deceived?

Mr. Dahanayake: By the mathematical quibbling contained in this Budget. We, Mr. Chairman, expect a certain amount of money to be spent for a certain purpose, and we give you that amount of supply. At the other end, you do not have that amount. Therefore, in all seriousness, I join with the hon. Member for Vaddukkoddai (Mr. Kanagaratnam) in asking the Government to give up this bad habit which they contracted no sooner they got into office.

The Hon. Mr. C. Sittampalam (Minister of Posts and Telecommunication, and Industries, Industrial Research and Fisheries): I feel that the hon. Member for Galle has misunderstood the position. We are budgeting for a total expenditure of Rs. 450,000,000, because we felt that the total estimate of Rs. 490,000,000 was an over-estimate of the entire expenditure for the coming year and there will be an under-expenditure on all the Heads put together of about Rs. 40,000,000 or Rs. 50,000,000. That is the result of our past experience in this country. There is no use our

trying to imitate England or Japan or for a matter of that any other country in this matter. We are going on our own experience and feel that there will be an under-expenditure of about Rs. 50,000,000. We, therefore, had to distribute this sum under the various Heads for the purpose of showing it in the Budget, as we thought proper. It might be that under this head of expenditure it will be less, but when we come for a supplementary vote for adjusting errors, you will probably find that there is a greater saving under this head than under some other head. So the Budget for the year will show an expenditure of what is actually estimated. There is no attempt to deceive anyone. The departments have to spend money according to the actual Estimates. And they will ordinarily find that there will be a saving of that amount. But if it does not, we will come to you for sanction to adjust it by taking over from the savings.

Mr. Dahanayake: We know a thing or two more than the Hon. Minister. The Treasury has directed departmental heads to stick to the expenditure less the under-estimated expenditure. The Treasury has given that direction to the Heads of Departments.

The Hon. Mr. Sittampalam: That is not correct.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In this case we expected savings under sub-head 1. The hon. Member is not aware that Financial Regulation 66 lays down that any savings under a particular sub-head can be used for expenditure under another sub-head.

Dr. Perera: No.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: But I am asking the hon. Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs whether this is not a fact. That, during the current year the Registrar-General has protested against the under-estimate, and has come for a special provision. I can quite understand what the Hon. Minister of Posts and Telecommunication stated, that under votes which contain other works and services like the Public Works Department or the Irrigation Department, where it is not possible to undertake or complete the works during the

year concerned, it is possible that there will be a saving; but, in a department like the Registrar-General's Department, where every officer is given a salary to which he is entitled, I cannot understand how it is proposed to effect a saving. I am only suggesting that in this particular case the under-expenditure has no meaning. It is an absurdity of absurdities.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Surely, my good Friend must realize that there is always a saving on Personal Emoluments!

Mr. Kanagaratnam: In this particular case I am asking whether you are going to save the sum of Rs. 172,390.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: All these people will not come to work. There are some people who will be drawing half pay; there are certain times when there may be people who draw no pay; on the other hand, there may be certain people who have not yet been appointed. It is our experience that there is always a big saving on Personal Emoluments. But we have to provide all the money for the officers employed and who have to be employed. However, as I said, there may be some people who get sick. That has been our experience. And I am sure that our experience has been that there has always been a saving of more than 10 per cent. on Personal Emoluments.

With regard to the practice that has been adopted by us, it is the practice that has been going on for a long time, and we have always estimated a saving at the end of the year. When the accounts were made up at the end of the year, even taking into account the Supplementary Estimates that were passed during the year, the savings have been very much more than we anticipated during the last three or four years. So, if that is so, why should hon. Members call the calculation a bad calculation? If it is bad calculation, it only means that we have not made a greater reduction according to our experience. What we are trying to do is not to cut too much of the expenditure because we want to urge the officers to do their best and try to spend as much as possible on the votes we have supplied each year. In no year has any saving been less than what we had estimated.

Mr. Keuneman: I think the main point in this argument has been missed by both the Hon. Minister of Posts and Telecommunication and the Hon. Prime Minister. Speaking generally on this question, on the method of budgeting in certain votes, there are certain sub-heads. A number of hon. Members of this House would like to see an estimate spent to the full. There may be sub-heads such as Public Assistance. We do not want any savings on them. In fact, we think the provision under those sub-heads is not enough. But when all these are lumped together and then there is a large reduction, we do not know whether it is going to be taken from Public Assistance or from any such vote. That is why we want an assurance on matters like this, where social services are concerned, that the money will be spent to the last cent.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The very fact of our not deducting an amount from each item but taking all the items together will show hon. Members that Heads of Departments are expected to spend up to the amount provided.

2.45 P.M.

We go even further than that. If, for instance, the amount that is provided for social services is not enough and if there should be any savings under some other sub-heads, we will permit that amount to be spent to meet the over-expenditure.

Dr. Perera: You cannot spend over and above the amount that is estimated?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Yes. As I said, if there is a saving on one sub-head it can be utilized for another sub-head.

Mr. Dahanayake: The Hon. Prime Minister may talk in that strange way, but I know that the Treasury gives different directions on the matter. Now, for instance, the moment that this Budget is passed the Treasury will write to the Head of Department and say, "This is the expenditure that has been apportioned under the various sub-heads and those new figures arrived at should be rigidly adhered to."

The Hon. Mr. Sittampalam: That is

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: As Prime Minister, I give the assurance that we can do it, that is, you can take the savings from one sub-head and utilize it on another sub-head.

The Hon. Mr. Sittampalam: If the Hon. Prime Minister says that it can be done, then there is an end to it. There is, therefore, no need for the hon. Member for Galle to start quoting from a letter that he has received from somebody else.

Mr. Dahanayake: In order to utilize savings from one sub-head you will have to wait till the end of the year.

The Chairman: The sanction of the Treasury can be obtained any time.

Mr. Dahanayake: The whole trouble is that here the Hon. Prime Minister thinks that things are being done according to what is in his mind, but what really happens is otherwise. Now, take the Provincial Kachcheries, for instance. We find that the Vote that has been passed by this House has not reached that end in the same form that it was passed by this House, but that only a small amount has been sent there under this new system.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 1,551,517 for Head 56, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 56, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 57.—Department of Parliamentary Elections

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of Parliamentary Elections, Rs. 278,775.

Dr. Perera: By way of preliminary remark, I presume that this Department is going to be more or less a permanent department?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Yes.

Dr. Perera: If that is so, why should not the expenditure be itemized, for instance, the cadre set out, the salaries set out, etc. Why are we just voting a lump sum for this? I can understand if it is a temporary department, but now

that it is going to be a permanent department, why should not this procedure be followed? Why cannot the salary scales be enumerated?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We do not know who and who are going to be appointed.

Dr. Perera: But still you can have your salary scales.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: At the present moment the Permanent Secretary is acting as the Commissioner of Elections, and we are giving him a small allowance for that work that is being done by him.

Dr. Perera: What about the other officers?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: They are also doing part-time work.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: May I explain this? Although this Department is to be a permanent one, yet the work that has got to be done is not of a continuous nature, for instance, the preparation of registers and things of that sort. The elections are held at different periods, and it is only during those periods that it would become necessary for us to engage a large number of temporary men. Take, for instance, the question of the revision of registers which has to be done every year. Now, this revision, when it takes place, will have to be done within a certain period, and it is only during that period that we will be requiring these officers.

Dr. Perera: May I throw out a suggestion? Now there is that special Department of Elections (Local Bodies). I do not know why these two departments cannot be amalgamated to form one permanent department, because the work in the Department of Elections for Local Bodies will be continuous more or less. There, for instance, they have appointed a Commissioner, an Assistant Commissioner, and so on, so I think these two departments could be amalgamated with advantage.

Mr. Dahanayake: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10". I move this reduction in order to express our complete loss of confidence in the work done by this Department. One of the main things which this Department has to do is to see to the annual revision of electoral registers, and I say with a full knowledge of the facts that, in the recent revision of registers, the work done was most slipshod, haphazard and thoroughly unsatisfactory.

Mr. Chairman, all of us are aware that during the last General Elections the electoral lists that were furnished to us were erroneous by over 50 per cent., that is to say, if there were 100 names on the list, 50 names were those of the dead or of those who were living far away from the villages or duplicated or triplicated. Those were the lists that we had to be content with.

Then we expected that, soon after those elections, steps would be taken to see that the lists were thoroughly revised. What is meant by a thorough revision? We wanted a house to house enumeration. We wanted every eligible voter to have his or her name to be inserted in the list. Now, did you carry out such a thorough revision? You did not. Your enumerators did not go from house to house, with the result that every eligible voter has not got into the lists that were recently revised.

I ask you, what then is the work that this Department has done? Why does not the Hon. Prime Minister or anybody else who is concerned in the matter give the fullest directions to this Department to see that the lists are up to date?

Then, again, I ask, why this Department cannot see to it that the electoral lists are furnished to the public in Sinhalese and in Tamil. The State Council and this Parliament have time and again asked that the electoral lists should be available in Sinhalese and in Tamil, but that part of the work has not been done.

Again, it is the work of this Department to attend to the various arrangements connected with by-elections. May I say that, from my experience of elections that have taken place after the last General Elections, things have gone from bad to worse in regard to the arrangements made by this Department? We have pointed out so many flaws in

regard to the arrangements that have been made, but nothing has been done to remedy matters.

Take the case of the arrangements in a polling booth. Now, it has been our experience that the candidate who is more powerful is able to secure a plot of land somewhere near the polling booth or actually within the premises of the polling booth to put up a camp or a cot of his own. At times he shuts out the other man completely from erecting a cot of his own. I know certain schools are chosen as polling booths. It may be a private school, but still the candidate who is powerful is able to utilize the school garden for his cot or camp while the other candidate is without a camp; the result is that every voter who marches to the polling booth is interfered with by the agents of that fortunate candidate. Now, should that type of thing be tolerated any longer? There are certain other details about which several M.Ps have made representations.

Now, take the question of impersonation. We, on this side of the House, have demanded that all possible steps should be taken to eliminate the very possibility of impersonation. But what has this Government done on this matter? It has done nothing. The old State Council passed a Motion sponsored by me that every adult in this country should be furnished with an identity card containing his photograph. That Motion was accepted by the State Council, but this Government has refused to implement that Motion. Furthermore, I ask, as aids to the detection of impersonation, what steps has this Department taken to help those who are keen on checking impersonation? You know, Mr. Chairman, that inside a polling booth there are two polling agents, and the rate at which voters come in makes it impossible for the two polling agents to have a check on the numbers that are passed. Something must be done to minimise this evil of impersonation.

Today the dice are heavily loaded against the candidate who wishes to conduct a pure election campaign. Mark, Mr. Chairman, the existing rules, regulations, and the manner in which this Department of Parliamentary Elections works, aids and abets corruption and all the sordid things that are noticed in an election campaign.

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

We ask that the Government should seriously consider these matters and that steps should be taken to see that as far as possible elections are conducted properly and in a pure manner, free, as far as possible, from corruption. I think it is not we alone on this side of the House who should make this demand but that all Members of this honourable House should make this demand. I shall impute motives to nobody, Mr. Chairman, but I do say that the Government has been guilty of lethargy in regard to this matter. Let them, for instance, get a full report from some competent officer of the various defects that were discovered in each of these by-elections and let them address their minds to the task of remedying all possible defects. I press for a cut in the Vote, Head 57.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I rise to impress on the Government the necessity for preparing completely new electoral registers in respect of all elections that will be held hereafter. I say that with the experience I have gained during the last elections in my constituency. As a public servant I was thoroughly ashamed—

The Chairman: As regards electoral registers, I hope the hon. Member will be brief, because there is already a substantive Motion on the Order Paper.

Mr. Kanagaratnam:—of the manner in which these electoral registers were prepared on the last occasion in spite of the fact that ample information was available with the Registering Officers at the time these registers were prepared in March, 1946. It was about that time that the census of the country was taken and the new rice ration books were introduced. At that time the Government Agent, in accordance with the law that governs the preparation of these registers today, asked the various headmen to prepare these registers. I understand that under the existing law a notification is published in the newspapers every year, asking those whose names do not appear in the registers to apply to the Revising or the Registering Officer.

Now, as hon. Members know, until an election is imminent, no voter will take the trouble to see that his name is in

the register or not, with the result that the Government Agent, as a matter of routine, refers the matter to the D.R.O., and the D.R.O. in turn refers it to the Kirama Vidane and the Kirama Vidane merely inquires, with the register just in front of him, whether anybody in a particular constituency has died since the last revision, but he never takes into account the fact that there are people who have left the constituency and that there are people who have come into the constituency.

The Chairman: The hon. Member need not go into details.

3.0 P.M.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I shall only say a few words in support of my statement. The result is that, at the time of the last General Elections, the electoral registers were in an incomplete state, with the names of a number of people who were dead and of a number of people who had left the constituencies still appearing in the register. When new names were called for to be registered and when those of us who are interested in the elections went into the various constituencies, I was shocked to find that the new applications were as many as the names that appeared in the register.

I was nearly losing the votes in one Kirama Vidane's district because of the manner in which these registers were prepared. The Kirama Vidane never prepares the registers. He employs one of the local boys, who probably has studied up to the 5th or 6th standard, for the purpose of revising the register, with the result that when the Kirama Vidane prepared the register and when the new names were collected by me to be included in the register, the whole thing was summarily rejected by the D. R. O., because he said that it could not be that there were so many names not included. The D. R. O. thought that if he submitted a list with a large number of new names, the Government Agent would question him as to how those names were omitted. You will not believe that when the whole Kirama Vidane's list was summarily rejected by the Registering Officer, I had to seek legal advice in order to find out how this took place. This took place because unimaginative officers undertook the

work, but, fortunately for me, there were various proofs by way of rice ration books and Census Reports.

Even if it comes to a question of amending the law, I would earnestly ask the Government to do it and to scrap all the registers and to start a completely new register. If you want more money to do this work, this House will very willingly set apart any amount of money for that purpose.

Mr. Dahanayake: I submit that a full Debate on this matter is very necessary.

The Chairman: I cannot allow a full Debate. There is already a Motion on the subject in the Order Book. I shall read the Motion:

"That this House considers it to be the imperative duty of Government, in the interests of manhood suffrage, to recast forthwith, the existing Registers of Voters of every Electoral District in the Island, and to cause such Registers to be examined and brought up to date annually in such manner that all persons entitled to vote are duly inscribed in such Registers."

I do not want any Members to speak on this Motion which is now before the House. I cannot allow any anticipation of this Motion that is before the House. Discussion on all other matters I will allow, but not on this. The hon. Member for Vaddukkoddai dealt with nothing else but this.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I am sorry, Sir.

The Hon. Mr. Goonesinha: They are taking advantage of your kindness.

Mr. Keuneman: On this question of the registers there is only one point I would like to make, and that is that the Government should issue instructions to the headmen to make house to house visits and to see that all persons qualified to be registered are included in the registers.

Secondly, I think that the Government should make some provision to see that those headmen who fail in their duties are liable to punishment.

The Chairman: Again you are on this very Motion which I mentioned

Mr. Keuneman: I do not think I am dealing with that Motion. I am trying to suggest certain Governmental action against people who do not carry out normal functions which they are expected to carry out.

The Chairman: That is the same thing.

Mr. Keuneman: The next thing I want to do is to emphasize once again the point made by the hon. Member for Galle.

The Chairman: Maladministration of elections?

Mr. Keuneman: Yes, on the question of the identification of voters when they come to the polling booth.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I think there is a substantive Motion on the matter.

Mr. Keuneman: I fully endorse the suggestion which the Parliamentary Secretary was trying to preclude me from endorsing.

Unfortunately, at the present moment there is a system according to which identification of voters, particularly in rural areas, is often left to the headman, and the headman says that a person challenged is the very person whose name appears in the register. That is often taken as the gospel truth. But I think every hon. Member knows that headmen are very often active partisans in elections, and it is extremely bad and extremely dangerous that the question of identification of a voter should be left entirely to a headman as is very often done in practice, and I shall be very glad if the Parliamentary Secretary would bring this to the notice of his Minister.

The other point I want to mention is about Presiding Officers. I have been not only a candidate but also a polling agent. It has been our experience that certain Presiding Officers do not carry out the law and complaints are made against them. It is always possible for a polling agent, if he is certain that a person claiming a vote is not the registered voter, to swear an affidavit. But there have been a number of cases where I know Presiding Officers have refused

[Mr. Keuneman.] to accept such affidavits, which they have no business to do. The agents concerned have lodged objections with those Presiding Officers which, in the normal course, should have been sent to the Commissioner of Parliamentary Elections. But I have never heard of any such action being taken against any such person. When this practice is allowed to continue, naturally the Government cannot blame the Presiding Officers if there is a suspicion that these Presiding Officers are partisans—

The Chairman: For both sides.

Mr. Keuneman: Very often when an impersonator is detected and an agent wants to hand him over to the Police, the Presiding Officer intervenes and says that there is no necessity for doing it. I do not think it is the duty of the Presiding Officer to intervene in a matter of this nature. Very often the Presiding Officer does exercise influence over those agents. I think the Hon. Minister concerned should give instructions that this sort of interference should not take place and that the Presiding Officers should rigidly perform their duties.

I would also ask the Government what action has been taken on the Report issued by the Commissioner of Parliamentary Elections on the last General Election. In that Report there were a large number of suggestions made—particularly suggestions for the re-interpretation of the law and a change of the law. Some of those suggestions were valuable and some were such that I do not agree with them.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: A Commission has been appointed to go into the question of altering the Regulations.

Mr. Keuneman: That Commission will be dealing with the change of the Constitution and not elections. For instance, the Commissioner points out that one of the rules is being interpreted, and has been interpreted in such a manner that if a polling agent does not turn up sharp at 8 o'clock in the morning, then for the whole day there is no polling agent at the booth. I do not see any reason why a candidate should be penalized because his agent

did not turn up by 8 o'clock. In other words it means encouraging mass impersonations to take place. I do not see that the Government has taken any interest in this matter or that the Government has made any attempt to implement the recommendation of the Commissioner. Because of that, when we go to by-elections, we see that the same mistakes to which the Commissioner drew attention are being perpetuated. It is very probable that when the next General Elections come the same thing will be repeated, unless the Government takes some action. I do hope that necessary legislation will be brought forward to implement those of the recommendations which the Government considers to be valuable, so that we can have more effective elections more genuinely representative of the choice of the people.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: With regard to the remarks made by the hon. Third Member for Colombo Central, I might say that, when a change of the law is next effected, it is the intention of the Government to go into the whole aspect and make the necessary changes, if any. By that I do not mean that we will accept all the suggestions made; but we will take them into consideration.

Mr. Keuneman: I was talking of the amendments to the Elections Order in Council.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We will consider the whole thing.

The Chairman: You cannot amend the Elections Order in Council unless you know the exact disqualifications.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I would like to make one remark. All the complaints were in connection with the unsatisfactory way in which these elections were held last year. I would like to point out to my hon. Friends that in this estimate provision is asked for next year and not for last year. In moving a cut on an officer's salary the intention is merely to draw the attention of the Government to certain matters and nothing more.

It was stated that certain methods were adopted. One of the things suggested was that there was only one

polling agent allowed. Those are governed by rules that are provided in the Elections Order in Council and the Presiding Officer cannot alter them.

Mr. Dahanayake: We want you to revise them in the light of experience.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: As I mentioned, those things will be looked into afterwards.

I myself am not satisfied with the way the registers had been prepared; nor am I satisfied with the conduct of all the public servants. There are certain public servants who had even boldly stated that they, as an association or body, would take sides. They had passed resolutions to that effect.

Mr. Dahanayake: What has that got to do with the revision of registers?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I do not think we are satisfied with the conduct of these officers. They stated that they were against this Party and that and that they would take sides. This is not at all satisfactory. I realize that.

But there is one thing I would like to say. This is the first time I heard that for these impersonations the Government officers were responsible. I remember taking an interest in the last General Elections and even in some of the by-elections, but I have never heard of any candidate who did not complain of the possibility of his opponent resorting to impersonations. The accusation of all the candidates was that their opponents would resort to impersonations. I do not think there has been a single election where they did not fear such a thing happening. It is true that impersonations did take place, but I do not think we are justified in saying that the officers were responsible for that, because there has not been any accusation or any charge made against the officers that all the impersonations were due to their slackness or encouragement. I presume that all of us in this House got in by good and honest means, and that all the people who were defeated were the people who did the impersonations. Impersonations could not therefore have been so great and effective as the honest men have got in here and the

bad men have been left out. I am inclined to think that, even if all the bad people were rejected last time, it is very necessary for us to see that we make the voter realize that no candidate should be encouraged to indulge in this impersonation campaign.

3.15 P.M.

I think the candidates and their agents can play a greater part in making the elections purer than the Government officials themselves. I certainly feel, as far as we are concerned, that it is necessary to endeavour to get the registers revised properly and brought up to date.

With regard to the remark made by my Friend the hon. Member for Galle, to the effect that nothing has been done with regard to the revision of registers, I might tell him that the work of revising the registers has to be done during a certain period and it cannot be done earlier. I really believe that August is the proper time for doing this work.

The Chairman: Yes, that is the period.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Therefore, when my hon. Friend goes complaining that the public servants and the Government Agents are not doing it earlier than that, the least I can say about it is that he is not quite justified.

Mr. Dahanayake: You do not know what is being done—that is the difficulty. There is no house to house enumeration.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They are doing so now.

Mr. Subasinghe: It is just not happening.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: It is not done.

Mr. Dahanayake: It is not being done. The Prime Minister imagines, that a house to house enumeration is being done, but it is not done.

The Chairman: It is being done in Colombo South, where I live.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: They are not doing it in the village constituencies.

The Chairman: Anyhow, we are now anticipating a Motion that will come before this House. I want hon. Members to remember that.

Mr. S. A. Silva: Sir, I wish to—

The Chairman: Order, please, the hon. Member for Agalawatta!

Mr. Dahanayake: I want an assurance that the enumeration will be done properly in the village areas.

The Chairman: The assurance has already been given by the Hon. Prime Minister.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We are doing our best to see that it is done.

Dr. Perera: It is true, Sir, that in Colombo a house to house enumeration is done but outside Colombo it is not done. I think that is the only point that we want to stress.

The Hon. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (Minister of Finance): It is being done in Colombo.

The Chairman: I know that.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Instructions have been sent out to see that the best possible enumeration is done.

Mr. Dahanayake: I might tell you how it is done in the outstations.

The Chairman: That is not right. There is a Motion before this House on that subject, and you might wait till we take up that Motion.

Mr. Dahanayake: Now that the matter has been raised here, Sir—

The Chairman: I do not want to carry on like this—

Mr. Dahanayake: This is a matter of the most vital importance.

The Chairman: To the hon. Member and myself, too! You are not pressing your Amendment?

Mr. Dahanayake: I am pressing my Amendment “That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10.”

The Chairman: The Amendment itself is out of Order, but I will agree to put it to the House. Hon. Members must realize that a cut cannot be proposed on a whole Vote, but only on a particular item.

The Hon. Mr. Goonesinha: Then, why should the Amendment be allowed at all, Sir?

The Chairman: The hon. Member can, if he likes, oppose the whole Vote, but he cannot propose a cut of Rs. 10 from it.

Question, “That the sum of Rs. 278,775 for Head 57, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule”, put.

The Committee divided (under Standing Order 48): Ayes, 42; Noes, 23.

Head 57, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 58.—Department of Rural Development

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Rural Development, Rs. 532,812.

Mr. Dahanayake: On this Vote, Sir—

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: I rise to a point of Order, Sir. This Head was debated last night.

The Chairman: Only the question of policy was debated. The sub-heads can be taken up now.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 242,515.

Mr. Dahanayake: I move, “That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item ‘Director’.”

The Chairman: You are not to discuss policy, please.

Mr. Dahanayake: It is not by any means a pleasant thing, Sir, to say things against the Head of any Department, and I would very much like to avoid making any such remarks; but in this case, I must say that we are not satisfied with the way in which the new Director of the Department of Rural Development has set about launching this programme of work.

He should have known, Mr. Chairman, that he was—

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: Can I rise to a point of Order, Sir? Is it correct to criticize an official when the Minister is the person who is responsible? The criticism should be directed against the Minister.

The Chairman: He can criticize the Minister as regards policy, but he is now concerned with an official of the Department. He can criticize any action of the Director which has come into the limelight. I do not mind that.

Mr. Dahanayake: This new Director should have known that the Government, the Parliament and the people were reposing a great deal of hope and expectation on the work of this new Department of Rural Development. Therefore, in the first instance, he should have studied how rural development was being done in other countries. He should then have consulted those who know about conditions in this country—conditions in the rural areas of this country—and he should have drawn up a programme of work to suit the genius of the people of this country.

What has he done, Mr. Chairman? He has set about doing the whole thing in the wrong way. I understand, Sir, that the Director went to each provincial centre and held a conference with a number of Government Officials.

The Chairman: That concerns the policy of the Government.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is an action of his, Sir.

The Chairman: Now you are infringing on policy.

Mr. Dahanayake: It is his action that I am criticizing.

I say that in my view he should have gone to the various areas and consulted people who have the welfare of the rural population at heart. The Government officials whom he consulted—

The Chairman: I do not think the hon. Member can take the one away from the other. The hon. Member is now criticizing what the Head of the Department did, and he should not take

up any points that we discussed last night. If there are any misdeeds to be brought forward against the Director, then I can understand his action in bringing up a cut in his salary; but what the officer did was a part of the policy of the Government by setting up this Department. I say it is not—

Mr. Dahanayake: After last night's discussion I understood that no directions had been issued to this Director, and the Prime Minister confirmed that the Director had acted on his own.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I made no such statement.

The Chairman: Nobody stated that.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I would always say that the Heads of Departments carry out the policy of the Government and its Ministers.

Mr. Dahanayake: They may carry it out in the wrong way, and then they will earn our criticism. In this particular case I think I am right in saying that the policy of the Government was laid before the Director, and he was expected to act on it.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Actually, if my hon. Friend wants to know, I might tell him that we held a conference at which the Director and all Government Agents were present. After the conference a certain policy was laid down, and it is according to that policy that the Director carries out his duties.

Mr. Dahanayake: A certain policy may have been laid down, Mr. Chairman, and the Director also may be trying to carry on that policy. We criticize his actions in the discharge of his duties in carrying out that policy. You can carry out a policy; you can also blunder through a thing. Even supposing that you are imagining that you are carrying out a policy, you can still be guilty of mistakes.

The Hon. Mr. Goonesinha: Was he guilty?

Mr. Dahanayake: What I say is that the Director has committed a very serious blunder in not contacting the

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

people who are in the best possible position to advise him on rural reconstruction. If the Government Benches will concede that, Sir, I will proceed no further.

The Chairman: Exactly the same thing was said yesterday.

Mr. Dahanayake: I feel that this new Director has acted as if he was imagining that he was the head of a military department; whereas he should know that he is being entrusted with certain measures that are calculated to lead to the improvement of rural living conditions.

The Chairman: I think it is very difficult for Members to speak on this Amendment which we have now before this House; I do not mind allowing discussion provided it does not infringe on the Debate that took place yesterday.

Now that we have thrashed out the whole matter I will take up the other sub-heads.

Mr. Dahanayake: We ask that this Director be removed from his post.

Mr. Subasinghe: There is just one point, Sir. I notice a sub-head entitled "Rural Survey and Development". Can I take that up?

The Chairman: I want to put this Amendment out of the way before proceeding further. Let anybody speak without infringing on yesterday's Debate.

Dr. Perera: The last time we discussed this was during the last Budget Debate when I raised the question—I do not know whether you will permit me to go on—of peasants' unions not being recognized by Government. On that occasion the Hon. Prime Minister undertook—I have his words here—to see that they would be recognized provided that they were non-political.

All these peasants' unions are non-political. In point of fact, they may not all be "Grama Sanwardhana Samitis," or whatever other societies you might like to call them, but they are all non-political. I find, however, that unless they happen to be Government sponsored, they are not recognized. That does not tally with the undertaking given by the Prime Minister.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

As far as I am concerned, I am not aware that I have gone behind any undertaking. Any unions, as long as they are non-political, will be recognized. I do not know of any non-political union that has not been recognized.

Dr. Perera: If that is so, all I would say is that the Head of this Department has stated that he will only recognize unions sponsored by Government.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

What I have to say to that is that this officer is not the Government. I have spoken for the Government, and this officer will carry out what I have said.

Dr. Perera: I would, in that case, wish the Prime Minister to issue the necessary instructions because, apparently, the officer concerned is not carrying out the intention of the Hon. Prime Minister.

3.30 P.M.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: This Department is bound to be very closely associated with the people in the villages, and I would therefore urge that at least one of the officers at the head of this Department, the Director or his Deputy should be a Tamil, so that he may be able to deal directly with the people in the Tamil speaking areas—the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

I am not urging this from the communal point of view, but purely in the interests of efficient work. Intensive work has to be done in the villages, and it is essential that one at least of the officers at the top should be conversant with the Tamil language.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

My good Friend probably does not realize the dangerous implications of his suggestion. If I were to accept that suggestion of his, I would be working against the interests of the Tamil community. Sinhalese-speaking areas form the major portion of this Island, and if the principle is laid down that for those areas Sinhalese-speaking officers only should be appointed, I am afraid there will be very few posts left for the Tamils!

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I am not suggesting this for general adoption—in all Departments. I thought that in a Department of this nature, to start with at least, something on the lines I have suggested might be done.

I would like to draw the attention of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Home Affairs to an article appearing in the "Times of Ceylon" of last night,—

"Rural Development Snag. The Government Rural Development Scheme was described by one of its officers today as a farce."

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: Who is the officer?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I am drawing the attention of the Minister concerned to the article.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We cannot take the contents of that article as authoritative.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene (Kalutara): I want to say a few words about the conditions of service of the Rural Development Officers. These officers were originally recruited to the Service in 1940, and were placed under the Department of Commerce and Industries. At that time the posts were temporary and non-pensionable. Now these posts have been transferred to the Department of Rural Development, but the posts continue to be temporary and non-pensionable—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: These are not the same officers. The rural reconstruction centres will continue. The officers working in the Rural Development Department will not be those referred to by the hon. Member. The officers in the Department under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services will continue.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: The posts are temporary and non-pensionable.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: Take it up when we come to that Ministry.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: Then about their salaries: I understand that the Cadres Commission has recommended that they should be placed on the same scale as the D.R.Os.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: They come under another Ministry.

The Chairman: We are dealing with the Rural Development Officers under this Head.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: I am referring to the Rural Development Officers.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The salary scales of the officers of the Department of Rural Development have not been considered by the Cadres Commission.

The Chairman: These are temporary appointments.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: At present the Junior Rural Development Officers have to supervise rural development work in areas covered by D.R.Os, and the Senior Rural Development Officers have to supervise the work of the whole district.

The Chairman: Applications for the posts of Rural Development Officers under this Vote are just being called for.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: There are a number of officers now functioning who are thoroughly dissatisfied—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They come under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: The Government cannot expect good work from these officers if there is so much dissatisfaction among them. They are dissatisfied with their conditions of service and salary scales. I want the whole position to be reviewed and early steps taken to meet the demands made by these officers.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: There are already in the Island hundreds of peasant organizations. They were formed by the peasants, the villagers, independently of any political party. Right from the time these organizations were formed, they have been demanding from Government certain minimum

[Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena.] amenities and facilities for their villages—manure, implements, land, and so on. The Government, however, has not given heed to the demands of these peasant organizations.

The Department of Rural Development should give immediate attention to the demands of these peasant organizations that have sprung up during the last few years all over the country, in Anuradhapura and other parts of the North-Central Province, the Southern Province—

The Chairman: The Prime Minister has said that he will give due consideration to the demands of all the peasant organizations that are not of a political nature.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: They have sent in demands—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I remember that an organization with which the hon. Member for Kotte is connected, or is interested in, did come and see me some time ago about the distribution of manure in the Kotte area. To carry out executive duties, we have the Government officers. We cannot hand over the distribution of manure, and so on, to associations of this nature, but their demands will certainly receive our attention. Executive work must be done by executive officers.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: The Prime Minister might clarify the position. He referred to “non-political organizations”. So long as these peasant organizations do not put forward any political demands, he should be satisfied and should regard such organizations as non-political—

The Chairman: That is a very wide definition!

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: You cannot keep out politics entirely. I may interest myself in an association in my constituency, but that by itself does not make that organization political. It is a very vague term.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The demands of even political associations receive attention from Government, but we do not want rural development to be run on political lines.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: We agree.

Mr. Dahanayake: Why do you not recognize the “*Goviperamunas*” in the rural areas? They are peasant organizations.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: With regard to the work done by Government in the rural areas, we desire non-political associations to—

The Chairman: Is the hon. Member for Galle pressing his Amendment?

Mr. Dahanayake: Yes.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The present Director of Rural Development has shown outstanding organizing ability, tact and drive, and the remarks made against him are totally undeserved. They are not at all applicable to the present Head of this Department.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: Put the Amendment to the vote, Sir.

The Chairman: Is the hon. Member pressing his Amendment?

Question, “That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item ‘Director’”, put:

The Chairman: The “Noes” have it.

Mr. Dahanayake: Divide!

The Chairman: You want a Division every time.

Mr. Dahanayake: This is very important.

The Committee divided (Under S. O. 48): Ayes, 22; Noes, 41.

The Chairman: The Amendment is lost. Any further remarks?

Mr. Subasinghe: There is a sub-head here, “Rural Survey and Development”. It was only yesterday that we came across an item under the Department of Census—

The Chairman: The hon. Member is referring to sub-head 5?

Mr. Subasinghe: Yes. There was a sub-head under the Department of Census for "Rural, Social and Economic Survey". Having provided that sum, we are now asked to provide for a further survey—"Rural Survey". These two things are inter-connected, and there is no necessity for another survey to be conducted by the Department of Rural Development.

If you are concerned with rural development, the facts that you need are those relating to the extent of rural poverty, rural indebtedness, and the needs of the villagers. If a survey of these matters is to be efficiently conducted, it can be done only by a Department which is capable of conducting it efficiently. The mere allocation of Rs. 180,000 for rural survey and development is not going to result in efficient work.

This kind of budgeting clearly indicates the lack of any real understanding on the part of the Government of the real problems they are faced with in the matter of rural development. With Rs. 180,000, what can you do? If the Government is really serious about this question of rural development, they should inter-relate this activity with the activities of all the other Departments of Government view this problem in its relation with the activities of other Government Departments.

The question of rural development should really be tackled by this so-called new Department of State Planning that the Minister of Finance hopes to establish.

Mr. Dahanayake: Sub-head 5 has the caption, "Rural Survey and Development". Those are the two activities they propose: to carry out a survey and inaugurate development measures, with this Rs. 180,000 allotted under sub-head 5.

I do not know how much work can be done with this sum, particularly when we study the development measures they propose to undertake. The details of the proposed expenditure are given at the end of page 185 of the Estimates.

You will see that they propose to create rural development centres, and to pay the rent of certain buildings. Model buildings will be put up, and these model buildings will contain an

office, library and reading room, committee meeting room, and cottages for officers, furniture, and so on.

On a rough estimate, from a common sense angle, how much will all that cost?

Furthermore, other development measures include the maintenance of model agricultural plots, poultry pens, stud bulls, stud goats, cost of books, newspapers, boxing gloves, and so on, for reading rooms and libraries.

It is also proposed to give advances on account of industrial implements.

Further, they propose to train a number of village leaders who, I hope, will become M.P.'s. Allowances are to be given to these village leaders.

For all the work I have mentioned, plus the survey, you allot Rs. 180,000. The number of rural development officers provided for in the Estimates is 91. That means, you have Rs. 2,000 per centre, or per area, operated on by a rural development officer. The amount allotted for the survey and the development measures is just a bare Rs. 2,000 per centre.

What do you propose to do with that Rs. 2,000? Put up a model cottage, buy a stud bull, give the villagers boxing gloves? Can you do all that with Rs. 2,000? What is all this? I say, Mr. Chairman, that in my view the Director has no scheme. There is a schemer behind this scheme.

3.45 P.M.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: Who is that?

Mr. Dahanayake: I do not indulge in crystal-gazing, Mr. Chairman, and I am not able to say who the person is, but I say that this entire thing is misconceived, and the manner in which the work has been started shows mishandling and bungling. How can we agree to giving this supply if each centre of work, each district of work, is going to be starved of the bare necessities of a scheme?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: Arising out of the remarks of the hon. Member for Galle, may I draw the attention of the Government to the provision of Rs. 1,000,000 in the Estimates of the current financial

[Mr. Kanagaratnam.]

year under Part IV, Loan Fund Expenditure, "Rural Reconstruction Scheme"? I notice that this sum is not provided for in the Estimates of the next financial year. May I know from the hon. Parliamentary Secretary the reason for that omission?

Mr. P. L. Bauddhasara (Polonnaruwa): In last year's Budget Estimates we passed a vote for 20 trainees to be selected and trained to become village leaders at Rs. 40 each. This year, too, we find that the same vote is asked for. I would like to know from the hon. Parliamentary Secretary whether this allowance is for the same set of trainees or for a new set, because we have never seen the colour of these trainees coming to our constituency. I wish to know whether these trainees are really necessary.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The hon. Member for Bingiriya spoke as if the full amount provided for, namely, Rs. 180,000, was meant for Rural Survey and Development. The hon. Member will find that it is a very small item, and I might tell him that we do not propose to spend much on that. The rest of the amount is for Rural Development Centres. In fact our scheme is to open up model Rural Development Centres in each constituency—

Mr. Dahanayake: Model or muddle?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: In every constituency in the Island we intend to open up a model Centre.

Hon. Members will observe that the financial provision asked for is not inadequate, but it is not possible to open up Centres all at once, and this year we have sought financial provision for the establishment of 34 Centres only.

Mr. Subasinghe: My real point was why was provision sought—

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We have asked for provision for a particular number of Centres, as the whole Island was not going to be covered up at once during the course of one year.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

My good Friend, the hon. Member for Bingiriya, I think wants to know why, when there is a central organization doing a general survey of the economic conditions of Ceylon, we should have any limited survey confined to different areas. Is that the question?

The Chairman: Yes.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

As a matter of fact, I think it would be well if I gave an example of an ordinary survey. We have got a survey of the whole of Ceylon, but that does not mean that surveys in the areas for different purposes cannot be carried out. You may have the general conditions stated, but still, for special purposes, special surveys have got to be done. If the principle that was enunciated by my hon. Friend can be applied, I think we can do away with the Survey Department, because they finished the survey of the whole island many years ago. But when we want something done in a certain area, take for instance irrigation, we take a contour survey of the area, and we get a general picture as well as particulars of the general survey. Thus there is a certain amount of survey that becomes necessary, and that is why you have got a limited amount of money asked for that purpose.

And there is another thing. You will realize that this Department is not working by itself, independently of other departments. You will find in the Estimates that provision has been made for stud bulls, agricultural plots, and even libraries and things of that sort. You will find the same sort of provision in the other departments that are doing this work. What we try to do is this. This Department is there to co-ordinate the activities of other departments, think out the necessities that exist in certain areas, co-ordinate all the work and get other people to do it, and when it becomes necessary to spend a little money on a certain thing, to spend it. But the main purpose of this Department is the co-ordination of activities, and it will carry on the work in that manner. As matters develop, you will find that these things will not perhaps be done by this Department. That is not the only work to be done by this Department for which we have provided

one lakh of rupees. If that is all that we expect of this Department for one lakh of rupees, then we need not have this Department at all. But we want the Department to do very much more work. Yesterday I mentioned that the officers of this Department had got to be some sort of liaison officers between the people and the rest of the departments, and for this purpose there has got to be a certain amount of expenditure and a certain amount of survey. Co-ordination becomes necessary, and sometimes for certain things they may have to spend money themselves.

Mr. Dahanayake: I understand that there will be, in the coming year, about 30 Centres of work. Have those Centres been chosen, what are those Centres, and how will they be chosen?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: They have not been chosen. They will be chosen in the course of the year.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Although the estimate has been made like this—you will notice that we ask for a provision of Rs. 1,000,000—in fact we make a 10 per cent. cut. That is the estimate of what we expect to spend during that time. As far as we are concerned, if it is possible to cover the whole island, it is our intention to do so. But we do not anticipate that, after the Department's activities and after getting the people together, more than 30 or 40 Centres would be established. We hope, however, that our estimate is wrong, that it is an underestimate. If it is possible for the whole Island to be covered, we will certainly come to this House for more money.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary has not answered my question as to why that Rs. 1,000,000 has been omitted in the Estimates.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: We are not primarily a money-spending department. Our job is mainly to get other Departments to do the work they are expected to do. The very essence of our scheme is inter-departmental co-ordination. Hence the disappearance of the one million rupee vote.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I do not agree at all with the hon. Parliamentary Secretary. The Government had carefully considered and made a provision of Rs. 1,000,000 for rural development schemes in the Budget of the current year. The amount has been omitted in the next year's Budget.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: You will notice that the rural development and other work we propose to do in that Department have increased the Votes of the other Departments. You will find that the activities in the other Departments have increased, and naturally, this fact has increased their Votes correspondingly. If it becomes necessary, however, we will increase the Vote for this Department.

Mr. Keuneman: There is one point which I wish to have clarified by the Hon. Prime Minister. The Hon. Prime Minister told us that the Government intend, within this year, to put up 30 or 40 Centres; they have estimated for that. I would also like the Hon. Prime Minister to clarify the principle which Government will follow in giving priority to the different places which are going to have these Centres. Will those constituencies which are represented by the hon. Members who are on the other side get priority, or is there any other system of priority which will be followed?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is quite possible, from the discussions we have heard in this House, that the hon. Members on this side will actually get priority for the simple reason that we have got greater faith in them. It depends on the activities in the area and the response we get. After all, it is quite possible that the people who have got no faith in the Scheme may lag behind and the people in whom we have greater faith will have a better chance. As far as we are concerned, it depends on the demand and the response we get from the areas—

Mr. Dahanayake: And the M.P.!

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We are not concerned with parties or individuals who represent such parties.

[Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake.]

That is why representatives are not allowed to be associated in these affairs, because it is the people's response we want.

Mr. Bauddhasara: May I know about the trainees?

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: They are perhaps under training. I am not sure.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I know more about the matter. Although last year we had made provision for trainees, we have had no opportunity of getting these men trained. We will get them trained this year under the same vote.

Question "That the sum of Rs. 532,812 for Head 58, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 58, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

The Chairman: The Sitting is suspended till 4.30 p.m.

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

Head 66.—Minister of Agriculture and Lands

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Rs. 190,524.

*Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments
Rs. 147,244.*

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake (Minister of Agriculture and Lands): I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,784 in respect of sub-head 1, item '14 Clerks.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 807 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Rent Allowance.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,200 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Extra Clerical Assistance and Overtime.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,560 in respect of sub-head 1, 'Allowances', New Item 'Duty Allowance at Rs. 130 p.m. to Assistant Settlement Officer Officiating as Assistant Secretary.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 5,280 in respect of sub-head 1, New Item 'Office Assistant (Special Grade G.C.S.).'"

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1."

I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the position with regard to people who had been given land during the period of the food production drive. Most of those people who had been given land were landless people, at least some of them.

The Chairman: Would you mind dealing with that under "Land Commissioner?" It really comes under that.

Dr. Perera: All right, Sir.

Mr. Dahanayake: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Minister.'"

The purpose of my Motion, notice of which I have given, is to direct the attention of the Hon. Minister to the lack of planning in regard to the activities of the departments that are in his charge. I dare say the Hon. Minister has had hardly the time to draw up a comprehensive plan. We know—and I say it with regret—that the previous Minister did not have a comprehensive agricultural plan for this country. But we are very hopeful that the new Minister will very soon draw up such a plan. We would like to be assured by the Minister that he has viewed the problem of agriculture in this country as a whole and that he has in mind, if not on paper, a blue print of the possibilities of development in the future. I would ask him to draw up a ten, fifteen—or twenty-year plan to secure for this country self-sufficiency in regard to the essential

foodstuffs and other commodities. In order to have a plan like that, he ought to know—and let him tell us if he knows—what our needs are. Then we will know what our target is. Knowing that, he ought to tell us how, and in what time, he proposes to make this country self-sufficient. Take now the question of food production. We have time and again—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There is a separate item for it. I suggest we take it up when that is reached.

Mr. Dahanayake: I am only making a few general observations; I am not going into details. We have time and again been told that we are sending out millions of rupees of our money on imported food. We want a plan by which the amount of money that we send out for food will gradually diminish from period to period, till we become self-sufficient in regard to foodstuffs; not only in regard to foodstuffs, but in regard to other essential commodities, like textiles. We would like to have an assurance that by a certain period of time there will be in this country a sufficiently large acreage of cotton cultivation to satisfy our textile needs.

The Chairman: I think all that information was given during the Second Reading Debate. That information was given.

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir, he never gave us a plan to make the country self-sufficient within a certain period.

The Chairman: As regards the growing of cotton, he gave the areas.

Mr. Dahanayake: How many acres under cotton? Anybody can get the other details from a geography book.

The Chairman: What he is going to do is not in the geography book.

Mr. Dahanayake: He has not told us in what time he is going to make this country self-sufficient.

The Chairman: All that was given, but the hon. Member was not in his seat that day.

Mr. Dahanayake: But I have read through his speech, and I say there is nothing in the Budget to indicate the steps he is going to take in regard to cotton cultivation.

The Chairman: Under Loan Fund Expenditure he pointed out in detail the work he is going to do.

Mr. Dahanayake: He can make certain generalizations.

The Chairman: No, no; he told us the exact work he is going to do; in which area, how many acres are going to be taken up, and so on. He gave all that.

Mr. Dahanayake: Take the requirements of the country in regard to subsidiary foodstuffs.

The Chairman: Even that he mentioned.

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir. Take the case of tobacco.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: *Parippu?*

Mr. Dahanayake: Take the question of cultivation of peas, cultivation of chillies and onions, of which there is a big dearth in the market.

The Chairman: All that was given. The Hon. Minister mentioned all the subsidiary foodstuffs, practically everything.

Mr. Dahanayake: I know he has mentioned these things, but I want a definite statement that by such and such a date we shall no longer be dependent on other countries for these things.

The Chairman: I will not allow him to repeat again what he has said before.

Mr. Dahanayake: Very well, Sir. What I want to point out is that we have no assurances for the future. We have year after year raised this question, and year after year we have been told that certain things will be done, but year after year the position with regard to food has deteriorated.

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

Take another point. What are his plans to satisfy the land hunger there is in the people of this country?

The Chairman: That also he dealt with.

Mr. Dahanayake: He has said that he has a scheme of acquisition of land for village expansion, but has he indicated to us a plan? Has a survey been made of the land hunger in this country? Does he know in what particular parts of the country there is an acute land hunger amongst the people?

I say this because, in the past acquisition of land for village expansion has been done in a most haphazard manner—haphazard, because there has been no survey. Now, what we want is an assurance from the Minister that acquisition for village expansion will be done on some systematized basis, that the country as a whole from the angle of expansion should be explored. I say this because we hear that such and such an estate has been acquired for such and such an electorate. Why not in the other electorate? Why cannot there be a plan, and for that plan you may have a priority list if you like. But the position today is that Members of Parliament and village societies keep on making applications for the acquisition of estates, but some of those applications are not granted. If there is a scheme this work of village expansion will be well done, will be well considered in relation to the needs of the people; no part of the country will be left out, and there will be a blue print prepared of the amount of land that will be required and in what places year per year. That is what I mean by a comprehensive plan. I know that the Minister has in mind certain schemes, but whether those schemes have been co-ordinated and thought-out from an all-Island angle is another matter altogether.

Let me proceed to another point, which shows the lack of planning. We ask not merely that the acreage under cultivation should be increased, but we ask that the present low yield per acre should also be increased. I ask the Minister to give us the story of what effort he has made to secure bone

manure for this country. Year after year applications are made by villagers, through Members of Parliament to Government—

The Chairman: I am sorry, but that question was also fully answered.

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir.

Take the Galle District. That District received only a small fraction of the needs of bone manure last time, and in the previous years nothing whatever. Can he give the assurance that in the future there will be ample supplies of bone manure given to the cultivators of this country? Again, I ask, what steps are being taken, or are contemplated, to secure a greater yield by a survey, or by analysis of the soil, of the various areas?

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: That was given.

The Chairman: That was also answered.

Mr. Dahanayake: I will give an instance in which I brought to the notice of the Department that in a particular area in my electorate the yield was very low. It was only when I pointed that out that the Irrigation Department took cognizance of that fact. Is it the work of a Member of Parliament to go about in his electorate and to find out the various plots in which the soil is not very productive and bring it to the notice of the Department? Or, is it the work of the Department to send out its men and to carry out a survey which will show where and where special treatment is necessary? That is the way we expect the Minister to proceed. I know the Minister has a very difficult task in hand, and we also feel that he has the enthusiasm to carry out a scheme. But we ask of him the assurance that he will have a comprehensive plan, the goal of which will be to make the country self-sufficient within a given number of years.

4.45 P.M.

The Chairman: Any other remarks on this particular Amendment?

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Within recent years the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands has fixed his entire attention on gigantic agricultural plans. We, of the Opposition, when finance was asked for such schemes, have not opposed the granting of it. But I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to this point, that, while these large schemes are going on, he should not neglect the minor schemes.

The Chairman: The Hon. Minister has answered that question fully.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: He might do so, but in past years the general apathy, the indifference to these minor schemes—

The Chairman: The Hon. Minister has told us what he is going to do.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: May I suggest to the hon. Member that he take these questions up under the Votes of the Irrigation Department. I can then give him a full picture of the Scheme.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: On the question of the acquisition of land to solve the problem of land hunger. I want an assurance—and we of the Opposition collectively want an assurance—that the scheme which the Hon. Minister has in mind is not a tragic repetition of the previous schemes. I have in mind the acquisition of estates like Knavesmire and Udispawa. We have been reminded by the Hon. Minister of Finance that rubber estates are a depreciating asset. If ever in this country there are estates which qualify for that particular term of depreciating assets, they are rubber estates which have been completely sucked up. Every estate that has been sucked up, has been acquired by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands in previous years.

There is a Muslim gentleman who buys up these old estates, slaughters them, and takes everything out of them. And then what happens? The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands acquires them and gives them over to the people. They cannot be run on a co-operative basis and they fail. At that point the Hon. Minister turns round and

says, "These estates are crashing, becoming failures, because of the lack of interest by the people," which is entirely wrong.

I want an assurance that, in future, when estates are acquired for the settling of villagers, estates that can be worked on an economic basis would be acquired.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I would like to bring one or two matters to the notice of the Hon. Minister.

The present agricultural policy of the Hon. Minister has not satisfied the peasantry of this country. Year in and year out the Hon. Minister has spent millions of rupees on different schemes. We, of the Opposition, have supported such schemes. But we regret to find that these different schemes have not brought much benefit to the peasantry of this country. We find, when we go back to the country-side, that the peasant plots or small fields, the vegetable plots, have been given no aid by the Government except in a very few cases. Annually we find along the Kelani Ganga the poor peasants being driven from their holdings.

The Chairman: The hon. Member mentioned that in the course of his speech on the Second Reading and a full reply was given by the Hon. Minister.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: In 1862 the British Government acquired, under the Waste Lands Ordinance, all the land of the peasantry to which no suitable title was available, and sold them to large estate owners, particularly to the foreign capitalists of this country. We still find that there is land in certain areas which had been owned by the ancestors of the peasants of such areas. It is bare land, uncultivated. The present Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has not made any provision to give back some of those lands to the peasants for cultivation.

We found that the slogan of the Government during the last few years was "Grow more food". But when the peasantry started growing more food and when it satisfied the Government at that stage—during the last Imperialist war—there was something done for the peasants. But we find a very sad situation today. We find the poor peasants who cultivated these lands being ejected

[Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena.] under some pretext or other, through some loop-hole provided by the Land Ordinance. The Government says, "This is a reservation for the prevention of soil erosion and things like that". Most of these people are being ejected from their plots. If you visit the country-side you receive hundreds of complaints from the peasants. We have brought this to the notice of the Hon. Minister, but so far no action has been taken.

I would like to refer to paddy cultivation by the peasants. Most of our peasant paddy cultivators do not possess land. A few may have a small block, but most of the land that they cultivate is owned by rich landlords. It is a very small share that the peasants get from paddy cultivation, it is not sufficient for them even to exist for a few months. There is no special legislation yet to ensure a fair share of profit to the cultivators.

We find in places like Mirigama that a peasant who cultivates a plot of paddy land gets one-third—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: No, half.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: In certain areas they get a half share. But they have to supply the manure and the cattle, and the landlord, of course, sits at home and gets his share. Unless the manure and the cattle are supplied, a peasant does not get his half share. That is the attitude that has been adopted.

I think these questions should be gone into by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and some sort of redress given to the peasant.

During the last Budget Debate we suggested certain schemes round about Colombo where a lot of cultivation could have been done and food grown. No action has been taken regarding the suburbs of the City where you find a large number of unemployed. You can solve the unemployment problem to a certain extent if you give these people land in the suburbs to cultivate.

There are a number of peasant colonies and agricultural camps today. For stating their grievances or making complaints in public about their grievances,

they have been victimized. I know that at Maha Iluppalam, when one of the workers stood up at a public meeting and spoke of certain things that were happening in the area, he was given notice on the following day and asked to quit. Again, the other day, at the Bandarawela Farm Station, a person who looks after the Farm Station was given notice to quit because he said that he had to work for about 16 hours for Re. 1.40.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Where is the Bandarawela Farm?

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: It is an agricultural office.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: What station is this?

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: This is under the Department of Agriculture.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The Railway Station is there.

The Hon. Mr. Goonesinha: Police Station.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: This man was a watcher at one of the Farm Stations at Bandarawela.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is no such station.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: It is close to Bandarawela; it is not exactly in the town. It is the Panawella Station.

If you go to the Anuradhapura Agricultural Camp, you will find that it is entirely a Military Camp in which the colonists are working. The discipline is worse than that of Hitler. I happened to visit that place about a month and a half back. There were several complaints.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Puliyankulam.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That is the Agricultural Camp.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: Yes. The discipline that is enforced there is severe. I would ask the Hon. Minister

to go there personally and listen to some of the grievances of these people and to remedy them.

One more point regarding some of these Farm stations. We have seen farm stations springing up all over the country. A short time ago the Department took over some land at Pasyala. If the Department wants to establish a farm, it must buy the land. They have been running a dairy for over 8 years in this place and have leased 40 to 50 acres of land from a certain landlord there. The Government has developed the land and the landlord has stood to benefit. Of course, when such things happen it is natural that there should be losses at the Government Farms. There is not a single farm which has brought any revenue to the Government.

Mr. F. H. Griffith (Appointed Member): In their Report the Rubber Commissioners recommended a method of cheapening cost of planting by poisoning rubber trees. This has been done by the Rubber Research Station, and I know that it has been carried out by a few estates. I understand this is done extensively in Malaya.

What I really want to know is, in the event of carrying out the experiment, what the position would be if it were found that paddy fields in the vicinity had been affected. I would like to know whether the Government would be prepared to pay compensation, or to stand by the planting community which undertook to carry out the recommendation suggested by the Rubber Commissioners, if anything happened to lands in the vicinity.

5.0 P.M.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I would like to inform the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands that the most important matter is the difficulty of finding suitable land for paddy cultivation. As rubber estates are now uneconomic, I would ask the Hon. Minister to acquire all low-lying rubber lands which are suitable for paddy cultivation and give those lands to villagers who are prepared to cultivate them. In the Pasdu Korale of the Kalutara district, lands, which were some time back smiling fields, were turned into rubber estates. These should be taken over by Government and given to cultivators.

With regard to the remarks made by the hon. Appointed Member (Mr. Griffith), I would strongly protest against the destruction of rubber trees by poisoning, because it would mean the destruction of a commodity which is very much in demand as firewood. If these trees are cut and sold, the timber can be used for firewood. If they are poisoned, the timber will be wasted. If, however, poisoning is to be carried out, it will have to be done very carefully, because the labourers who handle the poison might get poisoned in the process. I would, therefore, strongly protest against the destruction of rubber trees by poison.

Mr. Bauddhasara: I would like to suggest to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands the establishment of Agricultural Credit Corporations in purely agricultural villages, especially in the North-Central Province.

The Chairman: Though you call it Agriculture, it is a Credit Corporation which comes under a different head. You can take it up when the vote of that Minister is taken up.

Mr. J. A. Rambukpota (Haputale): I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to the necessity for establishing seed stations for pure line paddy in the Uva area, as there is not a single station there at the moment and cultivators find it difficult to get the necessary paddy for transplanting.

I would also ask the Hon. Minister to take steps to prevent paddy fields being used for the putting up of buildings, and so on. Several paddy fields are now being used for other purposes, and I would ask the Hon. Minister to take action to prevent paddy fields being taken over for other purposes.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva: I would ask the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands whether he has not considered the desirability of appointing Members of Parliament to these District Agricultural Committees.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We are all included.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva: We have not been so informed.

The Chairman: I think we passed a regulation only last week that a Member of Parliament must be a member of the Committee.

Mr. Dahanayake: I have been completely overlooked. I have been left out because I am a Leftist.

The Chairman: The hon. Member will be invited in good time.

Mr. L. Rajapakse (Hambantota): I wish to inform the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands that in my constituency, in Hambantota, there is a colony called Beragama Colony. The colonists who went there about 8 or 10 years ago were given a certain undertaking by the Government.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member might make his remarks under the vote 'Assistance to Colonists'.

Dr. Perera: I want some information on this question of land tenure. Only the other day I read in the newspapers that there was a certain hitch about the whole idea of land tenure. The Hon. Minister informed us some time back that he intended to get new legislation fashioned.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is being done.

Dr. Perera: In that connection might I also draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the position under the Service Tenures Ordinance? This is the *Dewala Rajakariya* question. There has been serious misuse of power by the various *Basnayake Nilames* demanding unreasonable sums of money in lieu of this *rajakariya*. There have been a number of cases in recent times, especially in the Kandy Courts, of people complaining against the unreasonable amounts that have been demanded from them. I would like to know whether this matter could also be included in the whole question.

The Chairman: I think something should be done about the Nindagama tenure. The *Dewala* tenure would come in under section 29 of the Order in Council—not the Nindagama.

Dr. Perera: I am really concerned about the unfair means adopted for the recovery of that money. In certain cases 'pangukarayas' have to pay according to the 'panguwa', but I find Nilames demanding the whole amount.

The Chairman: The law allows that.

Dr. Perera: But that is obviously unfair.

The Chairman: But what can the Minister of Agriculture do about it? You must amend the law. The Supreme Court says that you can demand the whole of the amount due from one *rajakariya*.

Dr. Perera: I would suggest to the Hon. Minister to change it.

The Chairman: That would come under section 29 of the Order in Council, because it deals with religious worship.

Dr. Perera: Could it not be done without infringing on religious susceptibilities? This has been a matter of complaint to me by the Galpata Village in my area. These people are very seriously affected by this. I think something should be done to relieve them.

Major J. W. Oldfield (Appointed Member): May I inquire what the policy of the Hon. Minister is in regard to the Rubber Research Scheme? I understand that at one time there were 5 or 6 officers. It seems to me, at a time like this, when the rubber industry requires all the assistance it could receive. . . .

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The Rubber Research Scheme is not under Government.

Major Oldfield: I was asking what the policy in regard to the future of the Rubber Research Scheme is. I presume it is not the policy of the Government

to take no interest whatsoever in the future of research work in connection with rubber, and that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture will take some interest in trying to preserve the industry as far as possible by scientific assistance.

The Chairman: Does the hon. Member for Galle press his Amendment?

Mr. Dahanayake: No.

Dr. Perera: Would the Hon. Minister also consider the desirability of acquiring these *Nindagama* lands. I think, with all due deference, it is high time there was some policy—I think it is time that the Hon. Minister decided upon some policy with regard to these *Nindagama* lands. Hundreds of acres belonging to these big *nindagankarayas* are today undeveloped, and the villagers are unable to utilize these lands. I think some policy is required in regard to this matter.

Mr. Dahanayake: May I remind you, Sir, that when you were a back-bencher in the last State Council, you moved a Motion which called for the repeal of the existing law in regard to *Nindagama* lands and the substitution therefor of a policy more enlightened to suit modern conditions? I hope the Hon. Minister will pay some attention to this matter.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I have not, for some considerable time, drawn the attention of the Hon. Minister to a certain section of my constituency, namely, Pooneryn.

The Chairman: The hon. Member spoke about Pooneryn during the Debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands are under the impression that Pooneryn is a small place. [Laughter.]

The Chairman: It may be as large as Ceylon, but I cannot allow you to speak about it so many times.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I want to speak about the Vanneri tank. A lot of time was spent during the last 10 years on

the restoration of this tank. In fact, the hon. Member for Jaffna, when he was representing the district, brought the matter to the notice of the authorities concerned, but unfortunately nothing tangible has been done so far, though a small sum has been voted for its restoration. Even that money has not been spent. During the last *Kalapokam* season, the paddy fields at Pooneryn suffered owing to lack of water. There are several tanks in this area, and if they are restored I am certain that Pooneryn will make a large contribution in respect of paddy.

The Chairman: The hon. Member mentioned all this in his 1½ hour speech.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I now come to the water supply in Elephant Pass. [Laughter.] This is not a matter for laughter by the Front Benches. I mean serious business here. As the elected representative of the people of my district, it is my duty to bring these matters to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture. I have brought these matters to his notice times without number, but no tangible action has been taken. There are several tanks in this particular area. They must be restored. Water must be stored for the daily use of the people. Without water, the first necessity of life, nothing can be done. In a place like Elephant Pass, fresh water can only be obtained from a place five miles away, by means of a pipe line.

I wish to say a few words about the failure of the colonization scheme at Kilinochchi.

The Chairman: The hon. Member is repeating the speech he made during the Second Reading of the Budget.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: He mentioned Elephant Pass also.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I mentioned these things during last year's Budget discussion, but I am prepared to take your Ruling.

5.15 P.M.

The next point I wish to mention is that I wrote a letter to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands some time ago, requesting him to make

[Mr. Kumaraswamy.] arrangements for the preservation of the fruits produced in my area. I requested that fruit canning machinery be installed and worked under the supervision of the Director of Agriculture. Oranges and mangoes abound in a certain section of my constituency, and mangoes are so cheap during a certain season of the year that they are thrown away due to lack of marketing facilities. My constituency can supply mangoes to all the Members of this House, Sir, and perhaps after tasting them you may allow me more time to speak on the subject. My constituency is situated in a central area between the Wanni and the garden lands in the constituency of the Member for Kopai, and it is an ideal place for the establishment of a fruit preservation centre.

There are a number of landless people in my area, and I would urge that steps be taken to open up more lands under certain tanks. This is a matter regarding which I wrote to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture about six months ago, and I regret to say that so far I have not received any satisfactory reply.

Since you are not inclined to give me more time, I shall not say anything more.

The Chairman: I do not mind if there is time available.

Mr. L. Rajapaksa: I would ask the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands whether he is aware that about 5,000 acres of crops have failed in the Tissamaharama area due to drought. I have accompanied the Minister to Tissamaharama and shown him the tank there. I understand that he and the Minister of Finance are going this week-end to Kataragama to pay their respects to the Kataragama God. I hope that, when they visit Tissamaharama on their way to Kataragama, they will go into this question and see that something is done to redress the grievances of the peasants of Ruhuna.

I was speaking to the Hon. Prime Minister the other day, and he told me that once the Gal Oya scheme was through, work would be started on the Embilipitiya scheme, and then we shall have sufficient irrigation facilities for my constituency. I would like to ask the

Minister of Agriculture and Lands how long he expects the peasants of Ruhuna to wait without proper irrigation facilities?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I do not think I shall take much time of the House, because most of the questions raised were answered, as was pointed out by you, Sir, during the course of the Second Reading Debate. I am sorry that the hon. Member for Galle was not in the House at the time I spoke on certain particular aspects of planning, and stated to what extent the different departments under this Ministry are planning in the case of land development. I dealt with that question fully, and instead of taking up the time of the House I shall refer the hon. Member to my Second Reading speech.

With regard to the question of bonemeal manure raised by the hon. Member for Galle, I must say, as I stated during the Second Reading Debate, exports from the countries from which we did get bonemeal manure have been prohibited, particularly from India, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we obtained even the small quantity of bonemeal manure that we are getting at the present moment. In spite of these difficulties, although a season needs 12,000 tons of manure, we were able to obtain and distribute 8,000 tons.

Hon. Members are well aware of the fact that some of this manure does not always go to the cultivator. As a matter of fact, although we are buying this manure at Rs. 400 a ton, I have a feeling, and I have been informed, that some of the manure comes back at Rs. 400 a ton and is distributed again. I have, therefore, decided that, from the end of this financial year, bonemeal manure and other manure should be made available at a price particularly through Agricultural Produce and Sales Societies and through Co-operative Sales Societies and such bodies, so that the manure will be available to peasants at a reasonable price. That decision was inevitable, and that will be the procedure followed in the new financial year.

The hon. Member for Dehiowita, who is unfortunately not here at the moment, referred to two estates purchased by Government. Hon. Members will realize that, due to a sudden change

in the price of rubber, it has become uneconomic to work rubber estates. I must also admit that these states were not in the best condition. In the future I do not think any rubber estate will be purchased for the purpose of village expansion and agricultural purposes without obtaining the opinion of an expert in planning as to the agricultural value of that estate. That is the policy decided on as regards that matter, and I think we shall then avoid some of the difficulties we are confronted with now.

There appears to be a certain amount of confusion in the minds of hon. Members as regards food production permits. I explained the position in the course of the Committee Stage of the last Budget. Owing to the emergency, food production permits were issued for the cultivation of land, and some of the lands in respect of which these permits were issued are lands which would normally never have been given out for cultivation. The permits issued were temporary permits, and the allottees were told they were temporary permits. An allottee was prohibited from erecting any permanent buildings on the land. The action taken by Government is only in the cases of those who have been issued permits in respect of lands which cannot be alienated because they are forest or stream reservations. All other temporary food production permits are to be turned into L. D. O. permits. That is the position. Hon. Members must realize that.

I would mention that cases of withdrawal of permits which have been brought to my notice have been those of lands coming under forest or stream reservations. Some hon. Members appreciate that position and have criticized Government for not taking adequate precautions against soil erosion, and so on, which occur as a result of denudation of forests. For instance, a great deal of havoc has been caused in Matara by the issue of these permits and by the clearing of jungles on a vast scale.

In those circumstances, it is impossible for me, or for anybody else who has the ultimate good of this country at heart, to alienate lands permanently and have them cleared permanently. That is our difficulty, and I explained that during the Committee stage of the last Budget

There was one point raised by the hon. Member for Galle as to whether this six-year programme or anything like it was going to make the country self-supporting. We have a long way to go.

Mr. Dahanayake: It is a long, long, trail.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is unfortunately so, and we are trying to get nearer that goal. I am positive that, with the accelerated pace of land development, we shall be able to reach that goal during the six-year period.

As regards the Walawe scheme, I can tell the hon. Members that we are ready to start work on that scheme, but there has to be a time lag of about a year between the starting of the Gal Oya scheme and the Walawe scheme, in order that the machinery initially used at Gal Oya can be diverted for use at Walawe. Therefore, in the completion of the scheme, too, there will be a time lag of a year. So that there is not very long to wait.

As regards the Tissamaharama fields I know the particular case referred to. I would like to tell the House the facts. There was a shortage of water. Hon. Members are aware of the fact that there was an unprecedented drought. Cultivators were informed that water could be made available only for a section of the fields. They were told that we could save that section only if the cultivators would get together, as had been done at other places, and decided to work that section. In some cases not only do the cultivators agree to work only one section, but they even divide the crops among themselves. Under the Irrigation Ordinance the decision is in the hands of the cultivators, and in this instance they said they wanted water issued to all the fields. The Government could not help it. The A. G. A. held two meetings and warned the cultivators, but he had to carry out the decision of the cultivators.

As regards the Ordinance regarding security of tenure, the hon. Member for Hakmana moved a Resolution in this House on that subject, and on that occasion I gave information to the House regarding security of tenure and

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.]
 the amount that is to be charged from a tenant. Legislation in regard to the matter is being drafted at the moment. The principles have been approved and the legislation is in the process of drafting. I do not think the Government can undertake the compensating of paddy owners whose fields have been damaged by the use of certain poisons for the purpose of killing rubber trees. I think that is expecting too much from Government.

Dr. Perera: They have made enough.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: If I remember right, the Rubber Commission in their Report stated that this work of destruction of rubber trees could be done without doing damage to others. That was their opinion. So I do not know whether any damage would ensue in those circumstances.

As regards membership of District Agricultural Committees, hon. Members are aware of the fact that it was only the other day that Regulations were passed in this connexion. Hitherto these bodies were non-statutory bodies, and under the Irrigation Ordinance they have been made statutory bodies. The Regulations determining the conditions under which every Member of Parliament for the District must necessarily be appointed a Member of the Committee, have just been passed and will be brought into effect soon.

With regard to the question of the Appointed Member regarding the Rubber Research Scheme, the hon. Member will realize that the matter is dealt with in the Report of the Rubber Commission, and that there is a Committee at present considering the recommendations of the Commission. I believe they held their final meeting yesterday, and they have decided, I believe, to accept some of the recommendations, one of them being the increase of the cess.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: What about my questions?

The Chairman: They have been fully answered. Will the Minister move his Amendments?

5.30 P.M.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 2,000 in respect of sub-head 2".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,191 in respect of sub-head 5".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Chairman: Does the hon. Minister want to reply to the hon. Member for Chavakachcheri?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: He has brought a number of matters to my notice. As a matter of fact, he has come and seen me. But I cannot, at the moment, say that any particular thing will be done.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Give me the assurance that you will look into the matters I have raised and that will satisfy me.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I will not merely look into the requests made by the hon. Member, but I shall also see what can be done. What can be done will be done.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 204,346 for Head 66, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule," put, and agreed to.

Head 66, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 67.—Land Commissioner

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of Land Commissioner's Department, Rs. 645,464.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 432,445.

Dr. Perera: I move,—

"That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 100 in respect of sub-head 1."

There is only one general observation which I should like to make. I see that the Land Commissioner's Department has been broken up into two. I do not know whether there is such an increase of work in order to justify the division of this department into two. It seems to be rather difficult to split up the two items of work. I think the *work* *Foundation* one of these departments

should come under Head 76, "Department of Land Development." Surely, there will be a certain amount of overlapping between these two departments? One department is the Land Commissioner's Department and the other the Land Development Department.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Land Development Department is needed for the opening up of new land under the scheme that has been tabled in an Appendix to the Hon. Minister of Finance's speech.

Dr. Perera: This is new land?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes, and the food production activities with other functions in the Land Commissioner's Department, have been taken over as part of the activities of the Land Development Scheme.

Dr. Perera: But will it come under the Land Development Department?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes, once the opening has been done, and the colonists have been settled, the work will go back to the Land Commissioner.

The Chairman: There is an Amendment for the increase in the salary of the Welfare Officer.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: by Rs. 600 in respect of sub-head 1, item "Welfare Officer." I move, "That the Vote be increased Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Subasinghe: I should like to know from the Hon. Minister what the functions of the Welfare Officer will be, because I have, on several occasions, brought to the notice of the Hon. Minister the prevailing conditions in some of those land development schemes; that, so far as the labourers are concerned, they are not entirely satisfactory. We find that in some of these places, the people who are appointed Managers or Superintendents are invariably people who have had no experience in the management of labour at all. They do not treat them as human beings. We find that people

have been dismissed for the most trivial offences. Sometimes they have been treated in a most careless manner.

Another thing that I have noticed on my visits to some of those schemes is that no medical provision at all has been made for them in the event of an emergency. For instance, between Hingurakgoda, Minneriya and Polonnaruwa, there is the Giritale scheme. When I went there I made inquiries and found that they did not even have iodine, which is needed for injuries and which is very necessary to stock in distant places like that.

Then, in Elahera, there was an incident that occurred. Several workers were sent away without any notice to them at all. Those men were called up at 7 o'clock in the evening by the Manager in charge and asked to quit the camp by 9 o'clock. And, poor people, they had to walk fifteen miles to catch a bus. They asked for transport in the lorry that was available there, but they were refused any kind of transport. I brought this matter to the notice of the Hon. Minister and I mentioned to him that the dismissal of these men was irregular, but, in spite of all the trouble I took, the Hon. Minister has not taken any step at all to find out particulars. I know the Hon. Minister is rather careful about these matters. He does go into them, but what I want to find out is why, in this particular case, no redress has been given to these people. In my opinion, the dismissal of these people is a great injustice.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to point out to the Hon. Minister that the assistance given to the colonists or peasant allottees is not given in the way it should be given.

The Chairman: That matter would come under Vote 2.

Mr. Dahanayake: I am discussing it under the Head, "Land Commissioner," because it is really part of his work.

The Chairman: You cannot discuss all the votes under the Head "Land Commissioner." Please take it up under the correct vote.

Dr. Perera: Does the Kotukachchiya Farm come under the votes of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture? Will that be discussed under Vote 2?

The Chairman: Vote 2 deals with colonization.

Mr. Dahanayake: May I know whether this Welfare Officer will be doing work right through the Island or will he be stationed in a particular place?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Welfare Officer under the Land Commissioner is particularly meant to look after the welfare of the colonists under the major colonization schemes. He would have to look into their grievances, to make recommendations as to how they should spend their leisure hours, and things of that nature.

As regards the matter raised by the hon. Member for Bingiriya (Mr. Subasinghe)—the conditions of the labourers—he will find that provision for a Welfare Officer is included under the Land Development estimates. He is specially meant for the purposes that the hon. Member has in view, namely, to look after the interests of the labourers themselves by going round and seeing that the very necessary amenities that he spoke of are provided.

With regard to Giritale, there is a dispensary there.

Mr. Subasinghe: When was he appointed?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I said there is a dispensary there.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to point out to the Hon. Minister that the work of the Land Commissioner in regard to colonies is done by the various Assistant Government Agents and not by officers of the Land Commissioner's Department. The position is that there are frequent changes in the personnel of the Government Agencies. The Assistant Government Agent changes from time to time. Some Assistant Government Agents take a great deal of interest in the colonies, whilst others take no interest whatsoever. There are a number of colonies in my electoral area. An

Assistant Government Agent who was there about three years ago used to visit the colonies once or twice a month. Subsequently, the Assistant Government Agent did not visit the colonies at all. I am not blaming the Assistant Government Agents. They have so much administrative work that it is not possible for an Assistant Government Agent to give full attention to the needs of the colonists. I suggest that that work should be taken away from the Assistant Government Agents and placed in the hands of the Hon. Minister and the Land Commissioner's Department.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: If the hon. Member for Galle will look at the Estimates, he will see that, under Personal Emoluments, provision has been made for ten additional Land Officers. Last year the number was nine; this year we have increased the number to nineteen. Their work will be especially in regard to land in the various provincial areas. They will devote their whole time to that work.

The hon. Member for Galle made a point that, with other work in the Kachcheries, the Assistant Government Agents cannot spend sufficient time to look after land work; that is why special officers have been attached to the Kachcheries who will do this work, and that is the reason why I am asking for an increased number of these Land Officers.

Mr. S. A. Silva: Will it not be possible to make these Land Officers responsible to the Revenue Officers?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Land Officers are really responsible men. But it is advisable for the Revenue Officer of an area, too, to look into this matter. One of his main functions is to look after the land work in a particular area.

Mr. W. P. A. Wickremasinghe (Akuressa): Would the supervisors, overseers, laboureres and other people be under the Assistant Government Agent, the Government Agent or under the new Land Officer whom the Hon. Minister has in view?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Land Officer will also be working under the Government Agent.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: With regard to the Welfare Officer, the scale of salary provided for him on page 192 is Rs. 1,440—120—3,600. Now, this scale has been altered to Rs. 3,000—120—180—5,040. In Head 110, "Commissioner of Labour," under the item "Labour Welfare Branch," you will find the salary scale provided for a similar post.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is not similar.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: The original scale of salary provided under the Hon. Minister's vote is Rs. 1,440—120—3,600.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As I said, these officers are required not only to look after the interests of the labourers who are in any land colonization or land development scheme, but also to look after the interests of colonists by providing them with various activities to devote their leisure time to and so on; so that a better type of officer would be necessary.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If I may say so, to have a Welfare Officer over a large number of schemes is, again, a sign of good aspirations, but I think it is but right to tell the Hon. Minister that the essence of welfare work, as already found in factories and the like is that the Welfare Officer is continually available in the given locality. You are looking at the matter from an artificial angle of providing a certain idea and knocking off providing the same idea. Welfare Officers have to be on the spot for dealing with the labourers, and so on, continually adjusting matters and not so much with the major matters. Therefore, I would suggest that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, now that he has given his mind to this matter, will provide an officer for each of the major schemes.

Mr. S. A. Silva: May I point out to the Hon. Minister a certain matter? An hon Appointed Member has brought to

my notice that the Cadres Commission Report contains the methods adopted by Government Agents in regard to land work. The following is a paragraph which appears in the Cadres Commission Report:

"Instructions have to be addressed to the Government Agent and his detached Assistant, but in practice he is seldom able to give much attention to this work, which is entrusted to an officer working under him, with the result that the Government Agent or detached Assistant Government Agent becomes little more than a post office, operating between the Land Commissioner and the officer who is doing the work in accordance with his directions."

5.45 P.M.

If these Land Officers are made responsible direct to the Land Commissioner, then this slow process of work could be avoided. I am referring to the Cadres Commission Report, page 139, paragraph 634.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I wish to point out to the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa that, while appreciating the views submitted by him, I want him to realize that there are colonization officers on the spot in every colony. They are also supposed to do this welfare work. This is an officer who will go round and co-ordinate the work of the various colonies.

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka (Deniyaya): I would like to make one or two observations with regard to Land Officers. These officers are expected to do the same work as Additional Assistant Government Agents. Therefore, I would like to know whether these Land Officers would get the same salary scale as Additional Assistant Government Agents.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There is an Amendment in the salary scale which is set out in the Legend, bringing the salary of Land Officers into line with the salary scale of Assistant Government Agents.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 646,004 for Head 67, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 67, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Colonization, Land Acquisition, Clearing and maintaining Crown Lands, &c., Rs. 5,820,080.

Sub-head 1.—Assistance to Colonists and peasant allottees, Rs. 4,000,000.

Mr. Griffith: I wish to offer a few comments on sub-head 1, Assistance to Colonists and peasant allottees. I am not suggesting that the sum of Rs. 4,000,000 is too much. I say that in deserving cases assistance to colonists is necessary, provided it is properly supervised.

All I really want to point out to the Hon. Minister is that in my District I see a lot of these colonists, and I am informed that to put up a house for these colonists it costs Government about Rs. 6,000, whereas in point of fact it really costs about Rs. 3,000. I do not want to suggest that something is happening. That is what my information amounts to, and I want the Hon. Minister to investigate into the matter and let me know what is really being done.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to point out that the assistance given to the colonists and peasant allottees is very inadequate and niggardly. For instance, I have visited certain colonies in my area, and I found that houses had been put up and that those houses were without doors and windows for a couple of years. In fact they were open houses. Thieves could have entered the houses at night very easily. Houses minus doors and windows! Then I found that, although some assistance had been given for the construction of the houses, there was no lavatory accommodation for the colonists. I also found that the timber that was used for the construction of these houses was of a very poor quality—so poor that within a few months you see that they start decaying. Again I discovered that nobody was paying any attention to the comforts of the people who were living in those houses. Wells were scarce.

The intention of the Government in putting those colonists in a colony was to see, firstly, that they did a job of agricultural work on the land; secondly, to see that they lived in decent surroundings. The second aspect of the question has been completely overlooked. When

I made inquiries I found that the Government was trying to cut down expenses, because the Government felt that they were spending too much on the construction of these houses. This was the point that was mentioned by the hon. Appointed Member. We are not satisfied with that state of affairs.

The Government must have, what I might call, a type plan.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There is.

Mr. Dahanayake:—and the Public Works Department should be able to give, with absolute accuracy, the cost of putting up a building according to that type plan. Then we will know how exactly we are placed and no Assistant Government Agent will say, “You are spending too much on such and such a building.” I understand that the conditions in other colonies in other parts of the country are just the same. So we appeal to the hon. Minister to pay more attention in the coming year than has been paid in the past to the living conditions of these colonists and peasant allottees.

Mr. K. Rajalingam (Nawalapitiya): In my electorate, Nawalapitiya, there are two settlements known as Mapakanda and Dekinda. In one colony the colonists have been living for sixteen years and in the other for five years. I have myself visited those two colonies, and I found that they were in a thoroughly neglected condition. I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether those colonists also will be given assistance.

Mr. L. Rajapaksa: I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the state of affairs prevailing in the Bera-gama colony in the Hambantota District. As you know, this colony was opened up about 12 years ago, and at that time colonists came from various parts of the Hambantota District to settle down in this colony.

Before this colony was opened up it was a jungle infested with elephants. These people, sold all their belongings and came and resided and started work in the colony. They were then promised by the Government that they

would be given, after five years, a house, the title deed for their allotments and various other things.

These colonists have now made representations to me that they have not got their title deeds and that the houses in this colony are not in a good condition. I would ask the Hon. Minister to look into this matter immediately and see that these colonists in the Beragama colony are given redress. I know that the then Minister of Agriculture and Lands, the present Prime Minister, took a great deal of interest in starting this colony, but once this colony was opened up and once the colonists settled down, the promises that were made were not fulfilled. I urge that these colonists should be given their title deeds and that their houses should be put up in a better manner.

I have received representations from these colonists that there is no school in the vicinity of the colony which the children of the colonists could attend. The children in this colony have to walk at least four or five miles to attend school. When I went to this colony I noticed that there was a foundation stone laid for the building of a school, and that was left at that.

An Hon. Member: An election promise.

Mr. L. Rajapaksa: I hope that the Hon. Minister would take a note of this and look into this matter as early as possible.

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to assistance given to the colonists, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that in my area the allottees are given a house by Government. These houses are thatched with cadjan and the allottees are expected to maintain them. These colonists in the Agalawatta area were asked to plant their allotments with coconut and jak trees. My hon. Friend, the Appointed Member (Mr. Griffith) will bear me out when I say that the coconut plants in this colony are about 12 or 13 years old and are not bearing. These allottees have no occupation, and as a result they are unable to thatch their houses because cadjan in that area cost so much as Rs. 25 a hundred. So I would ask the Hon. Minister to instruct his Department to tile these houses.

Investigations have been made and the clay in that area is found to be very suitable for the manufacture of tiles. If a tile factory is started in this colony, that will not only give employment to the colonists, but these colonists will be able to supply tiles to all the Government-built houses.

Mr. S. Thondaman (Nuwara Eliya): I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether it is the policy of Government not to employ colonists as daily-paid workers when there is work to be done in a colony. I understand the policy is to employ outsiders while these colonists are idling and without employment. I happened to visit the Kagama colony where, in section 3, some of the fields of the peasants were not cultivated because there was no water. And as a result these people had no work and the Department refused to give work because the Department entered into an agreement with the Agricultural Corps. All the families in section 3 were without work although they were willing to work. The family I happened to talk to consisted of 14 members, and they undergo hardship because they are without employment. It was also brought to my notice that there was no school and medical facilities for these colonists. I hope this will receive the early attention of the Hon. Minister.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: I would like to speak a few words in connection with middle-class allotments. In Bandarawela and Badulla Districts the available valuable land comes under the middle-class scheme, with the result that whenever Land Kachcheries are held, the peasant who really needs the land does not get anything.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Which area is given to middle-class people?

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: In Bandarawela and Attampitiya. That is an extension of Bandarawela. It is outside the Badulla and Bandarawela towns. In that area there are a large number of peasants who have no land, and they are not given any land. Some of the estates have been given land, whereas peasants who have no land have not been

[Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela.]

given land. I would like the Hon. Minister to go into this matter and have the middle-class scheme scrapped and land allotted to the needy people in that area.

Mr. Wickremasinghe: There are certain details given in the footnote which informs us that the assistance given by the Government is for a certain purpose. It is very good and we find that a lot of help is being given to the peasant allottees. I would suggest to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture that, though this assistance is given, there is very poor supervision in those peasant allotments with regard to the way that money is being spent.

6.0 P.M.

I would ask the Hon. Minister to see that the Assistant Government Agents of all Districts make these payments after they get reports from the various Inspectors. Many complaints have been made that, in cases where peasants have been employed on work connected with the stopping of soil erosion, where certain contours have been worked out, they have to wait for months and months to get their payments passed by the Assistant Government Agents. In the meantime, when the rain comes down and washes away certain improvements that have been made within a month or two, the poor people find it very difficult to prove that they actually did the work and get their money.

I would ask the Hon. Minister to see that supervision of this type of work is done by an Inspector of the Department of Agriculture who should be asked to supply prompt reports in order to make it easy for the poor peasants to draw their money; and also to provide better supervision to see that the money that has been paid out to the peasants is being properly utilized for improving their allotments.

Mr. J. A. Martensz (Appointed Member): Harking back to the question of houses, about which we have heard so much, the hon. Appointed Member, Mr. Griffith, stated that he understood that these colonists' houses, which get dilapidated after a short period of time, are estimated to cost about Rs. 3,000.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
No, no.

Mr. Martensz: That is the figure he quoted, and having regard to that figure, I wish to ask the Hon. Minister whether he will consider something in the nature of the "Viriya" houses, which are stated to cost about Rs. 8,000, in a modified form to suit the needs of colonists. These will cost a good deal less, in addition to which they will be more durable and also light in construction.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene:
I would like to have some information about one or two matters. The first is with regard to the Debt Conciliation Ordinance. I find that no money has been provided in the next year's Estimates for the operation of this Ordinance, and I would like to know whether the Minister intends to stop the operation of the Ordinance, or—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Debt Conciliation comes under a separate Head.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene:
I see it under Vote No. 2.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
No, no.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Last year it was so, but this year it is under a separate Head.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene:
Acquisition of lands for village expansion.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Debt Conciliation comes under Head 77.

The Chairman: Yes, it comes under a separate Head.

Mr. C. Vanniasingham (Kopai): I wish to make a few observations in regard to the Kilinochchi colony. I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that there is no pasture land provided in Kilinochchi, especially for the colonists.

The other complaint that I have to make about the Kilinochchi colonization scheme is that the construction of

houses is proceeding very, very slowly. I have seen some of these houses or cottages that are built. They have only one window for each house. I also understand that the Forest Department is not co-operating with the Assistant Government Agent in providing the necessary timber for the construction of these houses. In addition, this colony has no water supply either for irrigation or drinking purposes. I certainly feel that these colonists ought to be assisted in most of these matters.

Dr. Perera: May I make a few observations before the Hon. Minister replies?

I would like to endorse what the hon. Member for Galle has stated to the effect that the money that has been provided is not enough. We do not grudge this money; in fact we would like it to be more; only, we want to be sure that this money is going into the proper hands.

I have a letter here signed by a number of colonists from Hathamune in Hingurakgoda, complaining about the houses that are being built there. The foundations are so insecure that, after an inspection of the colony by the Land Commissioner, the houses were ordered to be demolished; but the officials have apparently subsequently changed their minds and the people feel that they are not quite safe in these houses. I will give this letter, which is signed by about 18 colonists, to the Hon. Minister with the hope that he will go into the whole question.

I have a few words more to say about this sub-head. It is very important that the Hon. Minister should assure himself that the money that is being set apart is being spent in the correct way, and that it really goes to the benefit of the colonists.

Might I also ask him whether there is any limitation set on the grant of money to peasant allottees who have been given land, not really as colonists, but under the L. D. O. scheme? There have been various complaints—I am particularly thinking of the area with which the Hon. Minister is fairly acquainted, the Iluwana area, where there are small peasant allottees. The position is that they are not getting any help from the Government, although on

more than one occasion they have petitioned the Assistant Government Agent for help. I myself drew the attention of the Assistant Government Agent, but the peasants are not getting any satisfactory help from him.

While talking about my own constituency, Sir,—it is rather unfortunate—I would like to know what the Hon. Minister intends to do in regard to Knavesmire and Udagoda, because the last time I visited these places, the people were functioning more or less like refugees. There is practically no activity there. The people have got the land there, but they are finding it difficult to eke out an existence in both Udagoda and Knavesmire. I would like to know what the Minister proposes to do. I also do not know whether Urumiwela is not in the same position.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That has been blocked and given out.

Dr. Perera: I do not know whether the people there are in a position to make a reasonable living on that land. I think they must be facing difficulties there because the bad rubber in Urumiwela is not very productive.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Those lands are to be turned into village gardens.

Dr. Perera: In all these circumstances, I would like the Hon. Minister to consider this aspect. I think it is not merely a question of just allocating money, but that we must see to it that the money is properly spent.

I would also like to get some information from the Minister with regard to the Kottukachchiya Farm, because the last I heard about it was that it was running at a loss—a big loss. Now that it has been taken over—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It has been blocked out and given to colonists.

Dr. Perera: So the old idea of a co-operative farm or a State farm has been given up?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
Yes.

Dr. Perera: I see.

I would also like to have some information from the Hon. Minister with regard to those families that have been transferred from the Kotmale area. The last time I saw them in Polonnaruwa, it struck me that their plight was a very sad one. They have not been given any land and have been more or less barracked in a big hall or something like that. I would like the Hon. Minister to explain what the present position is, and also how soon he will be in a position to give those people land. As it is, their uncertain plight is causing a certain amount of anxiety even to their kith and kin in Kotmale, as they do not know what is going to be the immediate future of their relatives.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: May I also say a few words regarding the construction of houses in the different colonies? I would like to know whether the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands is getting these houses put up under a system of co-ordination with the Ministry of Works, or gives out the work to outside contractors.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We do not give the work to outside contractors.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I ask this because we have found in the past that some of the houses built down Anuradhapura way get washed away by the rain, as they have been built with what are called මොදා ගල්, "moda gal".

Mr. Dahanayake: I do not know whether they are U.N.P. 'gal'.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: These are unbaked bricks, and a shower of rain is sufficient to pull down the whole house.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to make a few observations on the working of the Land Redemption Ordinance.

The Chairman: That is another sub-head—No. 6.

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir, it is sub-head 4.

There have been a large number of applicants who have asked for the redemption of their lands—

Mr. Thondaman: I would like to speak a few words on the working of the Food Production (Estates) Ordinance.

The Chairman: An hon. Member wants to speak on sub-head 3; so let us finish sub-head 1 which has been dealt with all this while.

Mr. Dahanayake: The Land Redemption Ordinance comes again under sub-head 6.

The Chairman: The hon. Member for Nuwara Eliya wants to speak on sub-head 3.

Before we take up those sub-heads, will the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands please reply on sub-head 1?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Vote under "Assistance to Colonists and peasant allottees" is meant to provide the colonists with assistance in the construction of their houses, sinking of wells, taking soil conservation measures and to supply them with live-stock, implements and planting material free of charge.

Hitherto, Sir, it was customary for the colonists themselves to put up houses, and financial assistance was given to them after they had conformed to a particular type plan in building their houses; but now the policy of the Government is to put up the houses for them. I think this procedure is more satisfactory.

There are two types of houses that are built in the major colonization schemes. Those are type plan houses. If any of the hon. Members would go and see the houses that have recently been put up under the major colonization schemes, they would not feel it necessary to criticize those houses. The first type of house costs Rs. 3,500 including the cost of building the latrine.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: Is the construction work given to contractors?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:

No; the houses are put up by the Land Development Department to which I have already referred. This Department has been removed from the Land Commissioner's Department and is under a separate Head.

Then there are the other houses that are put up on other colonies—for instance, the colonies like those referred to by the hon. Appointed Member, Mr. Griffith, and the hon. Member for Agalawatta. The maximum that these houses have cost is Rs. 1,800, and nothing like the Rs. 6,000 that the hon. Appointed Member spoke about. The figure, of course, varies, but the maximum has been Rs. 1,800.

As regards the point raised by the hon. Member for Nuwara Eliya (Mr. Thondaman), I think the work he referred to was taken on contract by the Agricultural Corps from the Land Development Department; it was later found impossible to cancel the contract with the Agricultural Corps and hand over the work to some of the colonists on the spot—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
The colonists themselves have their own work.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
—because they have work of their own.

Mr. Thondaman: I mentioned that there was no water supply for the paddy land.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
The colonists have high land for cultivation.

As far as the construction work was concerned, it was not possible to cancel the contract with the Agricultural Corps and give the work to the colonists.

As regards the Kotmale colonists, I think hon. Members of this House are well aware of the circumstances that led to the sudden removal of a number of people from Kotmale. Those who have visited the area—and I have had occasion to visit it with the hon. Member for Nuwara Eliya—will realize that the people there are living under very dangerous conditions.

6.15 P.M.

The land is slipping on either side, and the maximum number of people who could be placed on land in Minneriya were rushed to the place. I can assure hon. Members that in the circumstances the best available accommodation has been given, and they are working on this land, which when cleared, they will ultimately occupy themselves.

I do not think there was any other point—

Mr. Rajalingam: The Nawalapitiya settlements—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
I cannot say anything at the moment—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
This is a village expansion scheme. Land has been given out and the people are expected to look after themselves. They are not colonists. A certain amount of money was given for soil conservation work. An acre or two acres are given in certain areas. All the assistance they had to be given has been given.

Mr. Bauddhasara: May I ask on what basis these colonization officers are transferred? I have come across many colonization officers who have been working in a place from five to seven years. In view of the type of work the colonization officer does—

The Chairman: We have passed that item.

Mr. Bauddhasara: I wanted to speak on this item, and you wanted the Minister to answer the other questions first.

The Chairman: Your item comes under Personal emoluments. We have passed that.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
That is under Vote 1. We are now on Vote 2.

Mr. Bauddhasara: Cannot I refer to it under "Colonization"?

The Chairman: Colonization officers come under Vote 1—page 191.

Mr. Bauddhasara: With regard to the settlement of land in Kalagala village, in 1938 the Government promised that lands would be given to those villagers. Eight to ten thousand acres were cleared, but still no lands have been given to those poor villagers. I would appeal to the Minister to give these lands to the villagers immediately.

Sub-head 3.—Working of the Food Production (Estates) Ordinance, Rs. 70,000.

Major Oldfield: I would like to ask the Minister whether he is in a position to give us any information about the Food Production (Estates) Ordinance, whether it is the intention of the Government to continue the operation of this Ordinance, and if so, whether it will continue to be applicable to others as well as to tea and rubber estates.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: An Amendment will be brought before the House very soon, exempting rubber estates.

Mr. Thondaman: I wish to know what is going to be the position of Inspectors and other officials who were employed for working this Food Production (Estates) Ordinance. These men were recruited during a time of emergency, and they have done their best to improve the food position. Are we now going to treat them as "sucked oranges"? They are still on a temporary basis: will they be absorbed into the permanent service?

The Minister told us that Government was considering the question of providing relief to the rubber industry. What is going to be the fate of Inspectors and other officials who are working in that branch? I hope the Minister will do his best to see that they are absorbed into the permanent service.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Payments to these officers are made from the cess levied from the tea and rubber estates. If owners of tea and rubber estates would like these people to be given employment and the cess continued, we have no objection.

Mr. Thondaman: Government must see that they are given other employment.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They are temporary men recruited for a temporary purpose, paid out of a cess imposed on tea and rubber estates. When we give up the cess we have to cease employing these people also.

Major Oldfield: I understand that those holding the posts of Inspectors under this Ordinance are to be given other jobs. What they were paid under this Ordinance was extra remuneration. A man from a school was inspecting certain estates, and was given extra remuneration.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They are part-time officers.

Mr. Thondaman: There are also some full-time officers.

Sub-head 4.—Working of the Land Redemption Ordinance, Rs. 50,000.

Mr. Dahanayake: The Land Redemption Ordinance has operated rather harshly on certain applicants for relief. They have to go through certain formalities, and only after those formalities have been completed is the application entertained for purposes of investigation. In the process of investigation the applicant spends sometimes over Rs. 500. But at the end of it all, the Land Commissioner, or whoever is responsible for dealing with these applications, tells the applicant that he (the Land Commissioner) is not prepared to purchase the land in question because, to use his own words, it is an uneconomic unit—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: An uneconomic proposition.

Mr. Dahanayake: An uneconomic unit.

I have come across a number of such cases, and that is the phrase used by the Land Commissioner,—“an uneconomic unit”.

I have closely inquired into two such cases, and to my mind those propositions did not appear to be uneconomic. It was merely the opinion of someone in

the Department, who had been sent to investigate, that the proposition was uneconomic.

I sent up a case in reference to which I said that there were so many coconut trees, jak trees, and so many other plantations. How that property could have been considered uneconomic passes my comprehension. The applicant who came to me suggested that there had been something not altogether desirable in regard to the decision of the officer that the proposition was uneconomic. The applicant suggested to me that that particular investigating officer had been influenced by the other party.

I am not making that allegation, but I would like the Minister to give us some assurance that, if the proposition is found to be uneconomic, the discovery should be made early in the investigation so as to avoid unnecessary expenditure by the applicant.

Today, a large number of applicants who have been disappointed after their long run, or chase, for their lands are full of discontent, and keep on asking us what is the meaning of an Ordinance which makes them spend Rs. 500 and gives them no return in the end.

In a case like that I made an appeal to the Minister. He was unable to give any help because the statute lays it down that that particular officer is the final authority on the matter. In spite of that provision in the statute, I would request the Minister to go into the question carefully with the authorities concerned, so that unnecessary expenditure and trouble and inconvenience may be eliminated.

Sub-head 6.—Administration of Estates acquired for Village Expansion and under the Land Redemption Ordinance (Token Vote), Rs. 100.

Major Oldfield: Under sub-head 6, can the Minister give us any information as to what he proposes to do with regard to the administration of estates which have been acquired for village expansion? There have been from time to time articles in the Press which expose the most deplorable conditions with regard to some of the estates acquired by Government.

We are well aware that the management of these estates has been in some cases vested in Civil Servants and others who have no knowledge whatever of

estate management. I am not blaming the Civil Servants. It is outside their line and it is unfair to expect them to be in a position to manage estates efficiently.

There have been one or two very bad examples published in the Press, of the mismanagement of estates. What does the Minister propose to do to appoint efficient administrators to run these Government estates?

Mr. Subasinghe: Despite all the good intentions of the Minister, one point that strikes me about the Land Redemption Ordinance is the inordinate delay in dealing with applications for relief. Can the Minister tell us how many applications have been received so far, since the Ordinance came into force and how many have been dealt with or disposed of?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As regards the operation of the Land Redemption Ordinance, the hon. Member for Bingiriya is in a position to obtain those figures very easily!

Five thousand applications have been received, and two thousand of those applications had to be rejected because they did not come within the terms of the Ordinance. Some of the applicants were unaware of the exact nature of cases that could apply for relief, and half the number out of the total applications received did not come within the scope of the Ordinance—

Dr. Perera: How are they to know?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They must have been owners of undivided shares.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: For that and similar reasons.

It is difficult, I admit, for the applicants to know, but there was no way of telling them exactly what type of lands come within the scope of the Ordinance. There are so many sections in the Ordinance, and one cannot explain the terms of every section to the people, nor can one tell everybody concerned which type of lands came under the Ordinance. Every one of those 2,000 applications had to be scrutinized carefully before they were rejected.

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.]

There were appeals by the applicants against the rejection. Lawyers appeared for them, and they were heard.

Apart from that, there were certain defects in the Ordinance which had to be remedied, and an Amending Ordinance came into force only in 1947. Therefore this Ordinance has been working effectively for only one year. Work has now been speeded up, and I am certain that in the near future, when the public comes to know the extent to which procedure has been speeded up, many more applicants will be receiving relief.

As regards the point raised by the hon. Member for Galle, I wish to tell him that, in cases where an application is rejected at a late stage, the expenses incurred by the applicant are refunded —the whole expenditure—

Mr. Dahanayake: Is that so? All the expenditure?

Dr. Perera: At what stage?

Mr. Dahanayake: The cost of obtaining copies of deeds, and so on?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Not the cost of perfecting his title!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The deposits and various other sums are returned.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Expenditure on valuation.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The fees paid to his lawyers, and the cost of copies of title deeds, are not refunded.

The Chairman: The cost of perfecting his own title is not refunded.

Mr. Dahanayake: The applicant is misled all along the way. He spends about Rs. 500; he blames the M.P.; he blames the Minister and everybody else.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: What does the hon. Member suggest as a remedy? At the earliest opportunity the officer administering the *Ordinance*

rejects an application which cannot be entertained. Sometimes the applicant incurs some expenditure in perfecting his title. Does the hon. Member suggest that in every case the Government should refund the expenses? It is very difficult—

Dr. Perera: Is there no means of giving prior information to the applicant about the limitations of the Ordinance?

The Chairman: All applications are made through lawyers, who go through the title.

Dr. Perera: Some of them do not go through lawyers.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardena: The terms are published.

6.30 P.M.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Appointed Member (Major Oldfield) referred to the administration of the estates acquired for village expansion.

The procedure at the present moment is much more satisfactory than it was in the past. Hitherto these estates were administered by the local Kachcheri, with a Superintendent on the spot, who was under the control of the Kachcheri. Now, apart from estates that have been blocked out and given out to peasants, the large estates, which are to be worked on co-operative lines, come under a Visiting Superintendent, who is a recognized planter of the area. This Visiting Superintendent works directly under the Land Commissioner, and the Land Commissioner himself has set up, and is setting up, organizations, modelled on the agency system of the firms in Colombo, to manage this business.

The Chairman: Will the Hon. Minister now move his Amendment?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 1,000,000 in respect of sub-head 7".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is one thing I wish to mention, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the Land Redemption Ordinance. When this

Ordinance was introduced, the price of land was low. Now they have appreciated to such an extent that I am inclined to think it would be in the interests of the people not to redeem these lands for a little while longer. Today the value of land is so high that one would feel reluctant to ask these people to buy those lands at the enhanced rates. Land had been sold at cheap rates; according to the Ordinance, the market value of the day has got to be paid by these people.

Mr. Dahanayake: The market value of today?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Yes.

Dr. Perera: But the trouble is that some time later they may not have the money at all. However, I quite see the point made by the Hon. Minister.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is the trouble now.

Mr. Dahanayake: But let us take the case of the person who is very keen on getting back perhaps what is his ancestral property. Or perhaps he has no land whatever, and he wants his paddy fields back. Is that an uneconomic proposition?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I am only saying that it is not worth it.

Dr. Perera: I have to make an observation on sub-head 6, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: We have now finished sub-head 7.

Dr. Perera: I would like the Hon. Minister to give us some figures about that farm at Nuwara Eliya—

An Hon. Member: Bopatalawa?

Dr. Perera: Not a farm, I am talking of the coconut estate that has been purchased in the Nuwara Eliya district. I am sorry, it is at Maha Oya, in the Kandy district. That is being run at a big loss.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Now there is no loss on any estate.

Dr. Perera: But this is worked on a token vote. My fear is that we do not know how much money has been lost. What does it cost the Government as a result of this loss? A number of these estates are being run at a loss.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is possible that there were losses originally in respect of one or two estates, but the others were run at a profit. But I wish to say that at the present moment all are being run at a profit.

Dr. Perera: Even Maha Oya Estate?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Including that.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 5,020,080 for Head 67, Vote No. 2, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 67, Vote 2, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 68.—Land Settlement Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Land Settlement Department, Rs. 683,799.

Dr. Perera: With regard to the Land Settlement Department, there is still some settlement work going on in my area, Mr. Chairman.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Settlement work in respect of a number of applicants is still going on.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 683,799 for Head 68, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 68, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 69.—Department of Meteorology

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Meteorology, Rs. 539,824.

Dr. Perera: I would like to ask a few questions, Mr. Chairman. I find that the Hon. Minister has increased the number of Observers, and created a new category called "Assistant Observers".

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
In the Observatory?

Dr. Perera: Yes, in the Department of Meteorology.

While the Hon. Minister is at it, could he not give us some information with regard to sub-head 9, " Scholarships and Training Courses "?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The extension of civil aviation activities has made it necessary to extend the scope of the activities of this Department, which will be very important for the supply of data for purposes of civil aviation. Therefore, it was necessary to enlarge the staff.

As regards scholarships and training courses, 2 Technical Assistants have already gone on scholarship for a training in weather-forecasting. Four others will leave in 1949. On their return, the work of weather-forecasting for civil aviation, now being done by the R.A.F. at Negombo, will be taken over by this Department.

Dr. Perera: Are these scholarships awarded by the Public Service Commission or by the Department?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
By the Department.

Dr. Perera: Are they men of the Service or are they going to be recruited from outside?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
I am not in a position to give that information off-hand.

Dr. Perera: The Hon. Minister could ask his Permanent Secretary who is present.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
They are recruited from outside.

Question, " That the sum of Rs. 539,824 for Head 69, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule," put, and agreed to.

Head 69, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 70.—Survey Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Survey Department. Rs. 6,406,847.

Dr. Perera: There is a point, Sir, which I wished to raise yesterday. I wanted to raise this point under the Head, " Minister of Finance ", but you suggested, Mr. Chairman, that I should raise it under " Survey Department ".

I refer to the position of the Surveyors' Association. The financial position of this Association is fairly satisfactory, and I think they have a large sum of money lying to their credit. The only difficulty arose when the Association wanted to invite the Press to their Annual General Meeting. Permission was sought for this purpose, but the suggestion was turned down. It seems to me that this is rather discriminatory treatment because other associations have not been deprived of the privilege of inviting the Press to attend their conferences.

There is one more point with regard to that Association. There has been a complaint that the Head of the Department has not been considerate enough with regard to the officer seconded for the purpose of doing work in that Association. The Hon. Minister is perhaps aware that some officers are seconded for service for such purposes. There has been some difficulty with regard to the secondment of this particular officer. Will the Hon. Minister consider the representations made by the Association, discuss matters with the Association, and come to some reasonable settlement?

Mr. Dahanayake: There are a few hundred Survey labourers, who had served in the Department under various Government Surveyors for very lengthy periods, like 15 to 20 years, who have no work now. When they apply for work they are asked to wait till work is available. I think the Department is in full swing now, and that all these long-standing labourers should be given work. I would like the Hon. Minister to give me that assurance.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
As regards the first point raised by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella, this is the first time that I heard of the matter. I shall inquire into it.

As regards the representations of the Surveyors' Association, some of the representatives saw me personally and discussed many of the matters that they wanted rectified. This particular matter was discussed at length. The difficulty is this. An officer is allowed to be more or less seconded as Secretary of this Association for some specific length of time. But the difficulty was that this particular officer was holding that office over and over again. Consequently he would lose touch with his own work.

Dr. Perera: I hope some adjustment could be made if the Hon. Minister will reconsider the matter.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Galle, most of the Survey labourers are engaged on the spot when the Surveyors go out on survey parties, and their work is consequently of a temporary nature. It is not possible to give such labourers permanent employment.

Mr. Dahanayake: Some of these labourers have served for ten to fifteen years. I have pointed out time and again that after a man has served for fifteen years he cannot surely be called a temporary hand.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Were they in continuous service?

Mr. Dahanayake: Yes.

Dr. Perera: The point is that, originally, they were recruited from time to time from various places. I have noticed that there is more or less a concentration of Survey labourers in the Gampaha area. The hon. Member for Gampaha will bear me out, I think. A large number of Survey labourers are concentrated in that area. These labourers have got some sort of working sheet, which shows that they have been working in these Survey parties fairly regularly.

As a matter of fact, I think the Survey Labourers' Association has placed this matter before the Department and has asked for pay during

recess time. The Hon. Minister is aware that most of the Surveyors do a period of work, say nine months in the field, and for three months thereafter they go on recess. During that period of recess these labourers do not get any pay. While the Surveyors are in camp at Diyatalawa, the poor labourers are left without work. I think the proposal has already been made by the Survey Labourers' Association that the question of payment to them during recess time should be considered. They could be some sort of stand-by labourers. I think the position of these labourers should be regularized. About 3,000 to 4,000 labourers are involved.

The Chairman: Will the Hon. Minister now move the Amendment appearing in his name?

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 2,699,489.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 4,080 in respect of sub-head 1, New item 'Assistant Superintendent of Surveys'."

This amount is to meet the salary of an additional Assistant Superintendent of Surveys. The cadre has been increased from 20 to 21 to relieve congestion and to facilitate the grant of leave to officers.

Question put, and agreed to.

Sub-head 3.—Stationery, Office furniture and Office requisites, Rs. 30,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 10,000 in respect of sub-head 3".

Question put, and agreed to.

Sub-head 8.—Purchase and maintenance of instruments, stores, &c., and maintenance of printing machines, Rs. 250,000.

Dr. Perera: I would like to have some information about this sub-head, because there is an increase of about a lakh of rupees. I do not know whether the Hon. Minister is importing any new printing machines. Does the Survey Department provide all the lithographic printing?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Rs. 90,000 covers the following items:

Repairs and maintenance to old lithographic printing machines.

Repairs and replacements of parts in respect of machines purchased from the surplus Service stores;

Repairs and replacements of Survey instruments, theodolites, and levelling instruments;

Increase in the cost of factory material ordered;

Higher cost of labour;

Furniture for two surveyors' holiday quarters and circuit bungalows.

Dr. Perera: That is the point I was making. The Surveyors are given special comfort during their holidays, but during this period there is no work or pay for the poor labourers.

The Chairman: Is there any other sub-head on which hon. Members wish to make observations?

Sub-head 17.—Advance account for the purchase and re-sale of the Empire Survey Review (token vote), Rs. 10.

Dr. Perera: With regard to sub-head 17, may I know what is the real purpose of asking for this advance token vote?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is for technical publications, copies of which are purchased at 3s. 6d. each and sold to Surveyors. That is why this advance token vote is asked for.

Dr. Perera: Is there no means of recovering the money?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We recover the money from the Surveyors.

Sub-head 19.—Purchase of Departmental vehicles, Rs. 25,500.

Dr. Perera: There is a new item, Mr. Chairman.—“Purchase of Departmental vehicles”—for which a provision of Rs. 25,500 is sought. May I have some information about this item?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is for the purchase of jeeps, for Surveyors who are out in the field.

Dr. Perera: This is like a disease; everybody wants jeeps!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Hon. Members are aware in what remote areas these Surveyors have to work. This amount is for the purchase of jeeps for the Surveyors.

The Hon. Mr. Goonesinha: You can even sleep in a jeep.

Question, “That the sum of Rs. 6,419,519 for Head 70, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule”, put, and agreed to.

Head 70, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 71.—Department of Agriculture

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Agriculture, including cost of Agricultural Education, &c., Rs. 14,970,542.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 1,953,259.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, “That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,680 in respect of sub-head 1, New item ‘Lecturer in Household Management’.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Thondaman: I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that valuable agricultural machinery at Maha Illuppalama Farm and other farms are almost neglected. When I happened to visit Maha Illuppalama Farm, all this valuable machinery was more or less uncared for. I have seen it in open spaces, not properly stored away. It had not even been cleaned up after use. That is the condition in which this machinery is kept at that farm.

6.45 P.M.

I also happened to visit the Hingurakgoda Farm, where I must say things are looked after very well, but the machinery was stored in cadjan sheds—valuable machinery on which we have invested so much money—and that might cause damage. There was also some machinery there which had been imported before the war and not used; it is lying idle there, and I do not know whether it will be used, or whether Government proposes to sell it.

The other matter is about the Director of Agriculture arbitrarily reducing the running expenditure of a State

Farm; whether the State Farm is run at a loss or profit, he does not take into consideration, but just says, "Cut your running expenses by 50 per cent.", and by the time the 50 per cent. cut is imposed, about 40 per cent. of the money has already been spent. As a result, even developed and revenue-producing areas have to be abandoned and a number of labourers discontinued. This has created great hardship to the workers.

Another point is, these State Farm workers are not given a minimum number of working days, and, as a result, they find it very difficult to make a living. I trust this matter will receive the attention of the Ministry.

Major Oldfield: I would like to remind the Hon. Minister once again that the Veterinary Section of the Agricultural Department should constitute a separate Department altogether. I referred to this matter in my speech on the Second Reading, and I think it is generally acknowledged that the Director of Agriculture has his hands full with agricultural matters without having to be bothered with the Veterinary Service. I do submit that a separate Department for the Veterinary Service and for Animal Husbandry would be of advantage to the Island.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I wish to speak on another sub-head—

The Chairman: You can speak on any sub-head.

Dr. Perera: No, on Personal Emoluments.

The Chairman: The hon. Member for Nuwara Eliya (Mr. Thondaman) spoke on Sub-heads 20 and 22.

Dr. Perera: I am speaking on Sub-head 1 at the moment, on a rather important point from my point of view. The Hon. Minister has, I think, an agricultural engineer recruited on agreement for a period of years. I think also that that officer's period of agreement is due to lapse soon. I do not know whether the Hon. Minister intends to re-enter into a fresh agreement. But I would

urge that since we have got, to the best of my knowledge, a Ceylonese, perhaps more qualified than the imported officer, the Minister would do well to consider the matter afresh. My information is that this particular officer whom you have recruited on temporary agreement is not qualified really, and we have a much more qualified man who has had, to the best of my knowledge, about ten or twelve years' experience on particular machinery, on the mechanical side of engineering—a very intelligent, not only intelligent, but a fairly enthusiastic young man.

I have confidence in the Minister that he will look into the matter and see that this young man is not side-tracked and made to feel that he is really not wanted. We have had that unfortunate experience in the Irrigation Department, as you know. A very valuable officer has been completely side-tracked, and we are running the risk of losing his services completely; his services have not been utilized to the full. I hope that will at least be avoided in this particular case.

Mr. Dahanayake: Might I speak on Sub-head 4?

The Chairman: We are on Sub-head 1 still.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: I would like to know whether the Minister is taking steps to fill the vacancy created by the departure of the specialist in animal husbandry on the production side. I hope there is no intention of getting down that Livestock Officer who was sent to Australia—

Mr. Dahanayake: Who went to Australia.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: His only task would be to kill the animals and furnish no accounts.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the urgent necessity of establishing an Agricultural School in the Karachchi area, because, for most of the people in the Jaffna area, Karachchi is the background for agriculture. If they are

[Mr. Kumaraswamy.]

trained there, they would be more useful to the people of that particular area rather than if they are trained at Peradeniya or some other hilly district. The climate of such places is not the same as that of the Northern Province.

Again, for a long time I have been trying to induce the Department of Agriculture to establish an experimental farm at a place called Urumpirai for growing vegetables and fruits, particularly for mangoes. But the usual reply, that the matter is under consideration, or that the matter is receiving attention, is sent, and nothing is done. I say it will be very profitable to the Department of Agriculture and to the peasants in my area if an experimental farm is started at Urumpirai.

With regard to the officers of the Agricultural Department, I must say a few words. They are undergoing great hardship owing to the lack of living space and office space. They are now housed in semi-permanent buildings at Kilinochchi, with the result that the efficiency of the work suffers. I earnestly request the Hon. Minister to build headquarters for the Agricultural Staff at Kilinochchi.

Major Oldfield: Under Sub-head 4 I would like to draw the Minister's attention—

The Chairman: We might finish Sub-head 1.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is finished now.

The Chairman: Yes, Sub-head 4.

Major Oldfield: On page 207, under "Other trials and Demonstrations", reference is made to the Pyrethrum and Cinchona trials. It is only a small vote. Why I raise this matter is because I would like to know what is happening in regard to cinchona cultivation. In the 1947-48 Estimates there was a sum of Rs. 150,000 included in the Loan Scheme, but in the present Estimates that has been deleted, which would suggest that nothing is being done in regard to cinchona cultivation during the current year.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Under the Loan Scheme?

Major Oldfield: Item 63 under the Loan Scheme in the Estimates of 1947-48, a Vote of Rs. 150,000. That does not appear in the 1948-49 Estimates, which would suggest that nothing is being done with regard to cinchona cultivation during the current year. In addition to that, we find that the Quinine Factory has stopped functioning. Are we going on with the cultivation of cinchona whilst we find it impossible to manufacture quinine out of the bark?

Mr. Dahanayake: It is a matter of regret that the Vote under Sub-head 4 for "Maintenance, development and extension of agricultural and animal husbandry stations and experiments", has been reduced from Rs. 7,000,000 to Rs. 6,500,000. We really expected an increase under this Sub-head. It is with the money provided under this Sub-head that the various major and minor agricultural stations and the demonstration stations are maintained. As a result of a 20 per cent. cut in this Vote, as a result of an estimated under-expenditure of 20 per cent., a large number of labourers who were working in these minor stations, I believe, had to be, for temporary periods, discontinued from work. I am glad that as soon as that matter was reported to the Minister, he took immediate steps to grant whatever relief was possible to the labourers. I hope that, as a result of the reduction in this Vote, there will not be a repetition of what took place in the past year in regard to the discontinuance of permanent labour at these stations.

There is another point I wish to make, that is, that we want the work in regard to animal husbandry to be more progressive and to expand far more than it has done in recent years. Anyone who visits these farms will realize that a fair amount of work has been done, but that more remains to be done. For instance, I would refer to the minor station in my area—the Labuduwa Farm—which today supplies the Galle hospital with only one-eighth of its requirements of milk. There is no reason why that particular farm

should not be developed into a first-rate dairy, capable of supplying the milk necessary for all the Government institutions in the town of Galle.

Similarly, there can be progress and expansion in regard to the other farms. I feel, for instance, that the production of butter should be carried out in these various farms and a serious effort made to produce as much butter as the country needs. Today large sums of money are being sent across to Australia for our butter. If Australia can turn out good butter, there is no reason whatever why Ceylon cannot turn out better butter and cheaper butter. I mention this because butter began to be very extensively used during the years of the war, when, as a result of the rice ration, more and more people turned to bread as their staple diet. A serious effort should be made even to have a butter factory in one of these farms like Ambawela or Bopatalawa.

You will see that only Rs. 6,500,000 is set apart for the running of a large number of major stations like the animal husbandry stations at Polonnaruwa, Kilinochchi, and Ridiyagama Cattle Farm, and the minor stations, like Horana, Pasyala, and Labuduwa, I ask whether all this work can be done with this small amount of money, and whether the Department has seriously considered the question of making these stations more useful than they have been in the past.

7.0 P.M.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: Just one or two remarks with regard to the labourers' cottages at the Ambawela and Bopatalawa farms. I understand that they are in a very insanitary state.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Some of the best.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: From their point of view. They say that the houses are very damp.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: First-class.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: The roofs are leaking. There have been complaints made.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: That is at Kataragama.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: I understand that the former expert on animal husbandry had reported that the ratio of animals to grass fields available in a particular district was too high. Is that statement correct?

Mr. Dahanayake: I missed one point under sub-head 4. There is a thing called "Lilium Longiflorum". Is that the name of a pretty lass?

Mr. Thondaman: I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether it is the policy of the Government to sell heifer calves from the State farms to the public. In fact, when I wanted to purchase a heifer calf, I was told that I must apply to the Director of Agriculture. But when I applied to him I was told that I must get permission from the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands. When I applied to him I was told that my application must come through the Director of Agriculture. I had to apply again to the Director of Agriculture. I am now told that the matter is receiving attention. I would like some clarification of the point.

Mr. K. Kumaravelu (Kotagala): I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 4".

I want to inform the Hon. Minister that the cattle population in my constituency has dwindled to half from what it was about 10 years ago. This was due to the fact that the pasture grounds at Bopatalawa were lost to the cattle when the Government took the place over for a farm. Now all the cattle have to be taken to Uva, a distance of nearly 50 miles. I want to know whether the Hon. Minister will consider reserving a portion of the large acreage of the Bopatalawa Farm for private cattle to graze.

Major Oldfield: Could the Hon. Minister tell me where I could find a complete list of the minor and major experimental stations and also the situation of such stations? As far as I know there is nothing of the sort published. And when one sometimes finds a dairy

[Major Oldfield.]
or a farm station which is very interesting, nobody seems to know anything about it.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 100 in respect of sub-head 4".

There is a dairy in my constituency—the Undugoda dairy. Unfortunately the baby has been passed on to me. It is a place with buildings and no animals.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We are waiting for the P. W. D. pump.

Dr. Perera: I am sorry for the officer here. He is a very enthusiastic man and is very anxious to do something. The poor chap is just warming his seat there.

I am very sorry; this is a part of my parish pump. But I would appeal to the Hon. Minister to have a seed store here. In the whole of the Ruwanwella constituency there is no seed store. I would like you to have a place where we could get some pure line paddy for the whole of the area. I raised this matter in the District Agricultural Committee and also with the Assistant Government Agent. He promised to look into it. But nothing has happened so far.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As I said in my speech on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, in future this Department will be called upon to concentrate on certain very necessary activities. One is the question of raising the yield of paddy, which hon. Members have raised time and again on the Floor of the House; the other is the question of animal husbandry. The Department will also concentrate on certain other crops that can be grown in this country, particularly those that I mentioned during the Second Reading stage—cotton, sugar-cane, and so on.

I am mentioning this because the Director has complained that, with the opening of a number of farms all over, administration as well as concentration on these particular activities becomes physically impossible in view of his small staff. So that the opening up of extra farms will have to be very carefully number of—

The hon. Member for Nuwara Eliya raised a question about machinery and particularly about Maha Illuppalama. Certain experiments on the suitability of mechanized cultivation and applicability of machinery are being conducted there. I am sorry to hear that the machinery is not being housed properly. I shall certainly have that matter looked into.

As regards the separation of the Veterinary and Agricultural activities, these two departments were separate in the past. I think it was about six years ago that the activities were amalgamated. As hon. Members will realize that animal husbandry and other agricultural activities go together, it is very difficult to separate the two. The Veterinary Surgeons have asked for an interview, and a deputation from their association is coming to see me to make representations on this matter sometime this month, and I will be considering the question. But I do not know whether a change is advisable, in view of the fact that these departments were amalgamated only six years ago after considering the desirability of doing so. Perhaps the Hon. Prime Minister will be able to say why the amalgamation was effected. It was effected during his time.

As regards the Agricultural Engineer, it is true—and I am glad to say it—that we have a very highly qualified Ceylonese who has very recently returned from abroad. But I would like hon. Members to bear in mind, when they condemn the Mechanical Engineer who was in the Department and who is still there, that he, too, has a great amount of experience and is a very capable Engineer. He was brought out on a 3-year contract and that agreement has been extended. But he is on leave at the present moment.

Dr. Perera: Has the term been extended?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: But I wish to mention this to hon. Members, that the Ceylonese Engineer is acting at the moment and that the extension of the contract of the Mechanical Engineer does not prevent the acting engineer from assuming duties after a period of probation if he is found to be satisfactory. Apart from his academic qualifications he has practical training as well. We can, with three months' notice, terminate the contract of the

Mechanical Engineer, especially if the acting man is found to be satisfactory, and I have no doubt that he will be. He is a highly qualified Engineer. I do not anticipate any difficulty about that matter.

The hon. Member for Galle complained of a reduction. Over and over again hon. Members have been crying out about the losses on farms and various matters, and I have been criticized during the last Committee stage of the Budget. The hon. Member for Galle himself got up and quoted at length from the Report of the Auditor-General and brought that matter to the notice of the House. I may say that an endeavour has been made to cut down expenditure to a minimum while not interfering with the essential activities of the Department and naturally a certain decrease has resulted in that process and I think I ought to be congratulated for that and not criticized.

Mr. Dahanayake: These are your animal husbandry stations.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member criticized these very stations on the last occasion.

As regards the cottages at Bopatalawa, I am surprised at what the hon. Member for Kalutara had to say. I do not think these cottages will ever be found to be unsatisfactory. I would like hon. Members to go and see the cottages for themselves. I think very few labourers anywhere in Ceylon have such cottages.

As regards the Labuduwa Farm and its extension, the hon. Member is wrong. He knows that the matter is being considered. I have written to him that the Agricultural Department is looking into the suggestions made by him.

Mr. Dahanayake: What about butter?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is being made.

Mr. Dahanayake: A small quantity. Can I buy Bopatalawa butter?

Dr. Perera: The criticism is made that the butter produced from the total number of—

The Chairman: A consignment will be sent to the hon. Member every month.

Mr. Dahanayake: Can I get my needs of butter from Bopatalawa?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Yes, we will give you.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The specialist in animal husbandry—Mr. Turret—has gone. He was a very capable officer. I think the very satisfactory state of affairs at Bopatalawa and Ambawela was entirely due to his efforts and his capability, and I am very sorry we lost him. It was due to the fact that the conditions offered by us when revising the contract were not satisfactory to him. We went to the utmost limit we could in increasing his salary. But he did not find that satisfactory, and it is our intention to get out some other person to fill that post. There is also one of the departmental scholars who is undergoing a course of training, and he himself before long will be able to assume duties.

Mr. Dahanayake: Who is Miss Lilium?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: *Lilium Longiflorum* is not a damsel as pointed out by the hon. Member for Galle. If it was a trial of a damsel, I would invite the hon. Member for Galle to partake in that trial. But this is merely a particular type of lily with which trials are being conducted.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The Hon. Minister conveniently forgets my questions.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member has reminded me about the opening of farms or experimental stations in a particular area. At this moment I cannot say that I can open an experimental station in the area mentioned. I will certainly give all consideration to the proposal.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Karachchi.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: As a matter of fact there is an extent of about 9,000 acres reserved for a farm not very far from Kilinochchi of which

[Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake.] 3,000 acres have been opened up. The next step is the increasing of the cattle population. The rest of the land will be opened up.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The Hon. Minister has misunderstood me and not answered my question.

Major Oldfield: The Hon. Minister has not answered my question about cinchona.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There was a station at Masena, and that station had to be closed down. We are merely carrying out trials at Boralande at the present moment.

Dr. Perera: Masena cost a lot of money.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It has been converted into a tea estate.

Mr. Thondaman: My question has not been answered.

7.15 P.M.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I cannot understand the difficulty, because the complaint of the Director has been that he has found it difficult to find buyers. He has an excess of male animals on these farms, but he is finding it difficult to get rid of them. I shall certainly look into the matter.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move,—

“ That the Vote be increased by Rs. 25,000 in respect of sub-head 6.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: There is a magazine called the “ Kanatholi Villakam ” published by the Government. This is a good magazine, but unfortunately it never reaches the cultivator. I would like to know how many thousand copies have been printed and how many have been distributed. These magazines should be distributed free so that the articles contained in them could be made available to poor farmers.

Mr. Dahanayake: I am inclined to think that it would be much better to publish articles and distribute them in the areas where there are particular

types of cultivation. Supposing there is an article on the cultivation of ginger: what is the use of introducing that article in a place where ginger is not cultivated? Why not have a large number of copies with information on different articles available for free distribution? The magazine itself may be sold to subscribers, but I think the articles in Sinhalese and Tamil should be available free.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is what is being done. The magazine is sold to subscribers, but articles are printed separately in leaflets and distributed free in the manner suggested by the hon. Member for Galle. Unfortunately, there is not much of a demand for the Tamil magazine.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: People actually do not know that there is such a magazine. It must be popularized.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Two thousand Tamil copies have been printed but very few have been sold.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to say a few words in regard to sub-head 9 “ Propaganda work and grants-in-aid for agricultural shows ”. My area is an agricultural area, but these shows are not held in my constituency. Usually these shows are held at a carnival or where the Assistant Government Agent or some high personage presides over some gathering or other.

Previous notice must be given by the Department to particular areas that their agricultural vans would be visiting those areas to give agricultural shows. This would enable interested persons in the village to notify the people and induce them to come and see the show.

I personally feel that the sum of Rs. 89,650 is not sufficient for this purpose. It must be doubled if we are to have the full benefit of these shows. These vans should go to every village at least once a year, and there should be a technical staff attached to teach the people the latest methods of cultivation and irrigation.

Dr. Perera: Under sub-head 12, “ Running expenses of Canteens, &c., ” there is a token vote of Rs. 10. Is this coming out of the 2 lakhs of rupees that you provided some time back or is this separate?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We are paying more attention to the labourers.

Dr. Perera: Why do you put it on a token vote basis? The other day we passed a sum of 2 lakhs of rupees for the maintenance of various Government canteens. Why are you including this as a token vote? If you are making a grant, make a grant.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There are savings in the vote which will be sufficient to run them.

Mr. L. Rajapaksa: I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether, out of the Rs. 450,000 asked for in sub-head 14, Rs. 150,000 has been set apart for the construction of a swimming pool at Kundasale for the girls, and whether it is the intention of the Hon. Minister to teach these girls swimming—teach them the latest strokes—or whether it is the intention to teach these girls modern farming.

The Chairman: Swimming is one part of their activities.

Dr. Perera: I wish to ask a question on sub-head 13. The cost of re-construction of the Peradeniya Gardens is Rs. 24,000. Did you get some money back from the Military authorities?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is not yet settled.

Dr. Perera: The point is, are we on the good side or the bad side?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There are debits and credits. I think Peradeniya will be on the credit side.

Dr. Perera: As regards sub-head 14, I think you will remember that during the Second Reading, I said that this was really not a farm school but a finishing school for girls. I think you are going to find some brides for, maybe, the back-benchers of the U.N.P. I think it has gone beyond the conception of a farm. You have got an expert from abroad who can only speak English and who will not obviously be able to train village damsels, if that is what you had in mind. But now we have come to the stage

where we are providing for a farm school for the middle-classes, with very expensive swimming baths and all the necessary amenities to produce accomplished young ladies.

Mr. Dahanayake: May I speak a few words about this Girls' Farm School? When a girl is admitted to the school, is there some understanding or guarantee or promise that she will take to some type of agricultural career after leaving school? If there is no such understanding, may I ask whether the Government is justified in spending such a large sum of money in giving agricultural training to girls because these girls eventually become housewives and nothing more—social birds and nothing more? Why not take some of them and put them on the farms so that they may at least learn the art of milking? Does not the Hon. Minister remember the old nursery rhyme,

“Where are you going to, my pretty maid,

I am going a-milking, Sir, she said.”?

Let them even learn that art. What is it that the girls are learning there?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member for Hambantota asked me whether Rs. 150,000 was to be spent on the construction of a swimming pool. I do not know how much will be spent, but a beautiful swimming pool is being constructed at Kundasale.

He also asked me whether it was my intention to teach them strokes. I must bow to his greater proficiency in that respect and, were he to accept my invitation to help, it would be a finishing school in every sense. From the curriculum that is proposed for girls attending this school, hon. Members will see that it is far from a finishing school. These are the subjects, divided into various groups:—Elementary Science, General Principles of Agriculture, Horticulture (including vegetable culture), plantation crops. Animal husbandry and dairying—including the type the hon. Member for Galle is interested in—Cookery and Food Preservation, Needle-craft, Dressmaking and Designing, Weaving, Mat-making and Upholstery, Hygiene and Home Nursing, Household Management and Laundering, Oriental Music and Dancing.

Dr. Perera: We will have accomplished damsels!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Does the hon. Member say that we should not have accomplished damsels?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We have not only got a principal from abroad; we also hope, very soon, to get people from other countries. We are even trying to get teachers from Japan. There is no doubt about it; it is a finishing school for girls; and I am certain it will be more useful than the University. The girls taught there will become useful wives. I can assure you that.

Six girls have been sent to England for training. When they return they will go through a further training here to learn certain things that they have not learnt in England. After some time they will be sent as principals of schools in other parts of the country, and they will teach in both Sinhalese and Tamil. The present Principal of the Kundasale Farm School is an English lady.

Dr. Perera: What is the minimum qualification at the present moment?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The S. S. C. in Sinhalese or Tamil with English as a subject or S. S. C. in English.

Dr. Perera: Do you charge fees from the students or is it free?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The system adopted is the same as the system for the boys. We pay them so much per day, which is sufficient to cover their expenses, out of which they can save a rupee or two.

Mr. Dahanayake: There must be some understanding about the career she intends to follow before a girl is admitted to the school. Otherwise, these young girls will become the wives of Civil Servants and live in the Cinnamon Gardens bungalows. Before you train a teacher you insist on his giving you a bond that he will teach for a number of years or refund a certain amount of the money that has been spent on his training. Why not apply that same condition to these girls?

The Chairman: In every case it is the surety who has got to pay the money. In this particular case you will find that all the young girls are minors and therefore have no status to enter into a contract.

Mr. Dahanayake: But there must be some sort of understanding.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I believe we have decided on free education for boys and girls. We will provide free agricultural as well as free industrial education. I do not think these boys and girls should be requested to enter into a contract. This is education we are providing to those who would be useful citizens in this country.

7.30 P.M.

Mr. Dahanayake: My fear is that they will not utilize the knowledge they gather at this school.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I do not think all youngsters wish to remain bachelors.

Mr. Subasinghe: About how many students do you propose to have at a time?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: At the moment we have 100 students, and that is because accommodation is just now limited to 100. In time to come we hope to have 300 students in that school, and also to have a number of other schools in the other Provinces.

Mr. Dahanayake: Oh, you have more schools in view.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: We hope to have one in Galle.

The Chairman: In any case, hon. Members of the House will be invited for the opening of the schools.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: What we are doing at present is this. The girls were admitted to the school on the 9th. They will do a little work and carry on like that till about October. In October we intend having the opening ceremony, and I hope all hon. Members will attend that function.

Dr. Perera: The Minister of Agriculture can fill up the deficiency.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I hope by that date the girls will not only be able to use the swimming bath but will also be able to dive and do all sorts of things.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: There was provision, Sir, in the last Budget for acquisition of land for a girls' farm school in Jaffna. Unfortunately, I find that provision dropped in this Budget. I want to know why you are singling out the Jaffna girls for this type of treatment. The Minister of Agriculture and the Member for Galle are both bachelors, and they are evincing a great deal of interest in these farms, but the case of the Jaffna girls goes by default.

The Chairman: A large number of young ladies from Jaffna have entered this school.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is not all. One of the girls that went to England is a very clever Jaffna girl.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The point I make is this. When you do not have a farm school in Jaffna, you are neglecting the daughters of the poor farmers of Jaffna.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We have first of all to train girls before we open schools in other areas.

Sub-head 14.—School of Agriculture, Peradeniya, Girls' Farm School, Kundasale, and Model Kitchen, Rs. 450,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 66,300 in respect of sub-head 14."

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: Why are you increasing the provision?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The provision in respect of the Girls' Farm School at Kundasale is being increased from Rs. 195,000 to Rs. 234,450 for additional laboratory equipment, renovation of buildings, and for an additional school at Walpita similar to the one at Peradeniya.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We are shifting the school at Peradeniya to Walpita.

Sub-head 15.—Purchase and repairs of agricultural machinery including cost of instructions to agricultural staff and students, Rs. 1,500,100.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 100 in respect of sub-head 15". My purpose is to find out whether the agricultural machinery has already been bought.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Indents have been placed.

Dr. Perera: I presume you are getting a number of tractors.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes.

Dr. Perera: Why cannot some of these tractors be utilized in the ex-Servicemen's Colony?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: These are small tractors, the International 6 type.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to know how many tractors there are at work in the various agricultural schemes in Ceylon today, and whether a certain Sub-Committee that was giving advice to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture in regard to tractor cultivation is still functioning? I ask this question because I feel that a full effort has not been made to introduce tractor cultivation into this country. There is such a lot that can be done with a tractor. For instance, apart from paddy cultivation, the Department can introduce garden tractors for the market gardens in this country. What has been done? Nothing has been done. Can you give me figures as to where tractors are working? I have always maintained that this Government is not at all anxious to introduce tractor cultivation in this country, because the peasants will become more and more industrial-minded and will become Leftists much sooner than they become now. Before we can consent to accept this Vote, please give us an account of the tractor cultivation that is being done today.

The Chairman: The question of tractor cultivation was explained at length in the course of the Second Reading Debate.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Might I know from the Hon. Minister whether he has any intention of establishing tractor stations so that tractors will be accessible to small-holders at a reasonable fee?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As I stated earlier, we are carrying on experiments at Maha Illuppalama.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: That is not widespread.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I appreciate the point raised by the hon. Member for Dehiowita, but there is a certain amount of experiment which has to be carried out to find out the most suitable type of tractor.

Mr. Dahanayake: How long have you been experimenting?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Surely, the hon. Member for Galle must know that tractors were not available during the war for experimental purposes. I might tell him that in most of our farms tractors are being used. Once we find a satisfactory type of tractor for paddy cultivation, particularly in the colonization areas, we shall try to get the colonists to use that type of tractor by having tractor stations from which tractors can be hired out.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Who trains drivers?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Irrigation Department.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Is the Minister aware that the foreman in charge of the mechanical section of the Irrigation Department has only six months' experience in tractor training work? He is paid a salary of Rs. 800, while on a much lower salary an abler Ceylonese can be recruited.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I do not know from where he got that information. The people

tractor drivers are Ceylonese and there are a number of them; not only one.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: They are Ceylonese who are ex-Servicemen.

Mr. E. W. Mathew (Second Balangoda): What is the normal life of a tractor?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That depends on the number of working hours.

Sub-head 18.—Expenses connected with Coconut Replanting Scheme, Rs. 177,200.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 100 in respect of sub-head 18".

We would like to have some details about this scheme. We are thoroughly dissatisfied with the position. This will not meet the situation. At the moment there is a serious dearth of first-class seed nuts.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We are opening up the maximum possible. I might state that 360,000 seed nuts have been selected and nurseries are being opened up. Those plants will be adequate to replant 3,000 acres, but that is hardly sufficient, because we have to aim at replanting 15,000 acres a year. But this is only a start.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: What is the replanting material you give?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Coconut plants.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Only coconut plants?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes; this vote deals only with replanting of coconuts.

Sub-head 16.—Issue of planting material, expenses of seed store, &c., Rs. 200,000.

Dr. Perera: If you will permit me, Sir, I want to go back to sub-head 16,

which deals with a very important matter. I have given notice of an Amendment on that sub-head.

The Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Perera: I wish to raise only one point, Sir. The Hon. Minister will appreciate that seed paddy is the one thing we want, still we find that you are providing only Rs. 18,000 for the purpose.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is for the free issue of seed paddy.

Dr. Perera: What can you do with Rs. 18,000? There are a large number of cultivators who want seed paddy. The drought has affected the crops.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We have separate provision under the food production vote. This vote is in respect of the free issue of seed paddy.

Dr. Perera: This vote is for the free issue of seed paddy to villagers whose crops have failed, and I say the vote is not sufficient for the purpose. The whole country is affected.

The Chairman: Crops have not failed in the whole country.

Dr. Perera: There are a large number of people throughout the country whose crops have failed. A number of applications have been made for seed paddy, and they have been turned down.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is this difficulty. Sometimes crops fail and the usual paddy used in that area may be "six-months" paddy. Then if there happens to be rain in the area for some time, they want "five-months" paddy, or "four months" paddy or "three-months" paddy. We are unable to do that as we can issue only a certain quantity. If it is the ordinary paddy, it could be obtained from the cultivator as he carries it over from the previous year. When it comes to short-term paddy, it is only a limited quantity that we can collect. We cannot store the paddy.

7.45 P.M.

Dr. Perera: This question arose after the last flood.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: We have not given plants like the jak, orange and lime plants under this vote.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: People could buy those.

Mr. Dahanayake: I should like to ask a question under sub-head 18. You said that seedlings would be sold. What will be the price at which you will sell them?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It depends on the price at the time.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Seedlings will be sold at seventy-five cents each.

Mr. Dahanayake: Will the seedlings be available to the small-holders?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes, at seventy-five cents each.

Sub-head 19.—Advances to cultivators of cigarette tobacco (token vote), Rs. 10.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 19."

I want to know from the Hon. Minister in what stage of progress tobacco cultivation in Ceylon is, and whether he is contemplating taking any steps to start a cigarette factory in Ceylon to prevent the import of foreign cigarettes into this country. The business should not be managed by foreign capital; it should be under State control.

Mr. Dahanayake: The "Peacock" is a cigarette which is manufactured out of Ceylon tobacco.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No less than 150 acres of cigarette tobacco are being cultivated under the village schemes in various places like Hiriyala Hatpattu in the North-Western

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.] Province, and places like that. It is estimated that the gross income of the cultivator varies from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,200 per acre. There is a brand of cigarettes called the "Three Roses", which is made entirely out of our local tobacco.

Dr. Perera: Have they incurred any losses? I see you are giving them advances up to Rs. 8,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No.

Sub-head 20.—Running Expenses of Eriyagama rubber land (taken vote), Rs. 10.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 20."

What are these running expenses of the Eriyagama rubber land?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is worked at a profit.

Dr. Perera: How much has been made? What is the position?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is run at a profit.

Sub-head 23.—Running Expenses of Government Dairy, Narahenpita (taken vote), Rs. 10.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10 in respect of sub-head 23."

What are the running expenses of the Government Dairy at Narahenpita?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That dairy is run at a profit.

Dr. Perera: I am not quite satisfied at the way in which it is run. I am inclined to believe that more use can be made out of that farm. We do not know how much milk is provided by that farm.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Perhaps we can increase the production there.

Mr. Dahanayake: I understand that it is only a fraction of the needs of the General Hospital that is supplied by the Narahenpita Farm. Just as I suggested

that the Labuduwa Farm should be extended, similarly, the other farms also should be extended so that all the milk required by the General Hospital can be supplied by them.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is a farm at Welisara. I believe there is a proposal by the Municipal Council to have a dairy of its own. I do not think there will be much difficulty in increasing the quantity of milk we receive when all these farms are fully established.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: Will the Government consider the question of establishing a veterinary hospital in Jaffna?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is a Veterinary Surgeon there. In Jaffna there are two Veterinary Surgeons, and that is the only place where there are two of them.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: There is no veterinary hospital.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: If they will supply the medicines, we will provide them with a Veterinary Surgeon to attend to the animals. The only veterinary hospital we have at present is at Peradeniya. And we make use of that hospital for experimental purposes. This hospital is used more for research work.

Dr. Perera: Is that hospital available to any private party?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: No.

Dr. Perera: Can any private party apply for injections?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Yes.

Mr. Vanniasingham: I believe the Hon. Prime Minister stated that there were two veterinary surgeons in Jaffna. As far as I am aware, there is only one of them, and that officer is, more or less, stationed at the Quarantine Station at Kayts.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: If I remember right, there are two of them.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: There is one in Jaffna town.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I think I know more about Jaffna than my hon. Friend the Member for Kopai.

New Sub-head, Expenses in connection with the Rubber Planting Scheme, Rs. 267,650.

New Sub-head, Purchase of a Van, Rs. 8,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move the following Amendments:

“That the Vote be increased by Rs. 267,650 in respect of New Sub-head, ‘Expenses in connection with the Rubber Planting Scheme’.”

“That the Vote be increased by Rs. 8,000 in respect of New sub-head: ‘Purchase of a Van’.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: I should like to ask a question under sub-head 32. I wish to know for what purpose the acquisition of these 10 acres of paddy land at Welimada is required.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is wanted as an experimental station to give the paddy a trial.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: Under sub-head 34 there is an item, “Acquisition of 140 acres of paddy land under Maha Illuppalama Tank”. I wish to know from whom these 140 acres have been acquired. Did any peasants own those 140 acres? Further, I should like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that the peasants in the Maha Illuppalama Tank area are prohibited from going through this land. At the beginning they were allowed to get across, but now they are harassed by the authorities on the spot. They were promised work on this land at the beginning, but now no one from the area is given work. There is constant friction between the local peasants and the occupants of the farm.

Mr. Griffith: I see there is an Amendment by the Hon. Minister to the original Estimates for expenses in connection with the Rubber Planting Scheme. I

want to know for what purposes the expenses in connection with the Rubber Planting Scheme are.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is for the new rubber planting scheme officers. It was not included in the Estimates.

Mr. Griffith: Why?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It was not an oversight. There was a revision of the grant to the officers and in view of that this estimate was brought up.

Question, “That the sum of Rs. 15,265,446 for Head 71, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule”, put, and agreed to.

Head 71, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

It being 8.0 p.m., the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Committee report Progress; to sit again Tomorrow.

EXPORT DUTY ON DESICCATED COCONUT

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: I move,

“That this House resolves, under section 9 of the Customs Ordinance (Chapter 185) as modified by the Proclamation published in *Gazette Extraordinary* No. 9,773 of September 24, 1947, that—

(1) with effect from the date on which this resolution is notified in the *Gazette*, export duty on desiccated coconut shall be levied and paid at the rate of twenty rupees for every unit of one hundred pounds of desiccated coconut or any outstanding part of such unit, in lieu of the export duty leviable and payable on desiccated coconut at the date of this resolution; and

(2) nothing contained in this resolution shall effect any export duty leviable and payable on desiccated coconut under any written law other than the Customs Ordinance”.

This is a Motion to reduce the export duty on desiccated coconut from 30 cents to 20 cents a pound.

Dr. Perera: This is a very controversial matter.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It makes no difference.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: We have made about Rs. 4,000,000 by way of Customs Duty. Now we see that our desiccated coconut cannot compete with the Philippine coconut.

Dr. Perera: There are other problems arising out of that. I have another point of view to place before the House.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I can understand that. The only point is that we have already, by a Customs Protection Ordinance, given notice on the 10th of June.

Dr. Perera: But on the other hand, if we change this position, we will have to go back on that. I have alternate suggestions to make.

The Chairman: Under the Rules, if there is any objection, a Motion cannot be taken up.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: So let the hon. Member oppose it.

Dr. Perera: You cannot take up any Motion which is opposed by us.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The only point I wish to mention is this, that, most likely we may have to have another notice because the month will expire. We will have to have another Customs notice.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: If the Minister agrees, and if a full explanation is given, the hon. Member may agree to it. We can take it up tomorrow.

Dr. Perera: That will raise the whole question of an Allotted Day.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: It can be taken up at the conclusion of Business tomorrow, at 8 o'clock. Probably you might get facts and figures by then, or the Minister of Finance may discuss it with the hon. Member.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: "That this House do now adjourn."—[Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike.]

Adjourned accordingly at 8.01 P.M. until 10 A.M. on Friday, August 6, 1948, pursuant to the Resolution of the House of July 30, 1948.

