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Friday

6th August, 1948

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OFFICIAL REPORT

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1948

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Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industries, Industrial Research and Fisheries—Mr. H. DE Z. SIRIWARDANA, M.P.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, 6th August, 1948

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Extra Clerical Assistance for Anuradhapura Relief Works Payment

4. **Poholiyadde Dissawa:** Will the Minister of Labour and Social Services be pleased to state: (a) Whether he is aware of the need for extra clerical assistance and supervisory staff at the Anuradhapura Kachcheri, to enable the Government Agent to make payments to those engaged on relief works more regularly and their better supervision? (b) Whether such assistance can be given immediately?

The Hon. Mr. T. B. Jayah (Minister of Labour and Social Services): (a) Yes.

(b) As permanent clerks are not available, the Government Agent has been authorized to employ as many temporary clerks as he requires. All Ministers who have Departmental officers in Anuradhapura have been requested to instruct such officers to render every assistance to the Government Agent in the making of payments.

Poholiyadde Dissawa: May I bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that, although instructions have been issued to the Government Agent to employ temporary clerks, he has not employed a sufficient number, with the result that payments for relief works are delayed for a number of months? I would like the Hon. Minister to inquire from the Government Agent as to how many clerks he has employed to make payments to those engaged on relief works.

The Hon. Mr. Jayah: I shall do that.

Questions Nos. 5 and 6

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I have the authority of the hon. Member for Trincomalee (Mr. Sivapalan) to ask Questions Nos. 5 and 6.

Mr. Speaker: These Questions will stand over as the Hon. Minister of Finance is not in the House just now.

Valuation of Land acquired for Extension of Mawanella Hospital

8. **Mr. Ratwatte:** Will the Minister of Agriculture and Lands be pleased to state: (a) What was the Divisional Revenue Officer's valuation of the land that was to be acquired by Government for the extension of the Mawanella Hospital? (b) Whether it is a fact that the Government Valuator also assessed this land? (c) If so, at whose request? (d) What was his valuation? (e) Whose valuation was accepted and within how many days the money was paid to the owner of the land? (f) On whose authority the money was paid?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake (Minister of Agriculture and Lands): This Question appears for the first time on the Order Paper this morning. I can only give Answers to three of the Questions—(b), (c) and (d). The Answers to (a), (e) and (f) will have to be obtained from the Kegalla Kachcheri.

Mr. Speaker: You might answer what you can and leave the rest.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: (b) Yes, (c) Assistant Government Agent, Kegalla, (d) Rs. 35,740.

Transfer of Police Department to Ministry of Defence

9. **Mr. P. H. W. de Silva** (on behalf of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva): Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state: (a) Whether the transfer of the Police Department from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs indicates that it is to be completely militarized; if not what reasons have contributed to the change? (b) Whether the Police having been brought under the Defence Ministry, the personnel will receive the pay and rations of service personnel?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake (Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and External Affairs): (a) There is no intention to militarize the Police; they will use only such arms as are necessary for Police duties. I have taken over charge of the Police Department in the exercise of my discretion under section 46 (4) of the Constitution Order in Council. This has no military significance.

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

(b) The Police Department will continue as a Civil Government Establishment, and the military regulations as regards pay and rations will not apply to it.

Assets of Police Sergeants' and Constables' Association

10. **Mr. P. H. W. de Silva** (on behalf of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva): Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state: (a) Whether the assets of the Police Sergeants' and Constables' Association were distributed among the members after it was banned? (b) If not, in whose possession are these assets?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: When Colonel Bacon found it necessary to recommend to Government the immediate suspension of the Sergeants' and Constables' Association, a sum of Rs. 9,740.83 was lying in the Pettah Branch of the Bank of Ceylon to the credit of the Association. Attempts were made by the Inspector-General to arrange for the satisfactory allocation of these funds through the officials of the Association. It was found impossible to obtain agreement among these officials, none of whom was prepared to take the responsibility for distributing the assets. Accordingly, the Bank was instructed to hold the assets pending further instruction.

It is my intention, as soon as conveniently possible, to place this matter before the Welfare Committee for discussion, so that some satisfactory arrangement may be reached with regard to the disposal of these assets.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: May I be permitted to ask a supplementary Question?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: May I know what has happened to the assets?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They are yet in the Bank.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: Lying to the credit of the Sergeants' and Constables' Association?

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

Police Welfare Committees

11. **Mr. P. H. W. de Silva** (on behalf of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva): Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state: (a) Whether the proposed scheme of Police Welfare Committees means that the Sergeants and Constables are not to be permitted to have any form of association of their own? (b) Whether the recommendations of the Government's Adviser, Mr. Day, indicate that such associations should be the basis of any voluntary scheme of Whitley Councils? (c) In so far as the new order of the Inspector-General of Police under section 56 of the Police Ordinance lays it down that Police Welfare Committees shall be composed of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors in addition to Sergeants and Constables, and that meetings may be held only under the auspices and with the permission of the Officer-in-Charge of the District and Division, is it intended that the Sergeants and Constables are not to have the right of holding any form of meeting except with the permission and under the supervision of the Superior Officers? (d) In the event of a disagreement in the Central Welfare Committee, can there be an appeal from the rule of the Inspector-General of Police? (e) Will the Police Inspectors' Association and the Police Officers' Association be allowed to function under the new dispensation, or will they, too, be wound up?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: (a) The Welfare Committees and the Central Council will take the place of the Sergeants' and Constables' Association.

(b) Please see page 18, paragraphs 55 to 57 of Mr. Day's Report—Sessional Paper XX of 1947. Mr. Day recommended a modified form of Whitley Councils for the Police Force as a disciplined body. The Welfare Committees now recommended will be worked on these lines.

(c) Welfare Committees will comprise representatives of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors as well as Sergeants and Constables. There is no question of supervision or control of meetings of the Committees by superior officers.

(d) Mr. Day's recommendation at paragraph 56, page 18 of Sessional Paper XX of 1947, explains that there should

be no compulsory arbitration where the Police Service is concerned. If there is disagreement in the Central Welfare Council, the Inspector-General of Police may refer the question in the usual manner for a ruling by Government.

(e) The Police Officers' Association was voluntarily suspended by the members in order to give the proposed Welfare constitution a fair trial. The Inspectors' Association continues to function for the present.

Wages Board for the Laundry Trade

12. **Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela:** Will the Minister of Labour and Social Services be pleased to state: (a) Whether he is aware that a very large number of workers are employed in the laundry trade? (b) Whether he is aware that there exists no legislation to safeguard their interests with respect to wages, working hours and conditions of work? (c) Whether he is aware that the wages in this trade are extremely low and far below the minimum wages prescribed for other trades, and that the working hours are far in excess of the eight hours per day? (d) Whether he is aware that no inspections under the Shops Act are at present undertaken by the Labour Department in respect of laundries? (e) Will he take steps to establish a Wages Board for this trade?

The Hon. Mr. Jayah: (a) Yes.
(b) Yes.
(c) No.
(d) Yes.

(e) If the hon. Member will be so good as to communicate to me which particular branches of the laundry trade he has in mind, I will gladly examine the possibility of bringing it under the operation of the Wages Board Ordinance.

Success of Clerks in the Admiralty Clerical Service in the General Clerical Examination

5. **Mr. Kumaraswamy** (on behalf of Mr. S. Sivapalan): Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state: (a) How many clerks from the Admiralty Clerical Service were successful in the General Clerical Examination of October, 1947? (b) What was their period of service in the Admiralty?

The Hon. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (Minister of Finance): (a) and (b) The information asked for is being collected.

Incremental Credit to Admiralty Clerks

6. **Mr. Kumaraswamy** (on behalf of Mr. S. Sivapalan): Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state: (a) Whether the Clerks from the Admiralty Clerical Service who have been absorbed into the General Clerical Service have been treated on the same footing as *ex-Servicemen* and temporary clerks with regard to incremental credit? (b) If not, for what reasons?

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: (a) No. (b) The same consideration does not apply.

Treatment of Leprosy: "Promin Diasane" and "Promizola"

7. **Mr. Bauddhasara:** Will the Minister of Health and Local Government be pleased to state whether he would make arrangements to try the new treatment for Leprosy, discovered in the United States of America, known as "Promin Diasane" and "Promizola", at the Leprosy Hospital, Mantivu, Batticaloa, as the experiments at Hendala Hospital have so far been successful?

The Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Minister of Health and Local Government, and Leader of the House): Experiments tried at Hendala Hospital have not been very successful. A further trial of these drugs will be considered.

Acting Appointments of Village Headmen

13. **Dr. Perera** (on behalf of Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne): Will the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs and Rural Development be pleased to state whether he will consider taking steps to follow a similar procedure in appointing acting Village Headmen as that adopted in making permanent appointments?

Gate Mudaliyar M. S. Kariapper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs and Rural Development): It will not be practicable to follow the same procedure with regard

[Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper.]
to acting appointments for limited periods which have to be made at very short notice.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Speaker: Would it not be better if you start from Monday 9th and go on till Thursday 12th, because it may be that we will finish the Committee stage by Thursday?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: In any case we will have to sit on the 13th August; there may be some Government business to be disposed of.

Mr. Speaker: But why make it an allotted day?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Then shall I now move that we sit from Monday to Thursday; and if it is not possible to finish the Committee Stage by Thursday and if Friday is also necessary, I shall move on Thursday that Friday also be an allotted day?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move,

“That at the conclusion of Business this day, this House do adjourn till Monday 9th August, and that Monday 9th, Tuesday 10th, Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th be allotted days for the consideration of the Appropriation Bill.”

I request the permission of the House to omit from the Motion as appearing on the Order Paper the words, “Friday 13th”. If necessary, I shall move on Thursday that Friday be an allotted day.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I was wondering whether you must have so many allotted days.

Mr. Speaker: Unless there are allotted days we cannot go through the Business.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Under the Standing Orders there must be allotted days. In the belief that we could finish the Committee stage by Thursday I am not moving that Friday be an allotted day. If we do not finish by Thursday, we will move that Friday be an allotted day.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Suppose we finish the Committee Stage earlier, is it necessary for us to have so many allotted days?

Mr. Speaker: It is not necessary.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: We can finish today, for instance.

Question put, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL, 1948-49

Considered in Committee [*Progress, 5th August.*]

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

Head 72.—Forest Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Forest Department, &c., Rs. 1,870,984.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 736,158.

Mr. W. Dahanayake (Galle): May I make a few observations? I want to point out to the Hon. Minister that it is very necessary that the policy of obtaining all requirements of timber and firewood needed by Government departments through the Forest Department should be implemented. At present, Sir, that is not done. Take, for instance, the construction of houses for the colonists. The timber that is used is so bad that the Government has to spend or the colonists have to spend, year after year, large sums of money on renewals. Take again the construction of houses for the workers. I have gone and seen the houses that have been put up under the Ministry of Transport at Ratmalana, and, generally speaking, one can say that the houses are good, but the timber that has been used is both inferior and unsuitable.

The Chairman: Are you speaking on Vote 2?

Mr. Dahanayake: I am speaking on the Personal Emoluments Vote of the Conservator.

The Chairman: There is a special Vote, “Supply of timber to Government Departments.”

Mr. Dahanayake: I am speaking under the sub-head, Personal Emoluments.

Now, the position today is that the Forest Department is not in a position to supply the needs of firewood and timber of the various Government departments. I do not believe that even one-tenth of the requirements come through the Forest Department. So, Sir, what we need is that the implementation of that policy should be accelerated, so that as quickly as possible Government will be able to get its timber supply through its own channels. Today the Government depends on various contractors.

10.15 A.M.

There is one other handicap which has to be overcome. Much of this timber that is felled has to be hauled across by elephants, and the cost of the timber increases as a result of the use of elephants. What is necessary is that there should be roads connecting up the main P. W. D. roads with the spots where the fellings take place. Therefore, I feel that the work of the Forest Department should be closely co-ordinated with the work of the P. W. D. in the construction of roads. Otherwise, we may find that in the next ten years it will not be possible for the Forest Department to supply all the timber requirements of the various Government departments.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This comes under sub-head 9.

The Chairman: Sub-head 9 is "Roads and Buildings".

Mr. Dahanayake: Sub-head 9 provides a sum of Rs. 150,000.

The Chairman: There is another increase of Rs. 50,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I am moving an Amendment.

The Chairman: That Amendment is in respect of the increase.

Mr. Dahanayake: Let us have the assurance of the Hon. Minister that he will proceed to implement the policy of getting all Government requirements of timber and firewood through the Forest Department as quickly as possible.

The second point which I want to deal with is the question of the large number of labourers—casual labourers—who are

employed in the Forest Department. I believe there are over 5,000 of them employed at casual rates, and some effort should be made to give these labourers some other work if it is not possible to engage them in the Forest Department during the off season. I know of such labourers who have served the Department for over ten years.

A similar situation has arisen in regard to the work in the salterns, and I believe the Hon. Minister of Health has a scheme in hand whereby he proposes to give those saltern labourers work in other branches of the Government during the off season.

I believe that a similar scheme should be drawn up for the casual labourers of the Forest Department.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela (Second Badulla): I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that I have found the Forest Department has been recently prosecuting a number of villagers in the Badulla Magistrate's Court for felling and removing a little timber from the forests. The usual charge is "theft of firewood to the value of about Re. 1.50." I do not think that it is fair to bring villagers to Court merely because they had removed a handful of firewood for their personal use. I think that practice should be put an end to.

Further, while the Department prosecutes the villagers, there are a number of cases where satinwood has been removed from the forests by big landowners without having any action taken against them by the Department. I know that this has happened in the Moneragala area. I feel that the Forest Department has been rather lax in preventing the theft of Crown timber by the big landowners.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena (Kotte): I have to mention one or two matters in this connection. In village areas the peasants generally build their small huts with what is called බට 'bata' cut from the Crown forests. But even after permits have been issued to them, I have seen many cases where the villagers have been fined, just because they happened to remove ten or fifteen sticks more than the specified number. I think that this regulation should be entirely removed because 'bata' is not a special timber.

The Chairman: It is a reed.

Mr. Dahanayake: Is it a reed shaken by the wind?

The Chairman: It is too strong for that.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: As this reed is the material used by the peasants for building their huts and making various other things like tats, a small industry has sprung up round about the areas in which you find this particular reed. Therefore, I would suggest that the Government should give an entirely free hand to the villagers for removing 'bata' from Crown forests.

Mr. I. M. R. A. Iriyagolla (Dandagamuwa): I find, Sir, that the Forest Department has established timber depots in places where there are reserved Crown forests which saw the timber in unwanted sizes—not according to dimensions suitable for ordinary work—with the result that the depots are stocked with timber that cannot be sold; whereas there are people who, with the connivance of some of the Forest officers, exploit the Crown forests to their profit.

I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to this matter and request him to see that timber stocked in Government depots is sawn to useful dimensions.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera (Matugama): I would like to know from the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands what the position is regarding the processing of timber. Have any steps been taken in this direction?

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka (Deniyaya): Can I refer to one point under sub-head 8—"Extraction of firewood"?

The Chairman: Yes, you can deal with it.

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka: The extraction of firewood from reserved forests is now done exclusively by the Forest Department. No permits whatever are given to any persons who apply for permits to cut firewood on their own, with the result that rubber and tea factories

have to buy their firewood from the fuel pool of the Forest Department at prices now ranging between Rs. 4.25 and Rs. 4.50 per cubic yard. When the estates were getting firewood on their own, however, the cost used to be between Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 3.50. Because of this new practice in regard to the question of fuel, the cost of production of both rubber and tea has considerably increased. Therefore, I would suggest that some means be devised to bring down the present prices. I think the present rate of payment to contractors who supply the firewood to Government is Rs. 2.50 per cubic yard, and the Department sells it at a profit of about Rs. 2. Unless something is done very early to reduce this price, the tea and rubber factories will find it very difficult to bear the cost of production.

Mr. Dahanayake: The hon. Member for Second Badulla (Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela) made a very important point in regard to prosecutions. We want particularly to invite the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that certain of these prosecutions are frivolous. We want to point out to him that there is provision for dealing with petty offences departmentally. Since there is such provision, the Department should be considerate enough at least when a Member of Parliament points out such cases, to deal with them departmentally, and not drag to Court poor villagers 150 miles from their homes.

In 1946 there were six people who were sent to jail for offences connected with the felling of timber. I feel that not one of them should have been sent to jail. They were all poor people. If one of them happened to be a wealthy man—a wealthy contractor—he would not have gone to jail. I think the Minister should instruct the Head of his Department to be lenient and considerate towards poor villagers who commit such offences.

The Chairman: I wonder whether Rural Courts have jurisdiction over these matters?

Dr. N. M. Perera (Ruwanwella): No, Sir, these cases go to Magistrates' Courts.

The Chairman: I know that they go to Magistrates' Courts, but why should they not go to Rural Courts?

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya (Baddegama): I understand that the present policy of this Department is to stop all export of timber from Ceylon.

The Chairman: Only Crown timber.

Mr. Amarasuriya: Private timber as well.

The Chairman: No, they have not stopped the export of private timber. They have stopped the export only of Crown timber.

Mr. Amarasuriya: I was given to understand that even private timber exports were stopped. I made inquiries, and that is the information I received.

The Chairman: That is not correct.

Mr. S. A. Silva: (Agalawatta): With regard to village forests, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister—although I realize that I should not make a general statement—that, especially in my area, the forests are being exploited by the village headmen and vidane arachchies. When people bring this to the notice of the Government Agent or other authorities by petition, the headmen and the vidane arachchies come to know that a certain person has petitioned against them, and they immediately report to the Government Agent stating that that particular person has felled a tree, and enter a prosecution against him.

I think that it will be very appropriate if the village forests are also taken in charge by the Forest Department and not by the Government Agents who act through the village headmen. If Forest officers take over these forests, village headmen will not be able to exploit the forests to their own advantage.

Mr. N. H. Keerthiratne (Kegalla): I have noticed that in reforestation areas they freely cut down certain trees to enable others to grow up in turn, and the felled trees are sold for a nominal sum of about ten or twenty cents per tree. What happens is that certain people pay something to the officer who marks the trees for felling, whereupon he marks the best trees, and those people saw and remove good timber.

The second point I want to mention is that the Government is employing people to saw timber at a certain rate per cubic foot, but on the sly half the timber is sold by them to private individuals. I, therefore, suggest that somebody should be appointed by Government to supervise this work.

Mr. J. A. Rambukpota (Haputale): I wish to suggest that forest areas at an elevation of between 4,000 and 5,000 feet and over should be re-planted with what are called blue gum and red gum trees, as it is understood that reforestation with this type of tree helps in bringing about rainfall at that level. This, however, is a scientific question to which I think the Hon. Minister should pay some attention, because, if the present process of denudation of our forests is allowed to continue, it will certainly adversely affect rainfall at higher elevations.

Another matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister is the absence of any Government timber depots at Haputale, which compels us to depend on private individuals for our requirements. I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister to open timber depots in Haputale to enable the people to buy timber at cost price for building their houses.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera (Dehiowita): I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands to something which happened in my electorate and also in the Ruwanwella electorate.

After the recent announcement of Independence by the Prime Minister, the people started celebrating it by opening up certain Crown forests for food production. Now, this move appears to have proceeded from a mistaken notion. The villagers thought that all this time it was the British Government that was preventing them from opening up what was called Crown jungle.—[Laughter]—I am not saying this in a spirit of levity. This is actually what happened. When the people set about celebrating Independence in that particular way, they were prosecuted.

10.30 A.M.

I can certainly appreciate the reasons why the Government should not permit the clearing of jungle adjacent to

[Mr. A. Reginald Perera.]
rivers, &c., to prevent soil erosion. But I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands to certain areas, far away from the river itself, the cultivation of which, the Minister will admit, cannot cause erosion or permanent damage to the area. After survey, certain portions of that land can be given out to poor villagers for food production.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva (First Ambalangoda-Balapitiya): I want to know from the Minister to what extent, if any, the Department issues permits for free timber to needy villagers for putting up their own buildings, and whether these permits could not be issued, after investigation by, and on the recommendation of, the D. R. O. of the area.

Mr. D. S. Goonesekera (Udugama): The demarcation of forest areas was carried out about a hundred years ago during the time of the British. As the present Government has changed the old policy, we have to re-demarcate all the forest reserves and give the *deniya* lands to the villagers for food production purposes, to be asweddumized as paddy lands.

I would also suggest that the Government should establish saw mills in these forest reserves, in places like Hini-duma, with its thousands of acres of forests. There is a road leading from Hiniduma to Deniyaya, or rather a foot-path, which should be converted into a public road, and along this road timber can be transported to the Gintota plywood factory.

The hon. Member for Dehiowita referred to the fact that, after the Independence Day Celebrations, some villagers opened up land in forest reserves for food production purposes. In my electorate, too, that has happened. I hope the Minister will look into the matter and see whether those plots of lands cannot be given over to the villagers concerned.

The present policy relating to forest reserves should be changed, now that we are no longer under the British—

An Hon. Member: Are we not?

Mr. Goonesekera: At present thousands of acres of forests in this country are owned by European Companies. In one instance, about 10,000 acres have been sold to a European Company, and on this land, the reservations for streams and *dolas* are not so treated, but even *deniya* lands have been planted in rubber.

I cannot understand why the same system cannot now be adopted in the Crown forest reservations. In these reservations too, there are *deniya* lands. In the case of the 10,000 acres given to a European firm, the owners cleared vast jungle areas, and planted them up with rubber.

Whenever we apply for land, we are told that it is included in the forest reserve, or in a proposed reserve. The Conservator of Forests has marked these reserves on the plans by going right round the road, and not by going into the land itself and then marking the reservations.

I want the Minister to look into these matters.

Mr. H. B. Tenne (Dambulla): At present only a superior headman can issue permits to villagers for cutting timber in scheduled forests. That arrangement is not quite satisfactory, from the point of view of the villager. The Minister should consider allowing these permits to be issued by village headmen.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: With regard to reafforestation, I find that in the past, Government has planted up large extents of virgin soil with *jak* trees. These plantations have proved to be a complete failure. In most of the areas the *jak* trees have completely died off.

In the Avissawella electorate an area of 400 acres was planted with *jak*, but now more than three-fourths of the trees have died. The Government has not taken any action to replant the land with good timber.

As regards firewood, we find that even when villagers fell some timber from their own gardens and transport it to Colombo, they are harassed; they are required to obtain special permits—to transport their own timber!

I want to know why this particular restriction is retained in the matter of the removal or transport of firewood cut from areas owned by small private landowners.

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to the point I raised earlier, I should like to refer the hon. Minister to the following passage on page 87 of the report of the Cadres Commission:

“ Our scheme of reorganization for Kachcheries follows the principle of relieving them as much as possible of functions which could be entrusted to other Departments.”

This is one of the Departments which, I suggest, should take over the functions of the Kachcheri in respect of Crown forests. These forests should be given in charge of the Forest Department, and should not be looked after by the Revenue Officers as at present.

With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Dambulla, that minor headmen should be allowed to issue permits for cutting timber, I am afraid it will be like trying to hide salt under the wings of a water bird, the teal!

The Chairman: The reason why the Korala is authorised to issue these permits is that he is more educated and can read plans. The village headman cannot read plans.

Mr. Keerthiratne: The D. R. O. issues permits on the recommendation of the village headman.

The Chairman: The Korala.

Mr. Keerthiratne: In my area it is the D. R. O. The headman gives a letter to the effect that a permit for so many cubic feet should be given, and the D. R. O. issues the permit, without seeing the timber himself. Why should not the headman be allowed to issue the permit?

The Chairman: He cannot read the plans.

Mr. Keerthiratne: He can see the timber.

The Chairman: The permit is to the effect that the timber should be felled from such and such a spot. The permit is not for the removal of felled timber.

Dr. Perera: Last year when we discussed this particular Department, I drew the attention of the Minister to the fact that our timber resources are not properly utilized. The Minister of Agriculture and Lands told us that the then rate of utilization was 75,000 cubic feet, and that he was hoping to raise the figure to a million cubic feet in the course of the year. I do not know how far he has succeeded in that.

I am sorry the Minister of Industries is not here. We have a Plywood Factory working satisfactorily, and I think it ought to increase its output considerably. It has the capacity to increase the output, but I am afraid the Forest Department is not giving this Factory that measure of co-operation which it is entitled to expect. Owing to the absence of that co-operation, the Plywood Factory is producing only a very small proportion of the total needs of this country in the matter of tea chests.

That is the information I have. I remember discussing this matter with the Head of the Department of Industries, and he expressed the opinion that the output of the Factory could be considerably increased if the Forest Department came to its assistance.

I would appeal to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands to look into this matter. It is very important that there should be greater co-ordination between the Department of Industries and the Forest Department.

One other point: A number of complaints have been made by villagers in the Moragona-Undugoda area. The Balagala mukalana has been given over to contractors, for them to exploit its timber resources. By the time the contractors have done with this forest, there will be very little timber left for the use of the villagers. The contractors are denuding the whole forest of its timber.

I want the Minister to see whether something cannot be done in this matter, as the villagers depend on this particular mukalana for their timber needs.

Mr. Goonesekera: There is a vote of Rs. 10,000 for the maintenance of a Forestry School—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Are we getting on to the other sub-heads?

The Chairman: It will make it easier for the Minister to reply.

Mr. Goonesekera: I am referring to sub-head 20.

The Chairman: The hon. Member must wait till we come to that sub-head.

Mr. J. A. Martensz (Appointed Member): I wonder whether it would be appropriate for me to raise now the question regarding the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance. I know that the Minister is greatly interested in the administration of that Ordinance, and I would ask him whether he will not, at some early date, consider the recommendation of the Cadres Commission, who suggested the creation of the post of Warden under the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance.

We all know how much damage is done to wild life, particularly in our sanctuaries. During periods of drought, there is considerable decimation of fledglings and robbing of nests of birds. Particularly in the case of some kind of birds, steps to protect them are urgently called for. I refer particularly to birds found in paddy fields, which are killed for food.

I do think that something should be done to protect the nests of these birds, particularly during nesting time, and during the breeding season, so that the birds may get a decent chance of propagating.

Mr. S. Thondaman (Nuwara Eliya): May I know from the Minister what happens to the valuable timber when jungles are cleared for State farms and colonies? When I visited the Wellawaya Farm recently, I saw satinwood being sawn. I was told that sometimes the cost of transport was so heavy that the timber was destroyed on the spot.

Mr. Dahanayake: One more point—

The Chairman: The third time!

Mr. Dahanayake: The requirements of the Ceylon Government Railway are not adequately met by the Forest Department. The railway coaches are in a most dilapidated state, and some of

them are no longer serviceable. The Forest Department is unable to provide sufficient timber for the construction of railway coaches.

I want to know what proportion of the sleepers used on our railway comes through the Forest Department. If the Forest Department is fully discharging its functions, the task of the Ceylon Government Railway will be much easier.

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka: As regards the supply of timber to the Plywood Factory, some time ago I referred to the question of the exploitation of Crown forest reserves for the supply of timber to the Plywood Factory. This problem has not been properly tackled. The price now charged by the Forest Department for the timber they supply to the Plywood Factory is unduly high. Consequently the cost of tea chests remains very high.

I understand that a large stock of tea chests remains unsold. The charge per cubic foot of timber supplied by the Forest Department is very high, as compared to the price charged by private contractors, which is very much less.

To bring about a reduction in the cost per cubic foot, I would suggest that Government construct roads through the large forest reserves. There are such forest reserves in Urugala, Deniyaya and Akuressa. If we open out all the forest reservations in a systematic way, exploiting the timber systematically, the cost of transport will come down. At present, elephants have sometimes to transport the timber 2 to 5 miles in the forests. If we have a systematic roadway in the forests, and if the exploitation is systematically carried on, the cost of transport will come down very much.

10.45 A.M.

T. B. Poholiyadde Dissawa (Horowpotana): I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that, in recent times, there has been illicit felling of very valuable Crown timber going on in 'other' Crown forests. No action has been taken by the Forest Department with regard to these fellings on the ground that 'other' Crown forests are in charge of the Government Agent. Neither the headman nor the Government Agent takes any action, with the

result that illicit felling of timber continues in these lands on no small scale. Will the Hon. Minister kindly make inquiries into the illicit felling by villagers of timber in 'other' Crown forests and see that it is not allowed to continue?

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: Before the Hon. Minister replies, I wish to comment on a certain point, rather an important point. There are acres and acres of patna land in the Bandarawela-Welimada area which have not been utilized, and the Department could easily investigate—

The Chairman: Are they forests?

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: I am referring to the patna lands in the Welimada-Bandarawela area.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Eucalyptus is being grown there.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: In this area it is plain patna; not even *mana* grass is available. Will the Department consider the question of planting something better or more useful?

Mr. Keerthiratne: May I know whether young forest plants of valuable timber are available for sale to private individuals?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: My task has been considerably lightened by reason of your special knowledge of this Department and of the subject of forests, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for the help you have rendered me.

As regards the first question raised by the hon. Member for Galle as well as by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella, namely, the question of stepping up the output of timber by this Department, on the last occasion when this question was raised by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella, I stated that our output was 75,000 cu. ft. per year, and that we proposed to step it up to 1,000,000 cu. ft. in the current year. When the Department made that overwhelming statement to me, I wanted to make sure whether it was possible, and I got the Department to repeat it, as I had to be certain about it before I made such a statement to this House—it was a tremendous increase: from 75,000 cu. ft. to 1,000,000 cu. ft. I am glad to be

able to say now that we will produce the 1,000,000 cu. ft. by the end of this year. Up to the end of May the output had been 400,000 cu. ft., by the end of the year the 1,000,000 cu. ft. will be produced. It is a tremendous stepping up of production—from 75,000 cu. ft. to 1,000,000 cu. ft.—and I want the House to appreciate the fact. I may also mention that the target for the coming year is 2,000,000 cu. ft.

There is the other question with regard to the illicit felling of timber. I want hon. Members to take their minds back to the discussion that took place during the Committee stage of the Appropriation Bill last year. On that occasion every Member got up and spoke about the illicit felling of timber that was going on. I would ask hon. Members to realize that there are two conflicting claims—or shall I say conflicting facts?—when we come to deal with the question of timber felling in forests. On the one hand is the desire to make timber available to the peasants as conveniently as possible; on the other hand is the desire to prevent illicit exploitation and theft. When we take measures by having a rigorous system of permits in order to prevent illicit felling, we naturally create some difficulty as regards the genuine peasant who wants to get timber from the forests. Hence, we do our best to make it as convenient as possible for the peasant, taking, at the same time, the necessary precautions to prevent illicit felling as far as it is in our power to do so. That is why, even in the case of private timber, it is necessary to obtain permits, because, when timber is being transported about, there is no one to say that it is private timber or timber belonging to the Crown. I think that, with the adoption of stricter control over the activities connected with illicit felling, there is bound to be an improvement. I do not say that illicit felling could be entirely done away with. I know, for instance, that a number of headmen in the Kegalla District itself have now been dismissed, or are about to be dismissed, over the question of illicit felling. I dare say that illicit felling is going on in many other areas.

There are certain forests vested in the Forest Department, and other forests, the administration of which is vested in the Revenue Officers. Some

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Members expressed the opinion that all forests should be under the Forest Department. My answer is "No". If hon. Members would pause for a while, I think they would realize that it will be difficult, certainly more difficult than now, for peasants to obtain permits for their little needs, as was pointed out just now on the Floor of this House, if the administration of all forests was vested entirely in the Forest Department alone.

Then there is the question raised by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella with regard to the Plywood Factory. That Factory is not taking the full supply we are making available. That is the position. The difficulty is as regards the cost. The price of timber is rather high, and I think the matter is being gone into at the moment. I know that there was a conference held recently for the purpose of trying to cut down the cost. I cannot definitely state what has been the outcome of that conference.

As regards the question raised by the hon. Appointed Member (Mr. Martensz), I wish to inform him that we are strengthening the staff dealing with the fauna and flora protection activities. The appointment of an Assistant Conservator has been made, and I think that, in consequence, we could expect more satisfactory activity in that direction. I may also mention, in passing, that a deputation of the Fauna and Flora Protection Society saw me some time back and made representations as regards some of the matters raised by the hon. Appointed Member.

I now come to the question raised with regard to the processing of timber. I know that the Forest Department is intending to have a creosoting plant somewhere in the Southern Province, and as soon as plans are finalized, it is my intention to come to this House for necessary sanction to start that particular activity.

When the hon. Member for Second Badulla was raising the question of patna lands, I remembered seeing myself in certain areas, especially in the Welimada area, eucalyptus trees being planted on patna land. It was difficult to plant any type of tree on those patna lands, and the experiment made by withham charcoal.

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eucalyptus is progressing very well. 1,000 acres of patna land have been reafforested with eucalyptus.

Mr. Dahanayake: 1,000 acres out of a total of how many?

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: The Hon. Minister has not dealt with the question of "*bata lee*".

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There again it is necessary to have some sort of permit. On the one hand we have to control illicit exploitation, and on the other, we have to see to the needs of the villagers. There is a certain amount of difficulty, and, as much as possible, a sort of compromise ought to be effected. As regards prosecutions, generally the Department does not take action on those trivial offences.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I know of certain places where illicit exploitation is going on.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I shall look into that matter.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: What about the question of *jak* plantation?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member complained that certain *jak* plantations were not progressing satisfactorily, but the ones I have seen in certain areas—other Members themselves may have seen—are progressing very well indeed.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I am sure that about 400 acres of *jak* plantations in the Avissawella area are dying off.

Mr. Keerthiratne: The Hon. Minister has not answered my question with regard to young plants.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There are plants available for sale; they can be obtained from the nurseries.

Mr. R. S. Pelpola (Gampola): I understand from most of the people in my constituency that they are not allowed to get a little firewood from the jungle for the purpose of making charcoal. Some time ago they were

issued permits to remove firewood from the jungle, but now that issue has been stopped. The majority of the people need timber for the purpose of making charcoal for their use.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I am unaware of the fact that the issue of permits has been stopped.

Dr. Perera: In the Kotmale area.

Mr. Pelpola: Will the Hon. Minister kindly see that the system of issuing permits is restored?

*Sub-head 9.—Roads and Buildings,
Rs. 150,000.*

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 50,000 in respect of sub-head 9".

Question put, and agreed to.

*Sub-head 11.—Regeneration Operations,
Rs. 300,000.*

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 100,000 in respect of sub-head 11".

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: Is that to bring the vote up to this year's estimate?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes.

Mr. V. Kumaraswamy (Chavakachcheri): With regard to sub-head 11, I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that palmyrah trees in the Northern Province are being indiscriminately cut. He should take some steps to protect the palmyrah groves in the Northern Province. In the Crown land along the beach, too, you find palmyrah trees cut down by the Military and other people. I would very seriously suggest that, right along the coast of this Island a belt of palmyrah trees, at least twenty-five yards deep, should be grown by the Forest Department. That would prevent soil erosion and at the same time be an excellent belt for the whole Island.

11.0 A.M.

Mr. Dahanayake: Can you prevent soil erosion in that manner?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Yes.

Mr. Keerthiratne: In re-afforesting certain forests in my area, the Forest Department has destroyed a large amount of valuable timber and replanted the area. Trees that were just maturing were cut down and new trees planted. What I would suggest is that, instead of totally felling a forest and planting it anew, the forest should be weeded out and trees planted where necessary, so that you do not destroy the existing good trees which will be valuable in a few years' time; otherwise, we would have to wait for generations to get the timber to mature.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: The Hon. Minister of Transport has been in the habit of planting, along the roads, trees that do not bear any fruits, trees which are not profitable to plant. Perhaps he does not want these poor people to eat the fruits that may grow. I would, therefore, suggest that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture might co-operate with the Hon. Minister of Transport by supplying him with trees that bear fruit.

The Hon. Sir John Kotelawala (Minister of Transport and Works): Planting trees that bear fruits is not so nice as planting trees that bear flowers which beautify the place.

Mr. Dahanayake: Are you a butterfly?

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: This is rather an important question, the question of planting trees on the road-side. It is very easy for hon. Members to say that we must grow fruit trees along the roads, but there are only particular trees that can be grown on the road-side.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: Edible fruits!

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: There are various factors involved. The roots must be of such a nature that they do not spread out and damage the roads, thereby causing accidents; secondly, they must be trees that can be lopped; thirdly, they must be trees the branches of which do not break off. For instance, in the case of *jak*, until a branch drops, nobody knows whether it is decayed or not. We are trying to plant the smaller variety of *jak* trees, known as *Johore jak*, or the *Dias jak*,—a variety which

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bears in three years. But it does not grow big and therefore does not give shade. All shade trees are classified as such because of these three things: because they do not send out big roots that damage the roads, because they can be lopped, and because they do not sway by the wind. In Colombo, one of our most beautiful avenues often suffers damage from the wind; the trees get uprooted because it is the wrong kind of tree that has been planted—

An Hon. Member: Flamboyant trees.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Not flamboyant trees.

So that, planting fruit trees on the road-side is a question that requires very careful consideration. If you plant mango trees, for instance, you will find that every time a boy aims a stone at a mango, somebody's windscreen would be smashed. In fact, there was a Motion in the last State Council that all trees on the road-side should be removed, as a branch that dropped from one of them had killed a pedestrian. It is not fair to endanger the lives of pedestrians and others who use these roads by planting trees with overhanging branches.

In India, there are tamarind trees, mango trees and margosa trees planted along the roads. In Ceylon, too, we have margosa, but that grows at a particular elevation. And tamarind cannot be grown in the wet zone, so you cannot have them in Colombo. In India, the avenues of mango trees are far away from the centre of the road, so that there is no danger, but in Ceylon the value of land is so high that we cannot afford to have broad avenues. Just imagine the position if we had mango trees on the Colombo-Galle road, for instance. We would have to lop them off because of the electric wires overhead. The only useful tree we can think of is *jak*, because it can be lopped. The hon. Member will realize that selecting and planting trees is an art.

Mr. Dahanayake: And the bearing of fruit is also an art.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member for Kotte suggested that I should co-operate with the Minister of Transport to enable his trees to

bear fruit. I can assure the hon. Member that I am always prepared to co-operate with the Hon. Minister in that respect, but if I try to make his trees bear fruit, he might object.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: He does not mind it.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As regards sub-head 20, it is for the training school in forestry. It is proposed to do away with the need for sending officers to schools in India for training in forestry.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 1,998,584, for Head 72, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule, put, and agreed to.

Head 72, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Extraction and Supply of timber, &c., Rs. 100 (token vote).

Dr. Perera: Why is this worked on a token vote, and what is the position with regard to the token vote operating?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is worked on a token vote, because it is being paid for.

Dr. Perera: What is the present position? Are we losing or making any money?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No, we get paid for it.

Question, "That the sum of Rs 100 for Head 72, Vote No. 2, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 72, Vote 2, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 73.—Irrigation Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Irrigation Department, &c., Rs. 6,677,536.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 2,967,084.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 7,920 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Clerks'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 26,100 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Mechanical Engineers'".

Dr. Perera: We must know the reason for this.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Three Mechanical Engineers are required at Polonnaruwa, Gal Oya and another place to handle the earth-moving plant.

Dr. Perera: That is in addition to those you have now?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes. This department is entirely mechanized, and we must have these men.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 936 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. 3,870 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Orderly Allowance to 43 Sub-divisional officers, &c.'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,440 in respect of sub-head 1, New Item '1 Welfare Officer'".

Dr. Perera: Whose welfare is this officer going to look after?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The welfare of the labourers.

Dr. Perera: Is it at the Head Office?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Wherever there is a large number of labourers.

Dr. Perera: At Ratmalana, for instance?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: All over.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,080 in respect of sub-head 1, New Item '2 Caretakers for Circuit Bungalows'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Chairman: Any other comments?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Can we speak generally on Personal Emoluments?

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the position in regard to the staff of the Irrigation Department.

The Chairman: Junior staff or senior staff?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Both junior and senior staff.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I know the point he is raising.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Shall I proceed?

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: With regard to the Irrigation Department, I understand there was a practice of getting down officers from abroad for this Department, and the Ceylonese staff here is rather worried that this practice should still continue. The main grievances of these officers fall into five categories; namely, unsuitable living conditions, inadequate conditions of training and promotion, inadequate salaries, inadequate allowances, and an unfair system of transfers.

It is well known that the officers of the Irrigation Department have to work under very trying and arduous conditions, and it is necessary that a suitable housing scheme should be formulated for all grades of officers, irrespective of the salaries they draw, whether they be on the higher rungs or on the lower rungs. It is the duty of the Government to see that these officers are provided with houses, in addition to the provision of anti-malaria equipment and other things connected with the general health of these officers.

With regard to the question of the inadequate salaries, there was a memorandum submitted by the Irrigation Department Officers' Association to the

[Mr. Kumaraswamy.]

Hon. Minister, and I wonder to what extent the recommendations contained in that memorandum can be given effect to. I would just like to point out one or two discrepancies in the salaries of the officers of the Irrigation Department compared with the salaries in other departments. Take the case of a Storekeeper in the Irrigation Department, and compare his salary with that of a Storekeeper in any other department. In the Postal Department the minimum is Rs. 2,520 and the maximum Rs. 3,480. In the Railway Department the scale is the same. In the Electrical Department, the minimum is Rs. 1,440, and the maximum Rs. 3,480. But in the Irrigation Department the minimum salary of a Storekeeper is Rs. 744, and the maximum Rs. 1,668.

It is well known that in the Irrigation Department a Storekeeper does not only the work of a Storekeeper, but clerical work as well. I have seen personally Storekeepers rendering clerical assistance to their officers. The conditions under which these people have to work are far more difficult than those of Storekeepers in the Postal, Railway and Electrical Departments.

The same remarks apply to Field Assistants. The conditions under which these officers work are quite different to the conditions under which Field Assistants in other departments, for instance the P. W. D., work.

I will quote one paragraph from the memorandum to show the varied nature of the duties of Field Assistants:

- “(a) Surveys and investigations including sub-surface explorations.
- (b) Draughtsmanship.
- (c) Setting out and construction of roads, buildings, channels, structures in reinforced concrete, masonry, etc.
- (d) Control and management of mechanical plant and equipment.
- (e) River gauging, construction of models for research, etc.
- (f) Control, management and welfare of large gangs of labour.”

11.15 A.M.

These are the multifarious duties which Field Assistants are called upon to perform, whereas a P. W. D. Inspector normally has to deal with roads, buildings, and bridges. He is not given such difficult tasks as a Field Assistant in the Irrigation Department. The memorial goes on to state:

“The initial salary of Public Works Department sub-Inspectors was increased 40 per cent., that of supervisors of village works 50 per cent., that of the E. C. G. Grade II. 38 per cent., of Draughtsman Grade II. 100 per cent., and the hard-worked Irrigation F. A. a paltry 20 per cent.”

This, I feel, is a genuine grievance of the Field Assistants. We also see that the desire to join the Field Assistant service of the Irrigation Department is weakening because the conditions of service are not attractive. I will quote you figures in this connexion:

“It may also be mentioned here that there has been a falling off of the number of applicants for the post of Field Assistant Learners in recent years. In 1936 and 1937, the number of applicants was in the region of 500, while in the past few years the number has hardly been 100 at each call, and at least in two instances near 50.”

This is a very poor state of affairs. I also understand that the Field Assistants are not given a chance to let their natural genius assert itself and seek promotion to the higher rungs of the directorial staff of the Department, as in the case of the General Clerical Service where a clerk is given a chance of making himself eligible for promotion to the Civil Service. I personally consider that every opportunity must be given to the Field Assistants to assert their natural genius by offering them chances of promotion.

The same complaint is true of the Assistant Irrigation Engineers. There, too, the Department has, by introducing a time-scale, prevented the rise of certain officers who have been working in the Department for more than ten years. I understand that the officers feel that this time-scale could better be applied to those who enter service direct after obtaining their degree, without any practical training in the Irrigation Department. I certainly think it unfair to impose this time-scale on officers who have been in the Department for a long time and who have qualified by obtaining the necessary diplomas that the Department requires. Here, again, I wish to quote from paragraph 19 of the memorial of the Irrigation Department Officers' Association submitted to the Hon. Minister, a few months ago, which puts the case in a nutshell:

“The Sessional Paper No. VIII. of 1946, which came into force on January 1, 1946, has altered the conditions of promotions from the A.I.E. to the I. E. Grade. According to this Sessional Paper the Grades of Irrigation Engineer and Assistant Irrigation Engineer will be

on a continuous time scale. Non-professionally qualified officers cannot proceed beyond Rs. 7,680. We would submit that this is entirely a new condition—"

The Chairman: If the memorial has been sent to the Hon. Minister, what is the use of quoting it now?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: One line more:

"The application of the time scale to direct recruits to the Department from the Universities, without any practical training whatever, is perfectly justifiable; but to expect those who have been in the Department for several years and in many cases holding responsible executive posts to go through the same number of years before they are eligible for promotion to the I. E.'s grade, is not only unreasonable to the officers concerned, but also was never the intention of the Salaries' Committee".

I understand that this time-scale is not applicable in other departments, like the Post and Telecommunications Department and the Engineering Section of the Railway. Therefore, it is not fair that these engineers who work in the Irrigation Department should be singled out for this sort of treatment. In practical application, the time-scale works unfairly against the officers concerned. There is also no tendency on the part of the Irrigation Department Engineering Section to—

The Chairman: These are all matters of policy.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member need not labour the point. The Government has decided to do away with that particular provision.

The Chairman: If the hon. Member draws the Hon. Minister's attention to this, it will do.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The last point: It is in connexion with the tendency to recruit non-Ceylonese to posts which can be filled by Ceylonese. In fact, this sort of thing causes a lot of heart-burning amongst the Ceylonese officers. I noticed in the papers the other day that some action is being taken by the Hon. Minister with regard to the mechanical section of the Irrigation Department. I hope he will follow this policy in regard to all sections of the Department.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: We find that the Director of Irrigation has ruled that field officers have no definite hours of work and that they are not entitled

to overtime. That really means that they are on duty throughout the 24 hours of the day.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: All staff officers have the same condition.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: They have been demanding a maximum number of hours, which is really what other workers get in Government departments, namely, an eight-hour day. Further, these Irrigation officers have to spend their entire time near their working places—near the big Irrigation schemes—and they have not been provided with houses. At present, they have to live in thatched huts and spend their whole time near their work-places. I would like the Hon. Minister to go into this matter.

Another matter is in regard to their grading. Those in Grade II. have to wait for quite a long period to get a promotion. Some of the Field Assistants who enter the Department at the age of 20 may have to wait for something like 27 years before they can sit for an examination and obtain the necessary recommendation from the Engineers in charge.

Mr. Dahanayake: I want to point out that the work of the Mechanical Branch of the Irrigation Department is not quite satisfactory. The Mechanical Branch deals with the maintenance and operation of equipment of the Irrigation as well as the Agricultural Department.

I remember that, in the latest Report of the Director of Irrigation, he pointed out that there were a very large number of tractors that were out of action and had not been fully repaired. I understand that the position today is also unsatisfactory.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Much better.

Mr. Dahanayake: It is also said that all the parts that are necessary for repairs are not available and have not yet been obtained, and generally the work of this Department has not shown sufficient progress after the cessation of hostilities. The result is that the work of both the Irrigation Department and the Agricultural Department is hampered. I find from the Estimates that

[Mr. Dahanayake.]
the Mechanical Branch has not been strengthened over and above what it was during the last year.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
See the Amendments.

Mr. Dahanayake: If the position in regard to the use and the maintenance of the equipment of the Agricultural and Irrigation Departments is to be improved, the Mechanical Branch needs the close attention and investigation of the Hon. Minister.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene:
I would like to know what is the position with regard to the lack of engineering skill in the Irrigation Department. There was a report in the Press that, on account of the lack of qualified Irrigation Engineers, major irrigation schemes have been held up. It might be quite possible that, on account of the lack of competent engineers, wrong advice may be given to the Hon. Minister. The public of this country would suffer as a result.

I hope that, when the Minister recruits Engineers from abroad, he would not confine himself to England only but go outside, to America, Holland, and the Soviet Union.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
We have got two Russian Engineers.

Dr. Perera: White Russians.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene:
That is only about two or three officers. In fact, the countries I mentioned have similar problems to ours. I do not think any hon. Member of this House would grudge voting any sum of money to obtain the services of experts from abroad for the major schemes of this country.

Dr. Perera: I want to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the position of the Department as a whole. I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 100 in respect of sub-head 1".

It is true that the Hon. Prime Minister when he was Minister of Agriculture and Lands, had considerable trouble over this Department. He had to get rid of a number of officers. I was hoping that he would gradually find his way

to see that all the Ceylonese officers—qualified Ceylonese officers—would be able to rise to the highest position in the Irrigation Department. I am getting a little nervous about the position, because I find that one or two of our qualified men have been side-tracked—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
Could you mention one case?

Dr. Perera: I would rather not.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
There is no one who has been side-tracked.

Dr. Perera: I think the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands is keen to see that a fair chance is given to our younger men to rise to the highest posts. I am viewing with suspicion the new tendency to remove the present Head of the Hydraulic Laboratory to the field. I think that is a sinister move—that is how I look upon it—and I think the present Head is making or preparing the background for the Head of the Hydraulic Laboratory to take his place whenever he—Mr. Taylor—finds it necessary to lay down his reins of office. I hope that will not be acceded to by the Hon. Minister. I think we have two good officers at least in Mr. Kahawita and Mr. Silva.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
Which Mr. Silva? There are two people.

Dr. Perera: Mr. W. A. de Silva.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
Unfortunately, he has got heart trouble.

Dr. Perera: That is precisely my complaint. Here is an officer qualified in Hydraulics—he is an M. Sc in Hydraulics—who might have been allowed to work in the Hydraulic Laboratory with a view to succeeding the present Head, whom we recruited from America, if he had not been side-tracked. Unfortunately, he has heart trouble because he had spent most of his service in the wilds of the North-Central Province. I think he is now in Kurunegala.

I am rather keen that the Hon. Minister should look into this matter in order to see if our younger men can be

given the fullest opportunity for rising to the most responsible positions in the Irrigation Department.

There is one more point of criticism. I think the Hon. Minister will find, if he investigates it, that the District Agricultural Committees are not functioning—and have not been functioning—quite satisfactorily, although he has made certain changes now.

My own experience in these District Agricultural Committees is that the Irrigation Engineers who are attached to the various areas spend most of their time in the office. I think that is their complaint also. They have very little time to devote to really technical work, which they are really expected to do. A good portion of the time is spent in attending to the normal correspondence of the Department.

I know that on more than one occasion Irrigation Engineers have complained that they are not given adequate clerical assistance to get over the routine work to which most of their time has to be devoted. The result is that they cannot do more than one or two investigations a year. There is a long priority list. In one year they carry out one investigation and in the next year they draw up plans. I think that it will be found that in most cases Irrigation Engineers are wasting their valuable time instead of devoting it to the technical side of inquiring into irrigation schemes.

I would ask the Hon. Minister to see whether these Irrigation Engineers cannot be ear-marked mainly for technical work. Give them any clerical assistance they want, to do their routine work; do not burden these technical officers with routine work and waste so much talent.

11.30 A.M.

Mr. P. L. Bauddhasara (Polonnaruwa): Although the Minneriya and Parakrama Schemes have done much for my constituency, I regret to inform the Hon. Minister that there are no adequate means of supplying water to the *purana* paddy fields. I recently received a letter from the D. R. O. regarding water for the Hingurakgoda fields. This is what he says—

“Dear Sir,—With reference to your letter dated July 17, 1948, on the above subject, I

have the honour to inform you that the Irrigation Engineer, T. K. is making arrangements to provide a distributory channel to give water to these fields independent of the Colony lands. I have written to him today inquiring how the matter stands”.

This particular field is about 100 years old.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is about 800 years old.

Mr. Bauddhasara: But the new colony is about 18 years old. The Hingurakgoda colony has been greatly improved, but still those paddy fields do not receive sufficient water. During the present season, about 200 acres of these *purana* fields were ruined owing to lack of water.

At the meetings held by the Government Agent, Assistant Government Agent or D. R. O., more colonists than villagers are present, with the result that the colonists have their own way. The villagers are, therefore, handicapped.

I appeal to the Hon. Minister to do something in regard to the *purana* paddy fields, and to see that provision is made for an adequate supply of water for those fields. I would also request him to see that the villagers are not handicapped at these meetings.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: Regarding the priority list prepared by the District Agricultural Committees, may I ask the Hon. Minister whether it is not possible to have any work undertaken outside the list provided the Department feels, that it can carry out a particular scheme? Has it necessarily to go through the Government Agents? I ask this because our Kalutara District Agricultural Committee met a few months ago after an interval of about 3 years.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That is their own fault.

Mrs. Florence Senanayake (Kiriella): Will the Hon. Minister investigate the possibility of deepening the bed of the Kalu Ganga with a view to preventing periodical floods?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That would not help.

Mr. C. Vanniasingham (Kopai): May I draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that the Northern Division

[Mr. Vanniasingham.]
seems to be understaffed? Some time ago there was an Assistant Engineer—

The Chairman: There are 10 Assistant Engineers now.

Mr. Vanniasingham: One was in charge of the Peninsula Lagoon Scheme. He has been removed and at the moment there is a junior Inspector in charge of the work, just at the time when the bund is about to be reconstructed. It is desirable that an Assistant Engineer should be there at a time when the most important part of the work is to be done.

May I also draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the fact that there is only one Village Cultivation Officer for the whole of the Jaffna District, although a major scheme like the Kilinochchi Scheme is operating in that area? This officer has hardly any time to go round the whole area.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: May I inquire why no provision has been made for the Colombo South drainage scheme, which was discussed during the last Budget?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It has been completed.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: No. I find that quite a large number of workers employed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services are still employed in it.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It will be completed at the end of the financial year.

Mr. Iriyagolla: In the North-Western Province we have the best people and the worst Kachcheri. We have the largest number of village tanks in the North-Western Province, but all these tanks have been very badly neglected. Only a very few have been repaired. When you write to the Government Agent, he usually refers the letter to the Divisional Revenue Officer, who refers it to the village headman who does nothing. I had a talk with the Hon. Minister this morning, and I hope he will pay due attention to the North-Western Province.

Any Government Agent—however good he may have been in his previous Kachcheri—when he comes to the Kurunegala Kachcheri, turns out to be the

worst. This is due to the fact that there are several old clerks who have been there for the last 20 or 25 years. The Government Agent is guided by these clerks, on whom he has to depend.

I trust the Hon. Minister will take a special interest in this area, which was once the granary of the Sinhalese Kingdom and the first Kingdom of Parakrama Bahu the Great.

Mr. Pelpola: I wish to point out to the Hon. Minister that skill is not all that matters. There is no willingness on the part of these officers to do their work. They are still following the old system. When a proposal is made to them, they turn it down, saying it is impracticable, or that it is not worth doing. There is only one tank in my electorate. When I wanted the bund of a particular tank to be raised by two feet, they made a calculation and said that only 280 acres of paddy land would be served by the raising of the bund and that, therefore, it was not worth raising it.

What right has an Irrigation Engineer, or the Irrigation Department for that matter, to make an estimate and say that a thing is not worth doing? They are there to serve the people, and money has been voted for certain services. Instead of serving the people they go to the extent of making estimates and then saying that certain things are not worth doing. This has gone on for the last 100 years because there has been no one to question them. Can the Hon. Minister tell me how it is possible for an Engineer to make an estimate and say, for instance, that, by raising the bund, only 280 acres will be served and for how many years they will be served? I say that by raising the bund, not 280 acres but 200 times 280 acres will be served, and they will be served not for 100 years but for 300 or 400 years. This tank was built by our ancestors, and it is still in existence.

I earnestly request the Hon. Minister to investigate these matters.

Mr. Bauddhasara: I am given to understand that the Hon. Minister is going to recruit five foreigners for the Irrigation Department. May I know from what countries he proposes to recruit these men?

Mr. K. Kanagaratnam (Vaddukoddai): I wish to refer to a matter to which reference has already been made by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella. In the 1946-47 and 1947-48 Estimates provision was made for 11 Construction Engineers, on salaries ranging from £700 to £900, £920 to £960 and £1,100 to £1,200. In the Estimates for 1948-49 provision is made for 14 Construction Engineers on salaries ranging from £700 to £900, £920 to £960 and £980 to £1,060. From the list of proposed alterations in details in the Legend, and so on, it will be seen that this has been amended to 9 Construction Engineers at a flat rate of salary, namely, £1,500; one Engineer at £920 to £960, and four Engineers at £700 to £900. You will find, at page 216, that provision has also been made for three new posts of Mechanical Engineer on the salary scale £920 to £960. From the list of alterations to the Legend this has now been altered to £1,500 fixed salary, with a foot-note that the scales are subject to the condition that the officers are Engineers on Agreement.

This raises two important questions, one of which is the alteration of the salary scale. May I know from the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Lands whether any of the officers, for whom provision was made in the 1946-47 and 1947-48 Estimates, are already employed in the Department on the salary scales provided in those Estimates, and, if so, whether their salaries will be raised to £1,500 fixed, because he is asking for provision for nine officers at £1,500 fixed?

Secondly, may I know whether all these officers are to be recruited from abroad because, from the foot-note, it would appear that these officers are to be drafted on agreement. This raises another question. The higher appointments in this very important department were practically shut out to Ceylonese for many years. It was only after the introduction of the Donoughmore Constitution and mainly through the efforts of the then Minister of Agriculture and Lands that the higher appointments in this department were made open to Ceylonese.

11.45 A.M.

I am glad that today a Ceylonese is holding a very high position in the Head Office, and I am raising this question

now, because construction work will, in future, form an important feature of this Department. The Gal Oya scheme will require the services of many eminent and experienced officers. Further, there are many other schemes which our young Minister of Agriculture and Lands will undertake in the near future, and for many years to come; therefore, we should have men with experience in the Department.

If I understand the description of the Vote correctly, officers will be recruited on agreement from abroad to fill these posts, and I would, therefore, like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands the necessity for sending abroad some of our young men to specialize in construction work. We should send them not only to England but also to other countries where the construction of irrigation works is an important feature.

With the Ceylonization of the various departments, particularly the technical departments, it is absolutely necessary that our young men, who receive adequate academic education in the University as well as in the Technical College, should be given facilities for gaining experience, so that, when the time comes for replacing those got down on agreement, these young men will be in a position to succeed them.

Mr. Keerthiratne: With regard to the question of Ceylonization of this Department, as we have to deliver the goods, I am of opinion that it does not matter whom we employ in doing the work. During the time the English were ruling this country, Englishmen who came out to work here did not know till they arrived that they had to work under Ceylonese Ministers. The result was that they did not pull their weight.

Conditions today are different. Any European coming to Ceylon knows that, Ceylon being independent, he will have to work under Ceylonese. He comes here with that knowledge, and he knows that he has to do his work well. Therefore, as we have to get through this work there is no harm in getting outsiders for the purpose. Our people try to get their own relatives into the various departments. When a certain person is the head of a department you will find his relatives, his countrymen—I mean people of the same race, whether they

[Mr. Keerthiratne.]
be Sinhalese or Tamil—monopolizing that department. But an Englishman is fair.

The Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Keerthiratne: If we are to be independent of other countries in the matter of food supplies and we are to develop agricultural resources, we should not object to the Minister utilizing the services of anybody he wishes for the purpose. After that we can employ our own people.

I was about to say something about machinery yesterday when you pulled me up, Sir, and I sat down. This Department obtains machinery that is suitable for use in countries like Australia, America and England, and we are experimenting with that machinery. Instead of getting down machinery at an enormous expense, we should obtain the services of an expert from one of the firms which manufacture the machinery, so that he can go into the question of soil and climatic conditions, and so on, and invent machinery—[Laughter]—or at least design suitable machinery for use in this country.

With regard to D. A. C's, I would point out that they are unable to function because the Engineers are drafted on to other work. The Engineer stationed at Ratnapura is at present doing some work at Kegalla. He comes to a D. A. C. meeting and says that he had to do some urgent work somewhere else and therefore could not attend to our matters. The result is that some major schemes are neglected and there is unemployment.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
A number of points have been raised in regard to this Department, and I shall first deal with the question of staff.

I would like to refer hon. Members of this House to the Cadres Commission Report, in which the question of the inadequacy of staff in the Department has been commented on at considerable length, so much so that it has been stated that only 50 per cent. of the required personnel is available to the Department. That is a very serious state of affairs, and every endeavour is being made to remedy that state of

affairs. I shall give details of the steps taken in that direction.

Owing to the policy of Ceylonization introduced by the previous Minister of Agriculture, I am in a position to say that in five years' time, and not in six according to the plan, it is possible that we shall have no need whatsoever to recruit Engineers from outside, except for very specialized jobs when necessary. The very difficult period will be the next five years during which Engineers are badly needed for the accelerated pace of work that is being undertaken.

During the course of my speech in the Second Reading Debate I had occasion to refer to the programme of development which we have in view. I must say that, even when we put through that programme of work, the land that will be opened up will not satisfy the land hunger of the people. If I wait till Ceylonese are available to fill all the posts in the Department and do not recruit officers temporarily from abroad, then I shall never be in a position to keep to the pace that has been demanded by the people in this country. We have, therefore, had to increase the staff.

The hon. Member for Vaddukkoddai pointed out that we were increasing the salaries on which we intended recruiting officers.

Dr. Perera: I thought these were salaries of people already here on agreement.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
No. A good number of these posts are vacant. That is the unfortunate position. Although we intended filling the number of posts passed in the Budget last year, many of those posts are still vacant.

Dr. Perera: How many have been filled?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Only five or six.

Dr. Perera: Out of the eleven?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Yes.

That is the position. We have advertised all over the world. Hon. Members suggested that we try particular countries, and I might tell them today we

have Engineers on agreement who are Italians, Indians, Canadians, and we had one even from Russia who has now left us and joined Boustead's. We are trying to get Engineers from all over the world, but, unfortunately at the present moment, there is a tremendous demand for Engineers all over the world for reconstruction and development work. Therefore, unless salaries are attractive we cannot get Engineers, and it has become necessary to come before this House for increased salary scales on which we hope to be able to recruit officers on agreement.

The recruitment of officers from abroad is only for the purpose of carrying out this very necessary work we have in view, and their recruitment will in no way hamper the promotion of the officers who are already in the Department.

I wish further to state that we are taking every possible step to train locally the required personnel. There are altogether about 90 in training, of whom 40 or 50 are being trained locally. The others have been sent to India and other countries for specialized training.

Then, there is the question of dissatisfaction among a certain section of Engineers about the operation of the time-scale. That is a very important matter, and is one that has been agitating the minds of a part of the personnel of the Department for some considerable time.

The Assistant Irrigation Engineers and the Irrigation Engineers are lumped together, and it is only by effluxion of time that an Assistant Engineer becomes an Engineer, although there may be some among them who have the necessary technical qualification such as the A.M.I.C.E. Yet it was only when they had reached the salary of Rs. 7,680 that they were able to obtain promotion to the Engineer grade, although they may have been deserving of such promotion earlier. That position was very unsatisfactory. There were cases where Irrigation Engineers recruited from abroad had obtained technical qualifications even later than our own people, and our people who had obtained the qualifications earlier were still Assistant Irrigation Engineers because they had not reached that particular point on the time-scale to obtain promotion.

Although the Estimates do not show this, I would say that the Government has made the following decisions on this matter:

(1) That the designation of the class should be altered to "Irrigation Engineers."

(2) That the designation of the class next below should be altered from "Junior Assistant Irrigation Engineer" to "Assistant Irrigation Engineers."

(3) That the new class of Irrigation Engineers be sub-divided into two Grades, Grades I and II, the maximum salary of Grade II being Rs. 7,680 per annum.

(4) That only those professionally qualified be eligible for appointment to Grade I and that, too, only after 3 years' service in the Department.

The Ministry contemplates that officers, now in the Department who are professionally qualified and have had 3 years' service in the Department should be placed in Grade I, although they have not reached the point in the time-scale which is the maximum of Grade II, namely Rs. 7,680 per annum, and have addressed a communication to the Public Service Commission and the Treasury.

The communication also seeks to clarify what is meant by "professional qualification", whether it is only the complete A.M.I.C.E. or whether it should include the A.M.I.E. (India) or membership of an Engineering Institute of a British Dominion or in the U.S.A., and whether Sections A and B of the A.M.I.C.E. *plus* the Departmental professional examination after three years' service, or the full engineering course at Roorkee should be regarded as equivalent "professional qualification." That is the decision of the Government, and a communication to that effect has been addressed to the Public Service Commission.

The Chairman: The Sitting will now be suspended till 2 p.m. I would like to inform hon. Members that, when we have passed the votes of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, we shall be taking up the votes of the Minister of Health and Local Government and not those of the Minister of Food and Co-operative Undertakings, as the latter is indisposed.

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

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:

Before we adjourned, I was dealing with the question of the staff of the Irrigation Department. I mentioned that we were short of staff, and I pointed out some of the endeavours being made by us to recruit the necessary Engineers from abroad by offering them more attractive salaries.

Apart from that, whilst on the question of staff, I wish to mention the following facts: There is a total of 96 men under training. 45 of them are undergoing departmental training; 33 of them are undergoing training on various works, and a further 18 of them are abroad of whom 3 are in America.

Hon. Members will realize that every endeavour is being made to get the necessary personnel for the Department in order to carry out the greater programme of work that has been undertaken by this Department. And, as I said earlier, owing to the previous policy that has been adopted as regards Ceylonization, in about five years' time most of our problems will be over as regards cadre.

Then, I should like to deal with the misconception about village works. There is a notion in the minds of some hon. Members that a great deal of attention is being paid to major works, and, consequently, village and other minor works are totally neglected. It is true that a certain amount of attention—very necessary attention—is being paid to major works. As I pointed out during the Second Reading stage of the Appropriation Bill, these major works are very necessary for a planned programme of land development, and hon. Members will realize that that part of the work is being satisfactorily dealt with.

I should like to point out a few facts regarding village works in order to convince hon. Members that every possible assistance is being given in connexion with these works. The staff of this Department is engaged in the following manner: There is 46.4 per cent. employed in village works; 26.5 per cent. in new major works; 20.4 per cent. in improvements to major works, and 6.7 per cent. in miscellaneous works. So, hon. Members of this House will see that, by far the greater portion of the time of the

staff—as much as 46.4 per cent.—is engaged on village works. If hon. Members will look at the copy of the Estimates, they will realize the amount of money that has been included in it for attention to these works.

Then, there is Vote No. 2, sub-head 3, which is meant for the maintenance of village works alone. The vote in the current year was Rs. 100,000, but in the Estimates before the House they will find that it has been increased to Rs. 300,000.

In regard to Vote No. 3, sub-head 104, “Improvements and Extensions to Village Irrigation Works”, the vote in the current year's Budget was Rs. 700,000, while the vote included in the Estimates before the House is for Rs. 1,500,000.

Again, there are minor works which are attended to by Revenue Officers; those are works which cost below Rs. 2,500. In the current year's Budget there is an inclusion of Rs. 705,000, and in the Estimates before the House the figure is Rs. 800,000. There are also itemized works. Those are works costing above Rs. 30,000 and which are not included under Loan Works. There, too, there has been an increase from Rs. 505,000 to Rs. 860,616. Apart from those works—the maintenance and improvements to village works—there are the minor works with allocations for the respective Revenue Officers. Village works are also carried out under the Food Production votes.

For the first nine months of the current year a sum of Rs. 504,902 has been spent out of the Food Production vote alone on village works. Of course, I cannot give the figures of the demands that would come from the respective Revenue Officers. So, hon. Members of this House will realize that every attention is being paid to village works.

Moreover, as I had occasion to comment earlier, District Agricultural Committees are being set up on a different footing and Regulations have just been approved by this House. Under those Regulations, these statutory bodies—hitherto they were not so—have to meet at least once in three months.

An hon. Member complained that the District Agricultural Committee hardly met, but, after the adoption of these Regulations, under Section 3 of the

Irrigation Ordinance, every District Agricultural Committee has to meet at least once in three months. Any hon. Member of Parliament of that district also will be a member of the District Agricultural Committee under those Regulations. At those meetings, priority as regards construction, investigation of works and so on will be decided. The Committee will have a voice and can see that very necessary works in those respective areas are given effect to according to the respective urgencies. Therefore, I think the charge that has been levelled against the Government, that these village works are being neglected at the expense of the major schemes, has, to a great extent, to be modified.

I appreciate the desire of hon. Members to get ahead on a quicker basis with particular works in their own areas, and, with that end in view, three sub-divisions, apart from the normal village works activities in those areas, were started in Maho, Mankulam and Tiripana. In the coming year, a sum of Rs. 200,000 is proposed to be spent on each sub-division alone. That is in addition to the other village works normally undertaken in the area.

An hon. Member raised the question of flood protection in the Gampola area. This House is well aware of the fact that an expert is in Ceylon at the moment. He has been brought out to go into particular schemes such as the Nilwala Ganga, Gin Ganga, Gampola and Ratnapura flood schemes. The hon. Member for Gampola (Mr. Pelpola) will realize that action is being taken as regards the floods in the Gampola area.

In addition to the major and minor schemes, there are other schemes such as drainage schemes. The hon. Member for Kotte (Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena) referred to the drainage scheme for his area. It will be completed by the end of this financial year. That is why provision has not been included in the Budget for the Colombo South drainage scheme.

There are also the salt water exclusion schemes in various parts of the Island. They are some of the biggest schemes that we have in hand.

Jaffna lagoon scheme, which is estimated to cost over Rs. 1,000,000. Hon. Members, particularly those from the North, are well aware of the salt water exclusion schemes. In spite of the shortage of staff, every endeavour is being made, as I pointed out, to carry these schemes through. In planning out the major schemes, this Department can bring into fruition a number of major works, while, at the same time, not neglecting village works deserving of attention. I hope hon. Members will appreciate that fact.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 6,714,748 for Head 73, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 73, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Repair and Maintenance of Irrigation Works including Staff Quarters, Labour Lines, Circuit Bungalows and other departmental buildings and Agricultural Roads, Rs. 1,889,600.

Sub-head 1, Major Works, Rs. 1,700,000.

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

Regarding village works, might I ask the hon. Minister who really is in charge of the minor anicut schemes or village areas, because. . . .

The Chairman: Vote 2 deals with the repair and maintenance of Irrigation Works including Staff Quarters and so on.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There are two types of this work. One is managed by the Government Agent where the construction work is done. Then it is handed over to the field owners: The other type is managed by the Department itself.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: My point in raising the question is, as I have already brought it to the notice of the Hon. Minister, that there are a number of such works in my constituency on which the previous Government seems to have spent a fair amount of money. I am referring to the anicuts which are in disuse because their gates have all

[Mr. Wilmot A. Perera.]

decayed, and, I think, on representations made to the Hon. Minister, five village irrigation headmen have been dismissed, for lack of attention to one particular scheme. It was only last Sunday that I happened to visit another anicut which is in a similar state of decay. The Government is spending Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 17,000 on one of these, but in a few months' time they are in disuse.

2.15 P.M.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

I know there were some minor irrigation works constructed and the maintenance of those can be done by the Irrigation Department, provided all the field owners pass a resolution to hand over the works and they make their contribution for the maintenance. Many meetings were held with a view to handing over, but they refused to hand them over. This has got to be decided by the field owners themselves.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: I am not referring to earth work.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

We do the construction ourselves and, when we ask the field owners to pass a resolution to hand over the work to the Department for the purpose of maintenance, they very often refuse. There are a number of minor irrigation works on the Western coast.

Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 5 in respect of sub-head 1, Northern Province 'Karachchi Scheme'".

Under this Vote may I ask the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands a question relating to the Iranaimadu tank bund? We raised this question on the last occasion also. I see that there is provision in a sum of Rs. 58,000 for the Karachchi Scheme, which must necessarily be for maintenance or minor repairs. On the last occasion we drew the Hon. Minister's attention to the fact that during *sirupokam* time, that is the dry season cultivation, the water in the tank is not enough even for a fraction of the fields that can be brought to a cultivable condition. Of course, the

Hon. Prime Minister gave a reply on that occasion, partly relevant and partly irrelevant, about the wealthy taking advantage of the poor people. Some of that, of course, is masterly irrelevancy which does not help the question at all.

The question is that by reason of the bund not being high enough, there is not enough storage of water for the dry season cultivation. If there was a larger quantity of water in storage in the tank, an extent of about 10,000 acres, that is about double the acreage that can be brought under cultivation now, can be brought under cultivation during the *sirupokam* season. That seems to be the time when people prefer to cultivate, because it is a healthy season free from rains and malaria and because more cultivators are available from the mainland.

I ask the Hon. Minister whether he has given his mind to it or whether he has any plans regarding the matter or what he proposes to do in the matter.

Another question which I raised on the last occasion was in relation to lift irrigation, which will really come under Vote 3, and I shall refer to that later.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

I think I might give some information to the hon. Member. I am fully aware of the position of the Iranaimadu tank. It was constructed mainly to irrigate fields during the *kalapokam* season and its storage capacity is sufficient for 20,000 acres to be cultivated during the *kalapokam* season. Unfortunately, there are no people settled in the area to cultivate the fields during the *kalapokam* season. This is the season when Jaffna cultivators cultivate their own lands in Jaffna. So we tried to settle some people in Kilinochchi, in order that they might live there and help the land-owners to cultivate their lands during the *kalapokam* season. Unfortunately, we have not been able to attract many people to cultivate these lands during the *kalapokam* season. A certain number of people have been attracted to cultivate their fields during the *kalapokam* season, and I think that many more should be attracted.

But during the *sirupokam* season people come from Jaffna and cultivate these fields. If you want to increase the

cultivation during the *sirupokam* season to 10,000 acres, then you must increase the capacity of the tank——

Mr. Chelvanayakam: Raise the bund by four to five feet.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That will not do. We have now got 20,000 acres cultivated during the *kala-pokam* season, and if you want to cultivate 10,000 acres during the *sirupokam* season, the capacity of the tank has to be doubled. The difficulty in undertaking this work is this. If you double the capacity of the tank you will find the bund not strong enough for that purpose, because the wave action which is rather great during that time will cause harm to the bund. We are now trying to put concrete slabs to prevent the wave action doing harm to the bund. There is a proposal to raise the bund up to a certain height as soon as that work is over, and that will increase the storage capacity of the tank, so that 10,000 acres could be cultivated during the *sirupokam* season.

Mr. Chelvanayakam: That is the question.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is in course of preparation.

Mr. Chelvanayakam: The bund has been breached at present, and the question that I was asking was whether there is a proposal, or whether the question is being considered, to raise the bund and thus increase the capacity of the tank with a view to bringing a larger extent of land than at present under cultivation.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: With reference to item 1, I find that the whole of the Province of Uva has been allocated only Rs. 42,500, which I feel is hardly adequate to meet the needs of that Province. Even on the last occasion——

Dr. Perera: This is only for maintenance of existing works.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We are now discussing Vote 2.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: There are a number of tanks in the Wellassa area which need immediate repairs. Even on the last occasion I mentioned this. If these tanks are repaired and maintained, they would meet the needs of a number of villagers.

The Chairman: There is a vote of Rs. 42,500 for Uva, whereas for Sabaragamuwa there is only Rs. 26,500.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: That is hardly enough. Uva is a much larger and more neglected area compared to Sabaragamuwa.

Mr. A. R. A. M. Aboobucker (Mudur): There is provision of a sum of Rs. 8,500 for the Tamblegam-Kinniyai road, the length of which is 8½ miles. This road is the only road for that Pattu and you find about 150,000 acres of irrigable land in that area. This is the road used by all the people in that locality, and it has been given over to the Irrigation Department.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Not given over, it is maintained by the Irrigation Department. Only about 8.6 miles of that road is maintained by the Irrigation Department.

Mr. Aboobucker: If you want to maintain that road properly, the two streams intervening between Kinniyai and Tamblegam will have to be bridged. A sum of about one and a half lakhs would be required for the purpose of that work. That is a piece of work which is very essential for the agricultural improvement of that area. This is the only remark I make under this Vote. I hope the Hon. Minister will give due consideration to that. If he cannot do it this year, I hope he would at least include provision for this work in the next year's Budget.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: All that was necessary for the purposes of the Irrigation Department was about 8.6 miles of this road, and it has been built by them. There is no doubt that the two bridges referred to by the hon. Member are very necessary for the District. If they are built, they would be of great use to the people who come from Trincomalee. But this kind of

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

work is generally not undertaken by the Irrigation Department. They only deal with agricultural roads.

Mr. K. V. D. Sugathadasa (Weli-mada): Although a sum of about Rs. 600,000 is provided in the Estimates for various irrigation works in various places, I regret to find, as the hon. Second Member for Badulla pointed out, that only a sum of Rs. 42,000 has been allocated for existing works in Uva. They have not provided for any major works in Uva.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There is a big vote for Uva, although it is not shown under Uva.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There is the Kendala-ela scheme for Uva in the hon. Member's constituency.

Mrs. Kusumasiri Gunawardena (Avisawella): There is provision of a sum of Rs. 10,500 for the Kelani river flood bund and another Rs. 6,500 for the Ambatalenpahala area flood protection scheme. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister how exactly he is going to spend this money.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is to strengthen the bund.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member would realize that this is a maintenance vote and this is for the purpose of strengthening the bund.

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka: I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether, in view of the fact that a major flood protection scheme is to be launched for Nilwala-ganga, this sum of Rs. 21,000 provided under this vote is for the maintenance of the old works.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes. It is for the completed works.

Mr. V. G. W. Ratnayaka: I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether there will be any change in the flood protection scheme that has already been done.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:

We are awaiting the report of the expert who is now at it.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I would like to raise three points. The agricultural roads under the Karachchi scheme—

The Chairman: Have you got anything to say about the major works? Roads come under sub-head 4.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: What is the position regarding the Bolgoda flood protection scheme? Has Mr. Richards investigated that?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Mr. Richards is not investigating that. As I stated earlier, he has been asked to report on the Nilwala-Ganga, Gin-Ganga, Gampola and Ratnapura schemes. As regards the Bolgoda scheme—the right bank scheme and the Kalutara South scheme—

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: The Hon. Minister wrote and said that he would have Mr. Richards investigate that.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I find that a sum of Rs. 26,500 is being provided for "other major works" in the Northern Province. I would like to have some details as to how this sum would be spent.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: There are certain improvements that have got to be effected in some of the major works. Perhaps it may be to attend to the breaches in the Iranaimadu tank bund. This vote is meant for improvements to major works. I am sorry I cannot give the details just now.

Mr. Goonesinha: I find that a sum of Rs. 25,000 has been provided for the Gangaboda pattu scheme. I would like to know whether this is the same as the Gin-Ganga scheme or something else.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Same thing.

2.30 P.M.

Dr. Perera: You will notice that in all the other Votes we have had the cost of living allowance separated from

the main Vote, whereas only in this case everything has been lumped together. I do not know why this difference has been made—perhaps the Minister of Finance can answer that question.

The Chairman: In this there is no provision at all.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The allowance has been distributed among the different sub-heads.

The Chairman: You had it last year, but this year it has been taken out.

Dr. Perera: That is to say, the provision for giving the cost of living allowance has been lumped with the others?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: You have different allowances at different places, such as station allowance, and so on.

Dr. Perera: All lumped together?

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

*Sub-head 3.—Village Works,
Rs. 300,000.*

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Can I speak on sub-head 3, Sir?

The Chairman: Yes, please.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The Hon. Minister says that he is spending Rs. 200,000 on each irrigation sub-division. There is an irrigation sub-division at Mankulam, and I have brought to the notice of the officer concerned certain restoration work which has to be done to certain village tanks in the Tunukkai district. I will be very much pleased if the Hon. Minister will give me information as to what progress has been made by the irrigation sub-division officer at Mankulam.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That irrigation sub-division was started last year.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I want to know the extent of work that has been done so far.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I have not had time to make an investigation. It is in process of being done. As I said, Rs. 200,000 will be spent by that sub-division during the course of the current year.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Are you in a position to say how many tanks will eventually be restored?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: My hon. Friend will realize that the first thing that has to be done is to make a survey of the area. That work is now going on, and when the survey report is sent in to the Department, they make plans and so on. I believe there are a number of surveyors attached to each irrigation sub-division to carry out the survey.

*Sub-head 4.—Agricultural roads,
Rs. 250,000.*

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Agricultural roads are also a big problem in my constituency. In fact, last December, I had the privilege of going with my hon. Friend, the Member for Galle, and showing him the state of the Kilinochchi roads. They are in a very bad condition. I am sure that all hon. Members who have gone there will agree with me that the agricultural roads under the Karachchi scheme are in an equally bad state. Although money was voted ever since the scheme was started, nothing has been done either to strengthen or widen the roads. I have to mention however that, thanks to the progressive policy of the present Minister of Agriculture and Lands, there is now a great demand for lands in the Karachchi area, with the result that the wear and tear of these roads is also equally heavy.

One other aspect of these roads which must be mentioned is that many of the farmers live in the interior, and that when the fields are under cultivation or when they are under rain water, the farmers cannot use their carts. They have to walk a quarter or a half mile along perhaps a tank bund to reach the roads. Therefore, I would like to see that the agricultural roads are extended to farms in remote areas.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I should like to ask the hon. Member whether if a farmer has a farm of 1,000

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acres, he expects the Government to build roads within the 1,000 acres, and if he does, to what extent it should be done. Most of the farms in that area are of 50, 60 or 70 acres. I personally believe there is one 1,000-acre farm and another of about 400 or 500 acres.

As it is, you will find that there are parallel roads within about one mile of each other in these areas. The matter of connecting roads from one farm to another has been left to the owners, especially because they are not small owners. The people who want these roads are the big owners.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I agree with the Hon. Prime Minister if, as he says, the farms are owned by rich people. The trouble, unfortunately, is that in Jaffna there is not a single farm which is 1,000 or even 500 acres in extent. There are some farms of about 50 acres, and I do not want roads for them. The farms for which I want roads are those of about 5 or 6 acres. There are many farms in the Karachchi area of about 100 lachchams' sowing extent. I want these farms to be served by roads; and not those of rich people, which the Hon. Prime Minister does not want to do.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 1,889,600 for Head 73, Vote No. 2 be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 73, Vote 2, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 3.—Improvements and Extensions of Irrigation Works and construction of new works including cost of major Research Schemes, Staff Quarters, Labour Lines and other Departmental buildings and Irrigation roads, Rs. 4,046,414.

The Chairman: The Minister has given notice of a number of Amendments.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 25,000 in respect of a New sub-head 1A. 'Construction Workshop and Plant Store, Ratmalana.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 6,000 in respect of sub-head 36."

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 80,000 in respect of a New sub-head 40A, 'Puttur Tidal Well'."

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 32,000 in respect of a New sub-head 85A, 'Gravelling of Nagolla-Kosgalla Agricultural Road'."

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 22,400 in respect of sub-head 93."

Question put, and agreed to.

Dr. Perera: Sir, unless somebody wants to raise any questions on an earlier sub-head, I wish to speak on sub-head 8.

Mr. Aboobucker: I want, Mr. Chairman, to bring to your notice and that of this House that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands has been—

The Chairman: You are going to speak on the Eastern Province? Let us go Province by Province. Are there any remarks on the Western Province, Western Division? Southern Division?

Mr. Goonesekera: Under sub-head 14, Sir—

The Chairman: That is the Southern Province. Wait till we come to it.

Are there any remarks on the Central Province?

Mr. Pelpola rose.

Dr. Perera: There is just one point, Sir—

The Chairman: Let the hon. Member for Gampola speak.

Mr. Pelpola: I find that Rs. 20,000 has been provided for expenditure in

Hon. Members: Louder! We cannot hear him.

The Chairman: The hon. Member must speak up. I do not think even the Reporter can hear him.

Mr. Pelpola: Under sub-head 10, "Construction of Atabage-oya Scheme," the estimated expenditure for 1947-48 is Rs. 20,000, but, as far as I know, nothing has been done on that scheme. I want to know what work has been done so far.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The work is in hand at the present moment to provide irrigation facilities for 174 acres. The amount of Rs. 25,000 is for the completion of the work which is expected to be done before the 1949 *yala* cultivation.

Mr. Pelpola: Last year a sum of Rs. 20,000—

The Chairman: That is for this year up to September.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That amount is to be spent up to the 30th September, 1948.

Mr. Pelpola: Even if that is for spending up to September, no work has been done so far. I must say that I have not been there for the last one month, and I do not know whether work has been started only during the last month.

Dr. Perera: This is only for the purpose of information, Sir. Under sub-head 8, from the Estimated Total Cost at the end of this year, one would expect that the work would be practically over at that time; but a sum of Rs. 400 has been estimated for 1948-49 for land acquisition.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That is for payment of compensation.

Dr. Perera: In that case, the land has already been acquired?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes.

Dr. Perera: Then, Sir, sub-head 11 is for the "construction of a road along Mahagastota estate." Is that a private estate?

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

Dr. Perera: What rights have we got on that estate?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This raises a difficult question. I suppose when we construct the road we will have the right of way.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I shall give the information. The road to Ambawela goes through Mahagastota estate alongside a hill until you get to the other side of the estate.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As this money is meant for land acquisition, the estate road will be ours.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: What is proposed to be done is to construct a road from Blackpool to Ambawela, but as there is some land intervening which is only patna land—not under tea—which belongs to Mahagastota estate, that land will be acquired.

The Chairman: Any remarks on the Southern Province?

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva: I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the delay in the completion of the Hikkaduwa Post-Flood Drainage Scheme under sub-head 13. This is a scheme which, when completed, will bring over 3,000 acres of paddy land under cultivation. There has been considerable delay in carrying out the work, and I understand that to some extent it is due to objections raised by some landowners whose lands have to be acquired.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The landowners have not yet come to an agreement.

Mr. P. H. W. de Silva: What I wish to point out is that the objections of the landowners should not be allowed to stand in the way of carrying out this scheme.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: We have to act under the Land Acquisition Ordinance, and we cannot help it.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Unless the owners agree, we cannot go on. The Government Agent is endeavouring to bring about a settlement.

Mr. Dahanayake: The Moragoda-ela Salt Water Exclusion Scheme under sub-head 14 is within the Municipal limits of Galle. This estimate is very welcome, because it ends a 40-year old agitation on the part of the people. I am very thankful to the Director and to the Minister for having included this Item in the Estimates.

An Hon. Member: Also to the hon. Member for Udugama.

Mr. Dahanayake: The hon. Member for Udugama had nothing to do with the Moragoda-ela scheme. He had something to do with the Gin Ganga scheme.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: He also agitated.

Mr. Dahanayake: Long before that I agitated for it myself from the time I entered the Municipal Council; but we could make no headway with the previous Minister. Even in this case I had to see the Director of Irrigation several times in order to expedite the passage of papers and get the provision included in the Estimates. You will notice that, when these things are prepared, they never reach the Estimate stage for a number of years, and you have to go on pushing things through the various pigeon-holes in various departments.

There is one difficulty in regard to this scheme. As in other cases, you will find that this work cannot be taken in hand and completed within the current year. Just as in the case of the Hikkaduwa scheme, this work may never be taken in hand. What I suggest is that the staff that is employed under the Gin Ganga scheme, who at the moment do not have much work to do, should be put on to this scheme. I have made inquiries, and I find that that would be

possible. Otherwise, this estimate will have to be carried forward to the next year.

The real difficulty is that irrigation in Galle District is being managed from Kalutara and Hambantota. I think the Hon. Minister will agree with me that, in order to get information even on a simple matter, the people of the Galle District have to apply to Kalutara, but that Kalutara, in turn, may refer them to Hambantota. I hope that point will be borne in mind and remedied. As it is, it is extremely difficult to get even a minor work done in the Galle District because the Headquarters are far away in Kalutara and Hambantota.

Mr. Goonesekera: I am extremely sorry that the hon. Member for Galle should have said that I had nothing to do in Galle. When I became Mayor of Galle in 1942, an inspection was made of the Kiribathmunai bridge, and it was possible to get a grant of nearly Rs. 17,000 for the Municipal Council although this had been refused earlier. It was decided by the Municipal Council of Galle to construct a bridge over this ela, and the other day I suggested to the Irrigation Engineer to co-ordinate the Irrigation Department scheme with the bridge that the Municipality is going to construct. That will result in a saving to Government.

2.45 P.M.

I would ask the Minister of Agriculture and Lands to take this up with his Department before the Municipality construct their bridge. If the scheme of the Irrigation Department is joined up, as the work is to be carried out on the same spot, money could be saved and used for other purposes.

I am sorry the hon. Member for Galle should have misunderstood my remarks. I am not opposing any work meant to benefit Galle. The hon. Member for Galle should know that I am a voter in his constituency, and that I am also a member of the Galle Municipal Council.

Mr. Dahanayake: The agitation for the Moragoda-ela Salt Water Exclusion Scheme was revived by me when I was Mayor in 1939. I quite agree with the hon. Member for Udugama that the Galle Municipal Council agitated for this bridge, and subsequently a grant was

given for the bridge in the year that my hon. Friend the Member for Udugama was Mayor. This bridge cannot be constructed apart from the salt water exclusion scheme. The money allotted in 1934 or 1933 for this bridge lay in suspense account till the Minister of Agriculture and Lands came to our rescue by including this item in the Estimates, so that the hon. Member for Udugama is not altogether wrong in his statement—only, there has been a little mixing up of the details.

What is contemplated here is the salt water exclusion scheme; the money for the bridge was there from the time of the Mayoralty of the hon. Member for Udugama.

The Chairman: The credit goes to both hon. Members!

Any remarks on the other sub-heads?

Mr. Goonesekera: I cannot understand why the hon. Member for Galle should have said that I had no interest at all in this project. He was attending school in Galle when I—

The Chairman: We cannot adjudicate on the claims of the two hon. Members!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Although the hon. Member for Galle has thanked me, I do not propose to enter the contest for the claim to the parentage of this scheme!

The hon. Member for Galle will see that it is expected that Rs. 22,000 will be expended during the course of the coming financial year. I can assure him that the Gin Ganga Scheme staff will be put on this work. The delay in executing this scheme is due to the objections of the landowners. Until their consent is obtained, we cannot proceed with the scheme. The Government Agent proposes to make an endeavour to obtain their consent early.

Mr. Goonesekera: With regard to the item “Construction of Karagoda Anicut scheme—”

The Chairman: That is for land acquisition.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The work is completed. This vote is for payment for the land.

The Chairman: Any remarks on the other sub-heads under Southern Province? [Pause] Northern Province.

Mr. Chelvanayakam: I would like to refer to an item that has been omitted, not to an item that is included here in the Estimates—

The Chairman: Which is the item?

Mr. Chelvanayakam: I am going to refer to the omission of an item.

Last year I asked the Minister of Agriculture and Lands whether he would consider the question of lift irrigation in places like the Jaffna Peninsula, where gravitational irrigation is impossible. The Minister said that he had not considered it, but that he would look into the matter.

I submitted to the Minister a memorandum, rather incomplete, I must admit, because the question is new and requires a good deal of study. I want to know from the Minister whether the question will be given attention, and what has been done so far by the Department. I am referring to the question of lift irrigation in the Peninsula.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I might give some information to the hon. Member. There are only two wells in the Peninsula where lift irrigation on a large scale can be undertaken: Puttur, and the other some distance from Puttur—

An Hon. Member: Pokuna.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Lift irrigation can be adopted on a small scale all over the Island. That is a matter that should be undertaken by the owners themselves.

Mr. Chelvanayakam: That is what I am referring to—

The Chairman: There is a vote of Rs. 80,000 for the Puttur well—

Mr. Chelvanayakam: I am not referring to the Puttur well now. I am referring to the question of raising water from wells in places where the peasants can water their fields from wells alone. Outside the Jaffna Peninsula there are tanks, and water flows from higher to

[Mr. Chelvanayakam.]

lower levels. In Jaffna and in certain other parts of the Island, there are large numbers of peasant holdings which cannot be extended or intensively cultivated for want of some mechanical device for lifting water from the wells.

That is the question I referred to on the last occasion, and even the Prime Minister informed us then that, for want of facilities for lifting a greater volume of water from wells, the peasant holdings naturally remained small. We are concerned with the question of enabling the peasant to increase the size of his holding. This question, the Prime Minister informed us then, had not been investigated earlier. I called attention to this during the discussion on the last Budget.

This question is perhaps not one of spectacular importance, but its solution will have far-reaching consequences to the peasant.

The Chairman: Any further remarks?

Mr. Chelvanayakam: I want to know from the Minister whether the matter is being considered.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As regards the two major wells, Puttur and Pokuna, the matter is being investigated. This afternoon a file on this question was put up to me, and the matter will be investigated.

As regards the other question—how the small cultivator can be assisted—it may be possible to help him through the development of agricultural co-operatives. If these co-operatives could be helped to get the machinery and loan it, or sell it, to the individual members, I think something could be done in that direction. Certainly we shall see whether by that means we could help the peasant.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I want to ask a general question: What is the rate of pay given to the workers in these different places where irrigation works are carried on? I have been recently to Attidiya, where an irrigation scheme is being carried out, and I understand that the workers are paid a minimum wage of Re. 1.50 plus Re. 1.62 as war allowance.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: They get the usual Government rate.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: What is the usual Government rate? What is the minimum wage?

Mr. Dahanayake: 96 cents.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: At different places they are paid different rates.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The minimum wage, I understand, is Re. 1.24 plus war allowance.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I went to another place, where I found 200 people being employed, and I was told that the minimum wage was Re. 1 a day, plus war allowance, or Rs. 2.62 in all per day. Because the cost-of-living index has gone up, the Government pays Re. 1.62 as war allowance, keeping the minimum wage as low as Re. 1 a day.

The other day I went to Pasyala—

The Chairman: That question does not arise under this vote.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The minimum wage is Re. 1.24 a day.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The Government wage depends on the rate obtaining in the area. In Colombo, I believe the Government minimum wage is Re. 1.24 a day.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: In Boralesgamuwa it is Re. 1 a day.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The rates differ according to the area. We pay the wage rates—

Mr. Dahanayake: Under the recent salaries scheme the minimum wage per day is 96 cents for agricultural workers, and Re. 1.50 for factory labour.

The Chairman: Any further remarks under the Northern Province items?

Mr. T. Ramalinkam (Point Pedro): Reference has been made to the Puttur tidal well. I wish to refer to another spring, which lies in my constituency. The irrigation possibilities of that spring

also might be investigated. The work on this spring was suspended during the war owing to want of materials.

There is already some literature on this spring. [Interruption] I am referring to the spring called Atturu, in the Point Pedro area. Investigations were carried on during the war, and some literature has developed round that spring. Work was suspended during the war for want of the necessary machinery.

I made certain representations about this spring. I have received conflicting reports on the subject. The Kachcheri report is to the effect that the matter is still under investigation, but the Ministry informs me that the project had been fully investigated, and dropped.

I would ask the Minister to approach this question with an open mind and have the matter fully investigated. This spring deserves as full an investigation as the Puttur tidal well. I would urge the Minister to give adequate consideration to this matter.

The Chairman: Any further remarks on the items under the Northern Province?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: Under sub-head 10, the particulars read as follows:

“Providing irrigation facilities for tracts 80 and 10, Karachchi schemes”.

Is it 8, 9 and 10?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: 9c and 10.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: With regard to sub-head 34, “Water supply to irrigation, Department Quarters at Kilinochchi,” may I know what is the position about the supply of drinking water to the colonists? I brought this question to the notice of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands about a month ago—the need to supply good drinking water to the colonists. I hope the Minister will take steps to see that these colonists are given a supply of good water.

The Chairman: Anything else?

Mr. Kumaraswamy: I thought it would be easier for the Minister to answer these questions separately.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: No answer is necessary.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I cannot give an answer to that. All that I can say is that I shall consider it.

The Chairman: With regard to items that have not been included in these Estimates, all that the Minister can say is that he will consider them.

Mr. Kumaraswamy: With regard to item 35, “Mandaitivu salt water exclusion scheme”, how much of the vote has been spent?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This scheme will benefit 600 acres which are now inundated with salt water.

The Chairman: Eastern Province, page 224.

Mr. Aboobucker: Sub-heads 43, 44 and 45 relate to works in my constituency, but it is strange that they are lumped together with sub-heads relating to works in the Northern Province—

The Chairman: The heading is “Eastern Province—Northern Division.”

3.0 P.M.

Mr. Aboobucker: We have no fascination for the separate kingdom which the hon. Member for Kankasanturai espouses.

The Chairman: They are not done in the Northern Province, but by the Engineer in charge of the Northern Division.

Mr. Aboobucker: I should like to see Mutur constituency also included in the Northern Province.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is Eastern Province, Northern Division.

The Chairman: This is the Northern Division of the Eastern Province.

Mr. Aboobucker: I find that there is a provision of Rs. 189,000 under sub-heads 41 to 45. I thank the Hon. Minister for such a big provision.

My constituency forms the delta of the biggest river in Ceylon. It has natural boundaries, and it can withstand the attacks which might come from any quarter, including those from the Kingdom of Jaffna—

Mr. Kumaraswamy: The State of Hyderabad has capitulated! [*Laughter.*]

The Chairman: Order, Order!

Mr. Aboobucker: It has even land, and it comprises about 300,000 acres. But, at the end of 6 years, we are told that about 3,200 acres under the Kantalai Scheme, and 11,200 acres under the Allai Scheme, will be opened up. Is that all? I ask. Out of a cultivable extent of about 200,000 acres, the Government are bringing under cultivation, after 6 years, only about 14,000 acres! What is the Hon. Minister's policy? [*Interruption & Laughter.*]

The Chairman: Order, Order! I must ask hon. Members to make less noise; because I find that the Reporters cannot take down what is said. There is so much noise coming from one side that what is said on the other cannot be heard, and there is such a noise coming from the opposite side that what is said on the other side cannot be heard to be taken down. Surely you are not fair by the Reporters.

Mr. Aboobucker: In my constituency there is plenty of land available for cultivation. No provision is made to cultivate that land, and, what is more, the villagers are persecuted. Their paddy has been confiscated—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Paddy has been confiscated?

Mr. Aboobucker: Yes. Paddy had been confiscated last year.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Taken over for the Internal Purchase Scheme?

Mr. Aboobucker: Yes. Under the circumstances, how are the villagers going to carry on?

Paddy is not the only product that can be grown in that area. That area has the best soil for the cultivation of sugar-cane. This matter was brought to the notice of the Hon. Prime Minister when he visited my constituency, and he gave an undertaking that he would consider the matter and bring it to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands. I think he has done that, and I do hope that sugar-cane cultivation will be taken up in earnest in my constituency.

I might also inform the Hon. Minister that the soil of this land is very rich and suitable for cotton cultivation. I would ask him to take steps to see that cotton is also cultivated there. In my constituency you can bring under cultivation 200,000 acres of land. For this purpose you must utilize the man-power, the water-power and the soil that is available.

These are some of the matters which I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister, and I hope that he will give due consideration to the various points I have raised.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: While I assure the hon. Member that I will give due consideration to the points he has raised, I would like to point out that the biggest schemes that have been adopted by this country hitherto have been in the Eastern Province—

The Chairman: There are 40 sub-heads for Eastern Province!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: And the hon. Member wants to know what our agricultural policy is!

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: May I be permitted to make a few observations on this matter, Mr. Chairman?

As far as this area is concerned, it is not one which can be provided with water for paddy cultivation for the simple reason that it gets inundated all along. But there is not the slightest doubt that the area is very suitable for sugar-cane cultivation. I remember my hon. Friend pointing out the land to me. I wish to inform him, however, that there is an

experimental station there, and that sugar-cane plantation nurseries have been opened up where that area could be developed and planted with sugar-cane. Not only sugar-cane, but also tobacco can be grown there, and I might also say that that is the best area in Ceylon for cotton cultivation.

Dr. Perera: With regard to sub-head 51, under Eastern Division, "Improvements to convert miles 3 and 4 of Vellaveli-Divulane D. R. C. road into an Agricultural road, Divulane Scheme, Rs. 22,000", may I, merely for the sake of satisfying my curiosity, know why this big amount is necessary just to convert an existing D. R. C. road into an Agricultural road?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The D. R. C. roads you are thinking of are not like the roads in the Colombo District.

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: D. R. C. only in name!

Dr. Perera: Under sub-head 74, there is an item "Restoration of Karadian-aruru Tank, Unichchai Scheme, for development of 200 acres". The Department has been spending Rs. 182,000 already. What is the actual cost of this?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The restoration is not yet complete. I will be able to give the cost only when the 200 acres are restored.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: As a matter of fact, this is one of a chain of tanks under the Karadian-aruru Scheme. Although what we are doing now looks costly at first sight, by the time we get the other tanks restored the average cost would be much less.

The Chairman: Any remarks under North-Western Province?

Mr. Iriyagolla: I find that, in general, a comparably very small sum has been allotted for irrigation works in the North-Western Province, and I see that even this sum is provided only for the Western Division. I understand that the Ministry had certain schemes, such as Kadupitiya-wewa Scheme, a major scheme, Madawewa Scheme, Halpan-oya Scheme, and Yakabandiela Scheme.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That cannot be done.

Mr. Iriyagolla: Only about 300 acres will be inundated.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I think I gave some information about this subject.

Mr. Iriyagolla: The Hon. Minister might have given the information, but that is not the correct information.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I know that that information is correct because I am familiar with every inch of the area.

Mr. Iriyagolla: But sometimes that information may be wrong.

I do not see any money allotted for these schemes. With regard to Kadupitiya-wewa Scheme, I understand that the whole area was surveyed by the Survey Department, but I find that nothing has been mentioned with regard to this Scheme in the Estimates. This is an area with vast possibilities for agriculture, and I hope the Hon. Minister will take notice of this. At present the cultivators in this area have to depend on rainfall.

I think the Hon. Minister promised to see about these matters, and I, therefore, appeal to him to examine the various schemes in the North-Western Province which I mentioned, particularly Kadupitiya-wewa, Halpan-oya and Pandawa Schemes, and see that, at least in the next year's Budget, money will be provided for a start to be made on these schemes.

I see that vast sums of money are spent on other Provinces, but not on the North-Western Province, although many of our Ministers derive their income from this Province.

Mr. Albert F. Peris (Nattandiya): I should like to mention another matter with regard to the North-Western Province. As the hon. Member for Dandagamuwa stated, only a very small sum has been allotted this year, although a number of schemes had been formulated.

With regard to Kadupitiya-wewa Scheme, an extent of 2,000 acres can be brought under cultivation. The only difficulty is that, once a proposal is

[Mr. Albert F. Peris.]

made to the Irrigation Department, a report is received to the effect that the scheme is uneconomical, and the matter is shelved. I would ask the Hon. Minister to take up these schemes in spite of such reports, because they are long-term schemes and in the long run will benefit the people of the area. I hope that, at least in the coming year, a substantial sum will be allotted for these schemes.

Mr. K. Herat (Nikaweratiya): I associate myself with the remarks made by my hon. Friends, the Members for Dandagamuwa and Nattandiya. Furthermore, as I requested on a previous occasion, I want to have some information regarding Kudagal-oya scheme. When I wrote to the Hon. Minister regarding Kudagal-oya—this is a stream running from Kudagal-oya along Kala-oya to Tabbowa—I was asked to consult the Department of Irrigation. But both the Director of Irrigation and the Divisional Irrigation Engineer, Western Province, have informed me that they are unaware of such a scheme. I find, however, that certain surveys are now being made. I would like the Hon. Minister to inform me from whom I could get this information, whether such a scheme is in the making and, if so, whether it will come under consideration in next year's Budget.

Another matter which I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister is the question of a supply channel from Siyambalagamuwa-oya to Galigomuwa Tank. This scheme had been proposed as far back as 1933 or 1934, but at that time the stream Siyambalagamuwa-oya was thought to be not perennial. Statistics have now proved that this stream is perennial, and that this is a very feasible piece of work which could be undertaken at very little cost. Since 1910 Galigomuwa Tank has not spilled, and if a channel from Siyambalagamuwa-oya to Galigomuwa Tank, is constructed, over 2,000 acres could be brought under cultivation. I have gone into the details of this scheme personally with the Superintendent of Minor Tank Restorations, but I find, however, that it cannot be undertaken by him. I understand that he is detailed to carry out works amounting to only Rs. 30,000 or less. I do not

think that this scheme could be put into operation for Rs. 30,000, but I hope that the Hon. Minister will give this matter his attention.

There is also another matter which I have discussed with the Superintendent of Minor Tank Restorations. This, too, is in connexion with a scheme that had been recommended in 1933. I find that no action has been taken up to the present moment. I refer to Kodikkatuwa Tank in the Wannu Hatpattu. This tank could bring under cultivation an extra 2,000 acres of paddy field.

I hope the Hon. Minister will consider the fact that these three schemes are really important irrigation works within my electorate, which should be undertaken by the Department.

Another point, Sir. I was given to understand that, in respect of major irrigation works, Rs. 100 was paid as a subsidy for the asweddumization of an acre of paddy field, but later on I learnt that this Rs. 100 was not to be paid to those who own more than 5 acres of paddy field. I do not know whether my information is correct. Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to inform me whether my information is correct, that those who own 5 acres or more of paddy field will not be paid, under major irrigation schemes, that subsidy of Rs. 100 per acre?

3.15 P.M.

Mr. H. Sri Nissanka (Kurunegala): I would like to say a word or two, if I may. Whilst joining in the general chorus of disapproval in respect of the small amount of money which had been reserved for this very important Province, which I might say is one of the standout Provinces in the Island as far as agriculture is concerned, I do wish to say this, that I attended two meetings of the Agricultural Committees in that area—I would like the Hon. Minister to see that there are more meetings of that kind—

The Chairman: Under the new rules, every three months.

Mr. Nissanka: I hope that will be so. The general chorus from all Irrigation Officers was, "No funds. We can't do this, we can't do that, and we can't do the other thing, because there is no

money." If that is the complaint of Government officers, and they cannot move forward for want of funds, I would ask the Hon. Minister to consider the matter very seriously in the next Estimates.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:

As regards meetings of Agricultural Committees, I think these Committees will be meeting more frequently. I do not think the complaint has been that there are no funds. All funds asked for by the D. A. Cs are allowed. It is for the D. A. Cs to ask for the maximum amount of funds that they want—funds that can be spent on works that can be undertaken in those areas. I wish hon. Members to bear in mind that this item only deals with works above Rs. 30,000; this does not comprise the total irrigation programme of that area. For works under Rs. 30,000, as I stated, there is a special sub-division which is going to do work up to Rs. 2,000,000—

Mr. Nissanka: That is the Department that complains that there are no funds.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:

This District is getting the necessary funds—

The Chairman: You have got Rs. 1,500,000 for works under Rs. 30,000.

The Chairman: North-Central Province.

Mr. Bauddhasara: May I ask the Hon. Minister whether he has in view the raising of the bund of the Minneriya tank?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: There is a scheme for increasing the capacity of the tank.

Mr. Bauddhasara: Without raising the bund?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: No, the bund need not come up.

Poholiyadde Dissawa: May I know from the Hon. Minister what steps he has taken to augment the water supply of Nachchaduwa. Recently it has been

found that there has been a stream by which Nachchaduwa was fed in ancient times, and that there is a possibility of augmenting the water supply and getting water from Nuwara-wewa, Tissa-wewa or Basawakkulama. I understand there is always, practically every year, a water scarcity at Nachchaduwa. I think even today water cannot be found in those tanks for the cultivation of lands which can be cultivated under those tanks. I hope the Hon. Minister is aware that for ages a stream had existed to feed Nachchaduwa, a stream called Yal-oya channel which brought water from Sigiriya. There is a possibility of cleaning up this channel and bringing water along it to Nachchaduwa.

With regard to village tanks, if he walks about the N.-C.P. today, he will find that there are approximately 6,000 tanks and that every one of them is dry; you do not find sufficient water even for drinking purposes. This is not the first time it has happened; it occurs once in five years. I think it will continue for ever unless steps are taken to turn a water-course to this tank.

According to ancient history, the North-Central Province has had five feeder channels from the Central Province through the Amban-ganga, and these channels have fed the North-Central Province throughout the year. What we are trying to do is to retain sufficient water in the tanks collected from the rains.

I am very glad to mention—and I am very grateful to the Hon. Minister for it—the interest he has taken in the Province and the creation of a sub-division there. However, I think that there is much more to be done with regard to supplementing the water supply in the village tanks.

After all, you will realize, Sir, that the North-Central Province was the Province which kept Ceylon fed to a very large extent during the Emergency—

Gate Mudaliyar Kariapper: The Eastern Province came first, and Uva third, I believe.

Poholiyadde Dissawa: The N.-C.P. came first, I think. Anyway, you can have the credit, if you want. At the

[Poholiyadde Dissawa.]

time of the elections we held out promises to the villagers that these ancient channels would be improved. I believe the Hon. Prime Minister himself encouraged the people to carry on with their cultivation work with certain promises made to them with regard to the improvement of their tanks. I hope the Hon. Prime Minister will remember the promises that he has held out and convey them to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands in order that he may satisfy the villagers that we are people who keep faith with them.

The Chairman: Uva Province.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: On Sub-head 95, Sir, I would like to mention that the workers employed in these schemes are not treated well. They have to live and work in out-of-the-way places, in jungle areas, and when they finish their day's work, they have no facilities of any kind for recreation. There is not even a volley-ball court or some place provided for them to play some outdoor game for healthy recreation. Recently some of the workers employed on the Taldena-Kudaheta area were charged in the Rural Court with playing cards.

Regarding Uva, I am sorry to say that the amount provided is not sufficient to meet the needs of this Province. I would earnestly urge upon the Minister to give Uva some thought and to see that even next year he has some other schemes for this area. It has been neglected, and it continues to be neglected. I believe the main difficulty in Uva is that the Government Agent is in charge of the supervision of these schemes, and our sad experience has been that every Government Agent who had come there had happened to be a person whose sympathies were with the planting community, and not with the peasantry of that area. And the present officer is no better.

Mr. K. V. Nadarajah (Bandarawela): With regard to sub-head 98, "Quarters for clerk at Bandarawela", I would suggest that the Bandarawela Hotel premises be acquired by the Government to accommodate officers of all the Government departments in the Bandarawela town. There are a number of

Government officials living in private houses paying high rents.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We have already started the building of these quarters and we are completing them, so that we cannot acquire the Hotel premises for this purpose.

The Chairman: This sum of Rs. 12,000 is for the completion of the work.

Mr. Nadarajah: I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he is aware of a petition sent by the people of the Etampitiya area regarding the Uvamila Scheme. That was before the present Minister took office. There was a memorial sent to the then Minister of Agriculture, requesting him to develop that scheme which is capable of cultivating 500 acres at the cost of a few thousand rupees. If he is not aware of it, I would request him to visit the Uva Province and see the possibilities of this scheme. Let him make his first visit to Bandarawela.

The Chairman: Sabaragamuwa Province.

Mr. E. W. Mathew (Second Balan-goda): The Sabaragamuwa Province had been neglected for a long time, and I am glad to find that the Hon. Minister has set apart Rs. 1,500,000—

The Chairman: That is for the whole Island.

Mr. Mathew: But it comes under Sabaragamuwa according to the Estimates.

The Chairman: I know, it is a misprint.

Mr. Mathew: Then I will have to withdraw what I said.

The Chairman: May I know what has happened to the Galapaya Scheme? The Hon. Prime Minister visited the place and asked for certain estimates to be drawn up. That scheme can bring under cultivation at least five to six thousand acres.

Dr. Perera: Can I ask this question on your behalf? Sabaragamuwa is like the Cinderella of the Provinces.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I will just look into it.

The Chairman: Items 101 and 102 are both in my electorate. They were started last year, and, I believe, they will be finished this year. They promised to give the Ambawala scheme and the Galapaya scheme, but there is nothing in these Estimates.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Curiously enough, this happens to be the "Red" Province in the Island.

The Chairman: But there are some of us who retain our seats there.

Mr. Dahanayake: I think Sabaragamuwa should receive more attention, in view of the fact that the Father of the House represents a Sabaragamuwa constituency and by virtue of his office is unable to press the case of Sabaragamuwa before the House. I think it should receive special treatment on that account.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I assure the House that I will certainly give special preference to Sabaragamuwa, not only because the Hon. Speaker represents a Sabaragamuwa constituency, but because I also come from Sabaragamuwa.

Mr. Keerthiratne: In the whole of the Kegalla area there is not a single major scheme. It is a large area with five constituencies. Unfortunately, no tanks had been constructed in this area in the olden days, but there are large rivers flowing through this area—the Maha Oya, the Kelani-ganga, and other rivers. Cannot the Minister get his engineers to devise some scheme for harnessing the water of these rivers?

3.30 P.M.

The Chairman: We now come to the General Heads.

Mr. Tenne: May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the Atabage-oya Scheme in Central Province—

The Chairman: We have finished the votes under the Central Province.

Mr. W. P. A. Wickremasinghe (Akuressa): I should like to know from the Hon. Minister how the sum of Rs. 1,500,000 is going to be allocated to the different divisions, whether the schemes are all ready or whether they are to be submitted to him for the money to be allocated.

Rs. 1,500,000 is going to be allocated to the different divisions, whether the schemes are all ready or whether they are to be submitted to him for the money to be allocated.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The money will be distributed according to the demands that come from the D. A. Cs.

Dr. Perera: Then the difficulty I raised earlier comes in. If you relieve the Construction Engineers—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Construction Engineers will be relieved because we are increasing the cadre of Construction Engineers in the Head Office. The cadre is being increased to relieve the people in the divisional areas of construction work so that they can devote more time for field work.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: Did I understand the Hon. Minister to say that the allocations would be made to the Government Agent?

The Chairman: D. A. Cs.

Mr. Mathew: Under sub-heads 108, 109, and 110 I notice that a sum of Rs. 916,000 has been provided for stores, and so on. I would like to know whether it is a sign that the money is going to be spent on the Walawe Scheme. It is not specifically stated on what items of work the money is to be spent.

The Chairman: It is needed for the staff.

Mr. Mathew: The Hon. Minister told me some time ago that the works in connexion with the Walawe Scheme would be started some time this year.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: After the first year of the Gal Oya construction work is over, the Walawe Scheme will be started.

Mr. Mathew: It is high time that the buildings were put up for the Engineers and the roads were constructed.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is too early yet.

The Chairman: The road has been constructed.

Dr. Perera: My only complaint about sub-heads 108, 109, and 110 is that no details are provided. There appears a bald statement "Quarters for staff". We do not know where they are going to be put up.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I will give you details:

Northern Division	Rs.
Jaffna S. D. Bungalow for E. i. e.,	
Jaffna S. D. ...	46,000
S. F. A. Quarters, Kilinochchi ...	25,000
Clerks' quarters, Kilinochchi ...	11,000
Overseers' quarters, Iranamadu ...	12,000
Mannar S. D. Storekeepers' quarters at Murunkan ...	15,000
Vavuniya S. D. F. A's quarters at Vavuniya ...	29,000
S. K's quarters ...	23,300
Clerks' quarters ...	23,300
Central Division.	
Kandy S. D., F. A's quarters at Kandy ...	24,000
Badulla S. D. F. A's quarters at Bandarawela ...	25,000
Ratnapura S. D. F. A's quarters Bungalow for E. I. C., Ratnapura S. D. ...	21,000
Acquisition of land for above ...	52,000
	14,000

And there are various other items.

The Chairman: All over the Island.

Mr. Herat: Arising from what the Hon. Minister has said, I would like to know if the list of works regarding minor village irrigation schemes are to be forwarded by the Government Agent.

The Chairman: No, the D. A. Cs.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Of which the Government Agent is the Chairman.

Mr. Herat: What happens at present is that the Superintendent who is in charge of the Irrigation schemes is directly under the D. I. E., W. D.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: He is also a member.

Mr. Herat: This only duplicates matters. No work can be carried out.

Mr. Wickremasinghe: Under sub-head 111, I want to ask the Hon. Minister a question. In certain districts there is a tax called the *huwandiram tax*. A portion of this goes to the vel Vidane and the rest is deposited in the Kachcheri to be credited to revenue. I want to know whether that money is taken into consideration when these votes are framed, and, if there is a balance, how it is spent. Supposing there is a sum of Rs. 40,000 allotted to Matara district. After certain work is carried out and there is a balance of Rs. 20,000, I want to know whether that money is also brought into the account of the tax.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No.

The Chairman: I do not know where that question comes in.

Mr. Dahanayake: Under the same sub-head, may I know how the work is to be carried out? Is the work to be carried out by the Irrigation Department or by village labour obtained through the headman?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Government Agent.

Mr. Dahanayake: Working through the headman; and I take it that those who work on the schemes are the villagers. Is that correct?

Dr. Perera: The position is a little unsatisfactory because this matter was discussed by the D. A. C. I remember the maximum allocated for any work was Rs. 2,500. After that sum was spent the Government Agent could not expend anything else. If the work was within Rs. 2,500, he could have undertaken it out of the amount allocated. That sum was all right prior to the increase in the cost of material. What could have been done formerly for Rs. 2,500 could not be done today for even Rs. 4,000 or Rs. 5,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Under the Food Production Vote No. 2, the Revenue Officers can go up to Rs. 5,000 on their own.

Dr. Perera: Another point is that these schemes can only be undertaken by the Government Agent provided they do not cost more than a certain amount—I think it is Rs. 90 per acre. There again the sum is too low. I think, it was originally Rs. 60 but it was raised to Rs. 90 subsequently. That amount is still inadequate. Under present conditions I think it should be raised at least to Rs. 200. There are a good number of schemes I know of, small *amunas*—

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I am contemplating raising the amount to Rs. 250.

Dr. Perera: That will meet the situation because the work on a large number of *amunas* is being held up.

Major Montague Jayewickreme (Weligama): On the question raised by the hon. Member for Akuressa, I want to tell the Hon. Minister that it is in the Galle and the Matara districts that that particular tax is collected. There is provision in an Ordinance for the collection of this tax. I would request the Hon. Minister to remove this anomaly by deleting the particular clause in that Ordinance which requires the collection of this tax. The people feel very strongly about it.

Mr. Dahanayake: Not in Galle.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: There is provision here in a sum of Rs. 35,000 for the clearing and repairing of *elas*. I wish to know whether this vote includes the suburban areas of Rajagiriya, Kotte, and Nugegoda in the Colombo district. At the present moment there are some people who are working on some scheme sponsored by the Hon. Minister of Labour and Social Services.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: They are engaged on Unemployment Relief works.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: But will that be co-ordinated with the work of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Irrigation Department provided the work on the Unemployment Relief Vote.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: May I inquire who decides on the *elas* to be cleared?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Revenue Officers.

Dr. Perera: This list also goes through the D. A. Cs.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: Not in respect of *elas*.

Mr. Dahanayake: There is a foot-note which says that expenditure will be incurred by the Government Agents and their Assistants on their own discretion and responsibility.

Dr. Perera: But it will be discussed in the D. A. C.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: I notice a sum of Rs. 7,668 for the Badulla district. My submission is that it is not sufficient to meet the needs of even the Badulla electorate. I have found that there are a number of villages nestling among large estates. In every village the complaint is that they have no water as a result of tea plantations being opened up, water reservations, and the clearing of jungle land. All this has caused the water sources to dry up, and the result is that the villagers are without water. Their chief complaint is that they have no water to cultivate the paddy fields.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: These are demands that come from the various Revenue Officers. But it does not mean that my expenditure is limited to this figure, because there are always savings available which I can divert to most of the votes that run dry.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: As I said, no officer has been sent there to make a survey of the needs of the people.

The Chairman: There is the D. A. C.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member himself is in it.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: I will make it a point to see, when I am elected to the Committee, that this survey is carried out.

Mrs. Florence Senanayake: Under sub-head 111 there is a sum of only Rs. 10,000 for the Ratnapura district. In my area alone there are several anicuts to be constructed. This sum is hardly sufficient.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is not for anicuts; it is for *amunas*.

Mrs. Florence Senanayake: *Amunas* are the same.

The Chairman: I think that can come under the votes of the District Agricultural Committees. There is a sum of Rs. 1,500,000.

Poholiyadde Dissawa: There is a sum of Rs. 40,000 for Anuradhapura as against Rs. 85,000 which we had last year. Although the Hon. Minister has been good enough to allocate this money, I wish to know whether he has satisfied himself or made inquiry to see whether these amounts have been spent. As far as I know, there is any amount of work in the provinces for any amount of money that is voted. I understand that practically nothing was spent last year. Our vote which should have been increased this year has been decreased.

I would like to state that the Revenue Officer who is in charge of this vote has taken no pains to get the work done with the money that has been voted. I raised this question with him over and over again. I wrote to him and suggested that the works he had planned out under this Head should be submitted to the D.A.Cs in the form of a priority list.

I would suggest, in future, that all works under sub-head 111 should be submitted for the consideration of the D.A.Cs and approved in the same manner as major works are approved. I hope the Hon. Minister will take action in this matter.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member will have that work done by the D.A.C.

The Chairman: I think that can be easily done, now that hon. Members are in these Committees.

Poholiyadde Dissawa: I think the other Members of our D.A.C. are in this House. It is the Government Agent who would not do the work. I want the Hon. Minister to take action and to instruct the Government Agent to submit his proposals in the form of a priority list to the D.A.C.

Major Jayewickreme: I want an assurance from the Hon. Minister about the *huwandiram* tax.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: What is the assurance the hon. Member wants?

Major Jayewickreme: That he will remove the existing anomaly.

The Chairman: In other districts it is collected at the *kamatha*. In Matara and Galle a certain percentage goes to the *vel vidane* and the rest is taken to the Kachcheri to be credited to revenue.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: They use that for village works.

The Chairman: That is why the hon. Members want it removed.

Mr. Wickremasinghe: Neither the Assistant Government Agent nor the Director of Irrigation nor the Hon. Minister knows anything about this.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Assistant Government Agent has at his disposal the amount collected.

3.45 P.M.

Mr. Tenne: May I know whether estimates for works costing Rs. 2,500 and under are to be prepared by the Irrigation Department or the Revenue Officer?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The Revenue Officer can do it.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 4,118,814 for Head 73, Vote No. 3, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 73, Vote 3, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 74.—Valuation Department

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and expenses of the Valuation Department, Rs. 558,146.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, “That the Vote be increased by Rs. 28,000 in respect of sub-head 1, New item ‘Valuer Rating.’”

This sum is asked for as it is proposed to appoint Mr. Stewart Orr, who is specially qualified in rating work. The provision is to include salary for two months in the current financial year. The terms will be settled by the Public Service Commission.

Dr. Perera: I think Mr. Stewart Orr has gone to England.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: He has gone, but he is coming back on this special salary to do this rating work.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: May I explain the position? The Valuation Department consists of two sections—General and Rating. The General section deals with acquisitions, and so on, for the Central Government, but the rather more onerous part of the work is performed by that section which does rating work for the local authorities. As the House knows, Mr. Stewart Orr, when he was head of the whole Department—which was under me in the last State Council—was the only expert we had in Ceylon, next to Captain Eastman whom he succeeded, with experience in rating work. Unfortunately, before his contract expired he gave notice and left, because he could not get on with another officer—Mr. Schokman—who died shortly after. Mr. Stewart Orr had gone to England at the time of Mr. Schokman's death, and Mr. Wickremasinghe, who had returned from England after training there—although he has still got to complete his examination—was put in charge of the Department. There is no one in the Department with sufficient experience to work the new Rating Ordinance, so I asked my hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture whether he would consent to putting Mr. Stewart Orr in charge of the Rating Section of the Valuation Department. I took the matter up with him and tried to secure

his services again. Nominally, he will be under the head of that Department. Mr. Stewart Orr has consented and he has returned to Ceylon, and this provision is being asked for in order to employ him on contract for about three years; it will certainly not exceed that period.

Dr. Perera: He was an old man at the time he left!

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Certainly not.

Question, “That the Vote be increased by Rs. 28,000 in respect of sub-head 1, New item ‘Valuer Rating,’” put, and agreed to.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: There are two or three observations I wish to make regarding this Department. I do not want to make any sweeping charges, but there is one thing—and I can vouch for what I say—and that is that this Department has been guilty of two very serious offences, namely, corruption and delay. It is a well-known fact that in this Valuer's Department they have worked out a system on a certain basis where convenient valuations are made. I would ask our energetic Minister to pay a little more attention to this aspect as well as to the matter of delay.

Dr. Perera: May I have some explanation as to why the number of Assistant Valuers, Probationers and Temporary Assistant Valuers has been increased, and why this temporary staff is still being retained?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The temporary staff is dealing with compensation claims and speeding up the work.

As regards the matters raised by the hon. Member for Dehiowita, we are increasing the staff to remove the second difficulty he complained of, that is regarding the arrears of work. I would like to give him an idea of the work that he has been doing. During the last few months we have considerably speeded up our work, and 101 properties were valued for acquisition purposes worth over Rs. 3,000,000, 1,819 properties were valued for Estate Duty, 120 for Stamp Duty, 65 for the Public Trustee, and one for the State

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.]

Mortgage Bank, totalling 2,105 properties on an average of 263 per month.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 586,146, for Head 74, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 74, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 75.—Commissioner, Agricultural Corps

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and expenses of the Administrative staff of the Agricultural Corps including cost of (i.) Construction of Camp, &c., Rs. 846,650.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 3,000 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Commissioner'".

The Amendment is to bring the salary scale of the Commissioner up to the amount at which the post was advertised. He has been paid on that scale, but the Treasury has included another scale in the draft Estimates, and it is sought, by this Amendment, to bring it up to the advertised scale.

Dr. Perera: The Commissioner's salary scale has been fixed at Rs. 13,800 to Rs. 15,600. An outsider has been appointed, and I presume he has been appointed on this scale.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We now propose to alter the Estimate scale to the advertised scale by this Amendment.

Dr. Perera: What is the new scale you propose?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The salary scale on which the post was advertised, that is, Rs. 16,800 to Rs. 18,000.

Dr. Perera: Surely a change like this in a salary scale should receive somebody's sanction?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: We are merely proposing to bring it up to the advertised scale. This is the

scale on which the post was advertised, and applications were called for on that scale.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: May we know how much was earned by this Agricultural Corps working for other departments till the end of June this year?

Mr. Dahanayake: The House should take very serious notice about the manner in which this Department is being run. As it stands, I think the Department is really top-heavy. The real men who form the backbone of this Department now carry out works for other Government departments, such as the Irrigation Department, Land Development Department, Food Production Department, &c., on contract at negotiated rates. Therefore, the majority of men in this Department really serve under various other departments, and in the performance of such work there should be a profit, or if there is no profit, there should be a small loss; we can understand that. If you lend your labour to another Government department—

The Chairman: The anticipated loss is 6 lakhs.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is a loss.

The number of *sevakas* is 2,000, so the loss is not very considerable. What I wish to point out is that the staff men who are put on to manage this Department are paid salaries, the sum total of which is not in proportion to the nature of the work done by the Department. You have a Commissioner on a very high salary, a Senior Assistant Commissioner, two more Assistant Commissioners, and 35 clerks supervising the work of 2,000 *sevakas*. That is why I call this Department top-heavy. I am certain, from my own observations, that it would be possible to run this Department with one Commissioner and about 20 clerks: You can eliminate the Senior Assistant Commissioner, the two Assistant Commissioners, and about 15 clerks from this Department.

Why has that not been done? For this reason. When this Department was first constituted, posts for these various staff officers were created. Then the Department underwent a

change from doing work of their own, to lending labour to other departments; lending the *sevakas* to other departments, and hiring them at contract rates. I am using the words 'lending labour' as a general term. My point is, when that change took place—a change which completely altered the working of the Department—although the *sevakas* were affected, yet the men at the top were retained in their positions without consideration of the changed circumstances. I can understand the fact that there were about five Commissioners at the time when the *sevakas* were in camp. They had to be taught their work and their work had to be supervised when they were taken to work in other places and they had to be brought back. That was the position when this Department was originally formed. These *sevakas* had to be taught their work and they had to be kept under rigid discipline—it was something like an unofficial army. Today, its whole face has changed. I will modify the view which I expressed earlier—that one Commissioner and 20 clerks would be sufficient—in the light of further thought, and say that a good Supervisor alone will be able to handle these men.

I would, therefore, ask the Hon. Minister to look into this question with a view to making this Department less top-heavy and thereby reducing the cost to Government.

The Chairman: The Sitting is suspended until 4.30 P.M.

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

4.30 P.M.

Dr. Perera: When we adjourned for tea, I was about to point out an irregularity in regard to the appointment of the Commissioner. It is unfortunate that we are not in a position to criticize the Public Service Commission as this appointment was made by the Public Service Commission.

With regard to the salary, Sir, I can understand an extraordinarily high salary scale—almost a Civil Servant's salary—being provided for a first-class man, but, to the best of my knowledge, on the salary provided, they have appointed a person who was only a schoolmaster.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: What is wrong with it?

Dr. Perera: All I can say is that a man who was drawing about Rs. 300 is now suddenly raised to a position where he will draw over Rs. 1,000 a month. I can understand the salary being raised in order to attract a first-class man, a man with a tremendous amount of experience, and I happen to know that in this particular case first-class men applied.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Who are they?

Dr. Perera: However, rightly or wrongly, this man has been chosen, and we are not in a position to criticize the action of the Public Service Commission.

My complaint is that, contrary to the salary scale provided for the post, contrary to the salary scale provided in the previous year's Estimates also—the accepted salary scale for this particular post—a man has been appointed on a very much higher salary, on an entirely new salary scale, and he is a man who does not possess the qualifications which should be required of a person holding an office of this type.

I must confess that I am not convinced that this particular job requires a man on a salary as high as the amount provided by the Amendment moved by the Hon. Minister. The Agricultural Corps is really an adjunct, if I may say so, of the unemployment relief schemes. It provides labour for the various irrigation and other land development schemes. As was pointed out by the Hon. Minister, 2,000 men are provided under this scheme for clearing up land and preparing the background for the new colonists who go in after the land has been cleared.

Now, that is not such a very difficult task for which you need such a highly paid officer of this type. It is the normal function of an ordinary officer. I think at best a Class III. Clerical Servant can do that job. It is not as if this particular individual has to organize the whole scheme on an Island-wide scale. It is not a question of organizing an entirely new labour force. All that he has to do, so far as I can see, is to see that a certain amount of labour is

[Dr. Perera.]

provided for a particular scheme, whether it be under the Irrigation Department or the Land Commissioner's Department. If a Department says, "We want so much labour for the purpose of clearing 500 acres in the North-Central Province area", is it such a big task that you need a highly-paid officer to attend to it?

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: You think a kangany might do it.

Dr. Perera: Absolutely. This particular individual is a glorified kangany, and must you pay very nearly Rs. 1,000 to a glorified kangany?

I must say that this expenditure is thoroughly unjustified, and I do hope the Minister will reconsider his decision and decide to economize, at least on the personnel, so that at least a portion of the loss which you find shown under Vote No. 2—loss of Rs. 600,000 a year—can be avoided, or, if not avoided, at least minimized by having much less expensive personnel at the head of the Agricultural Corps.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I referred to this Department when I spoke on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill. This is the first time I see the Government still running and maintaining a Department which has consistently shown loss after loss every year. If it is essential that this Department should be continued, some steps should be taken to reorganize it in order to see that the loss is justified from the point of view of Government, or to see that the loss is avoided by taking such steps as will enable Government to make the organization useful to the country.

I do not know whether this is a successor to the old Essential Services Labour Corps. I remember the Commissioner in charge of that Corps used to publish an account of the activities of the Department in the form of an Administration Report. May I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether such a Report has been issued in regard to the Agricultural Corps and, if so, when? A Report of that nature will enable this House fully to understand the working of this Department and see whether it is justified in voting such large sums of

money. As a matter of fact, you will find that the actual expenditure in 1946-47 was Rs. 2,579,793. In 1947-48, probably the amount might be the same.

I would earnestly ask the Hon. Minister to go into the working of this Department and see that it pays its way, and also see that a Report is published for the information of this House, so that at least next year, when the Minister comes for funds for continuing the Department, the Members might satisfy themselves that there is still justification for its continuance.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: I am glad the hon. Member for Ruwanwella is coming back to his seat, because I would like to tell him that I do not think it fair to criticize an officer in a Government Department who has been appointed by the Public Service Commission, especially when we know the value of that officer. I shall tell the hon. Member what the value of that officer is.

The hon. Member said that this officer was a teacher at Nalanda, and that because he was a teacher at Nalanda he must remain a teacher all his life and that his pay must be the same always. That was his argument.

This officer was a teacher at Nalanda, and he was also an Officer in the Cadet Battalion. At the time these hon. Members were in safety, I employed this man as a junior officer in the E.S.L.C. Within three months he was able to rise to the rank of an O.I.C., that is a person in charge of 1,500 men. Later on he was in sole charge of the whole of the E.S.L.C., which numbered about 15,000 men, and the success of the Essential Services Labour Corps was due entirely to the efforts of Mr. Munasinghe, who is the person the hon. Member for Ruwanwella was speaking of.

As regards his capabilities, I might say that he would have risen to the rank of Colonel had he been in the Army.

Mr. Sri Nissanka: Hear! Hear! And would have been knighted!

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Yes, if he was a lawyer, he would have become a K.C., and I would have helped him to become one.

Mr. T. B. Subasinghe (Bingiriya): Anything can happen in Ceylon.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: I would also like to tell hon. Members that, when we took over Rs. 2,000,000 worth of American Service Stores, the one man I put in charge of that organization was Mr. Munasinghe. It will also be remembered that, on every occasion that Government took over Service stores, goods worth thousands of rupees were stolen, but in regard to the stores of which Mr. Munasinghe was in charge, only a typewriter was lost and that, too, was stolen by a clerk in the Audit Department. There was a profit of Rs. 800,000 obtained through the American Service stores.

Then, Sir, when the Salvage Department was in a tremendous mess and was passed on to me in that state, I had to put Mr. Munasinghe in charge to put matters right. He was drawing a salary of Rs. 1,200 or Rs. 1,300 in that Department.

When the post of Commissioner of the Agricultural Corps was advertised, he applied for the post. He was appointed to that post and was released by Government to take up those duties. The post was advertised on a certain salary scale; it was offered to him on that scale, and he accepted it on that scale.

This gentleman was the one person who was responsible for feeding the people of this country during the crisis, when some of our Friends were trying to starve the people. At that time the unloading of ships and the moving about of foodstuffs had to be carried out by the Essential Services Labour Corps as well as the Agricultural Corps.

I can assure you, Sir, that there is no man who loves his job, who is worthy of his hire, more than this particular individual, and it is a pity that disparaging remarks such as the one made by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella, that this man was drawing only Rs. 300 a month, should come from an hon. Member of this House who thinks that every labourer is worthy of his hire.

Mr. Dahanayake: Last year there were one Commissioner and two Assistant Commissioners in this Department; three superior staff officers. This year,

evidently because such an efficient and outstanding person like Mr. Munasinghe has taken charge, we have four staff officers, one additional staff officer. There is provision for one Commissioner, one Senior Assistant Commissioner, and two Assistant Commissioners. It is indeed paradoxical, Mr. Chairman, that when efficient men are placed in charge of departments, they need more hands than there were before. Efficiency must be proved by facts and figures. Mere words will carry no weight with hon. Members of this House. If such an efficient person has been chosen to fill the post of Commissioner, let him show that he will be able to run the Department at a lesser cost. Let him show that he is able to do the work that two or three other less efficient men had done. That would be one way in which efficiency could be proved.

4.45 P.M.

Quite apart from all that, we feel that this Corps of labourers can be managed by others. Their work can be supervised by men other than those who are paid fancy salaries. We also feel that this Department can be abolished and the 2,000 *sevakas* absorbed into some other department which does building or development work. In that way we could dispense with the supervisory officers of this Department altogether.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I am glad the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works had something to say about the appointment of the Commissioner. I myself should like to clear some misunderstanding as regards his appointment. If hon. Members will refer to the current year's Estimates, they will see that the salary scale provided there is the scale I intend to adopt. It does not indicate an increase of the officer's salary. At page 240 of the 1947-48 Estimates hon. Members will see that the scale is Rs. 16,800—600—18,000. So, the first point that was made, that I am seeking to increase the officer's salary, is incorrect.

Mr. Dahanayake: We did not say that.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That point was made by the hon. Member for Ruwanwella (Dr. Perera). The

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.] advertisement called for an officer on the scale of salary I just mentioned, but, for some reason or another, a different salary scale was included in the Draft Estimates, and I am now seeking to rectify that error.

Dr. Perera: How did that occur?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: It is not necessary for me to explain the reason that led to that difference.

Hon. Members have spoken disparagingly of the capabilities of the particular individual. What is the test that should be applied to a person who applies for a post of this nature? The hon. Member for Ruwanwella just informed us that probably a Civil Servant might have been appointed to that post.

Dr. Perera: He is drawing a Civil Servant's salary.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member says he is drawing a Civil Servant's salary. But I dare say seventy to eighty per cent. of the Civil Servants will never fit themselves into the job. The post calls for organizing ability of a particular type. It was amply demonstrated, in the case of the *ex*-Servicemen's scheme, that it is very desirable to have at the top of it people who are able to organize and to get on with the staff and personnel under them. This particular gentleman, as stated by the Minister of Transport and Works, had the opportunity of doing this type of work and doing it very successfully before. By his success, he has risen from the bottom rung right up to the management of the whole crops. The fact that this gentleman was a school teacher should not be a disqualification. The simple reason is this: That he has proved himself exceptionally capable in this particular type of work. The hon. Member for Galle was a teacher himself, and I do not think he will agree with me in decrying teachers.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is why we are trying to teach the Government.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Then, what is the test of the work he has done? If hon. Members will look at the 1947-48 Estimates, they will see that

for the year 1946-47 the estimated loss was Rs. 2,711,893. Last year we budgeted for a loss of Rs. 750,200 and our estimated loss this year is going to be Rs. 600,000; it is not even the budgeted figure of Rs. 750,200 in the Estimates for 1947-48.

Dr. Perera: That is not because of this gentleman?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Oh yes!

Dr. Perera: He was appointed only the other day.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: He has been there for some time. In our Budget for next year, it would appear that we are opening up a new camp at Gal Oya and we are estimating for a loss of only Rs. 600,000. The hon. Member does not realize that we are increasing the number of men in the Corps from something like 1,956 to about 2,500. We would want an extra Staff Officer to be particularly in charge of the activities in the Gal Oya area where hon. Members will find, under "Special Expenditure", certain items for the opening up of the camp in that area. These people are a trained and disciplined force, and it is a labour force which is maintained under exemplary conditions. It costs us Rs. 4.25 a day for each *sevaka* in the Corps, and we receive Rs. 3.50 per man a day on the work done. That accounts for the loss incurred on the upkeep of the force. We can cut down the loss; we can give the men lower wages. We can say, "Let the *sevaka* have less pay; let him work like other labourers". Then we will have no loss; we will show a profit. But is that what hon. Members want me to do? I am sure they do not want me to do that.

Mr. Dahanayake: Cut down the salaries at the top and not at the bottom.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Will the hon. Member for Galle just cut down some of the salaries and work it out? I say, remove all the salaries at the top and work it out and then see whether it will make much of a difference. This is the usual argument

brought forward by the hon. Member, to cut down the salaries at the top, when, he seems to think, everything will be all right.

Mr. Dahanayake: It will work out to Rs. 42,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That would be Rs. 42,000 out of an expenditure of about Rs. 2,000,000. You cut down Rs. 42,000 and expect to effect a saving?

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: You make a *sevaka* the boss.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: The hon. Member has asked me to give an account of some of the work that had been done during the course of the year by this Corps. Work to the extent of Rs. 1,242,795 was done. 648 acres of jungle have been cleared, 2,026 acres have been burnt and stumped; 970 acres have been stumped; work in respect of contour ridging has been done on 1,072 acres, and 51 cottages have been constructed during the course of this year by the personnel of this Corps, namely, by 1,956 persons. And, we are hoping, with the greater availability of machinery, to be able to mechanize this Corps and considerably cut down expenditure. I have shown that with every year we are cutting down losses considerably, and, therefore, I do not think the House should oppose this expenditure. As regards the administration, the Commissioner has been asked to publish his report, and it will be available soon.

Dr. Perera: My worst fears seem to have been justified after the statement made by the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works. This is really the elevation of a favourite. That is what I object to. Here is an officer, as Assistant Commissioner, who was drawing a salary of Rs. 8,400—apparently he was functioning as an Assistant Commissioner in this Agricultural Corps.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: He was an Assistant Civil Defence Commissioner.

Dr. Perera: That was Mr. Wickremasinghe.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: The hon. Member does not take my word.

Dr. Perera: The special pleading for an officer made by the Hon. Minister of Transport will just induce us to have our worst misgivings about the Public Service Commission if this is the basis on which officers have been chosen. That is all that I can say about this particular officer. My argument against this particular officer is that the salary scale provided for him is far too much for the nature of the work that is expected to be performed by him. Much more responsible work has been done in various other departments on much lower salary scales. If you are going to provide a salary of Rs. 16,800—600—18,000 for the purpose of just looking after 2,000 labourers, what is the proportionate salary you would have to provide for other Heads of Departments carrying out big schemes? Take, for instance, your Irrigation Department and the other departments under you. What are the salary scales provided for those officers? There must be a sense of value and a sense of proportion. If you provide a salary of Rs. 16,800—600—18,000 merely for a glorified kangany, there is something wrong in the calculation of values in this country.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: This salary was not fixed as a salary. It was fixed for the job and the job was advertised. This man was one of the applicants, and he was selected. That he was the best man there is not the slightest doubt. After all, it may be stated that this particular officer had held a similar job during the war. Therefore, his salary should be the same as he drew then.

I might tell my hon. Friend that I was a supernumerary in the Survey Department, but today I am Prime Minister.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva (Wellawatta-Galkissa): Now he surveys a wider field.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: I should like to ask a question from the Hon. Minister of Finance. In the 1947-48 Estimates, at page 240, he will see that, under Vote No. 2, the losses incurred were given as Rs. 2,711,893 for 1946-47; and, the losses for 1947-48 were given as Rs. 750,200. At that time we were able to find out exactly how those losses were incurred. Those losses were incurred because we were running a number of camps of which two important ones were abandoned in 1947-48.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Even in the existing camps the expenditure has been cut down.

Mr. Kanagaratnam: Why were these details not given in this year's Budget for 1948-49? It is not only under this vote, but practically under every head, sufficient details have not been given. If only the details had been given, it would have saved considerable time of this House in asking for information from Hon. Ministers. You will find it is a very significant omission.

The Hon. Mr. Jayewardene: What are the details you want?

Mr. Kanagaratnam: The details for these estimates should have been given in the same way as you gave them in the 1947-48 Estimates. It would have saved the time of this House if all those details had been given in these Estimates as was done in the previous year.

5.0 P.M.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Even then they ask questions.

Mr. Subasinghe: Whatever the Government might say, we have still to be convinced of the necessity for this Department.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Can we convince you?

Mr. Subasinghe: The Hon. Minister pointed out that they had done a mighty lot of work. We believe that, through the ordinary channels of supply of labour, the same job could be performed with greater efficiency. Our conviction is that, of the creations of the Hon.

Minister of Transport, this is another. His officers will continue to exist, whatever the cost of them may be to the Government.

If they maintain that the work in this Department is so efficiently done under this particular officer, then how is it that we find every now and then large numbers of these people, the *sevakas*, deserting this Corps? Is it a fact that it is some of these people who resorted to rioting recently in Anuradhapura? If they are such a contented lot, then how is it that these things do happen? We believe that this Department with the ordinary channels of supply could provide the labour for the Minister to go on with the work.

Mr. Dahanayake: I suggest that the Department be abolished and that the *sevakas* be drafted on as permanent labourers of the Agricultural Department and the Irrigation Department.

Question, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 3,000 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Commissioner,'" put, and agreed to.

Question put, "That the sum of Rs. 849,650 for Head 75, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule."

The Committee divided (under Standing Order 48): Ayes, 38; Noes, 26.

Head 75, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Vote No. 2.—Advance Account for working of the Agricultural Corps Camps, Rs. 600,000.

Dr. Perera: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 600,000 in respect of sub-head 1."

Why is it not possible to charge the full amount? If the cost per *sevaka* is Rs. 4 why should we charge only Rs. 3.50?

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: That Vote is passed now.

Dr. Perera: I am speaking on Vote 2. Why cannot the Department charge the full cost?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They do work for other departments.

Dr. Perera: Then there is no reason why they should lose. Take the Minister of Industries. When he charges the

cost of articles produced in his factories, he takes into account all the items including overhead, and so on. In the same way, if the estimated cost is so much per *sevaka*, why should you not charge the other departments the actual cost?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This is merely an anticipated loss.

Dr. Perera: We have already had running losses. Last year it was Rs. 250,000.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: This year it is becoming very much less.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 600,000 for Head 75, Vote No. 2, be inserted in the Schedule," put, and agreed to.

Head 75, Vote 2, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 76.—Department of Land Development

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Land Development, &c., Rs. 2,499,490.

Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments, Rs. 350,388.

Mr. Dahanayake: This is a very important Head, because the Department of Land Development is a new Department that has been created for the first time this year. I find that this Department has been created mainly for food production purposes.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No. The main purpose is opening up of lands.

Mr. Dahanayake: The first criticism that I would like to offer is that, as usual with the Government, they have made this Department also top-heavy. The Department is manned on the office side by four Civil Servants and on the field side by three Civil Servants, making a total of seven Civil Servants. On the Office side you find a Director, two Deputy Directors, and an Office Assistant who are Civil Servants. On the field side there are three Assistant Directors who are also Civil Servants. In short, in this new Department you find seven

Directors. To how many do they give directions?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: 25,000.

Mr. Dahanayake: Seven C. C. S. men supervising the work of 90 clerks! The mathematics of things will never be understood by the Government. Having seen at close hand how certain Government departments work, I say that every Government department can do much better work if there were not too many pigeon-holes in which papers rest too long, and if there were not too many Heads not one of whom knows exactly what he ought to do.

Then the second point of criticism that I would like to offer is that it is not known how the sum of Rs. 2,500,000, ear-marked for food production, would be spent. What I mean, Mr. Chairman, is, how exactly this food production Vote would be allocated and through what channels the work would be carried out. From the Estimates before us we are only able to see the number of men who will be in the offices. We are more concerned with what is going to take place in the field. How will that work be done? Is there a plan for that type of work, for the work that you have in mind? You told us that you propose to do work under minor irrigation schemes, assisting the cultivation of land with foodstuffs and increasing the production of paddy by the adoption of improved methods. All that is excellent, Mr. Chairman. I call them platitudes. Platitudes have been the bane of this Government and the last Government. We want you to tell us exactly in what districts, on which crops, under what schemes, this sum of Rs. 2,500,000 will be spent.

I ask this pointedly, because our experience in the past has been that millions of rupees were voted for food production, and the last thing that that money produced was food. That money may have produced many other things in the country, but certainly the millions of rupees that the State Council voted for food production produced no food whatever. I challenge the Hon. Minister to show me the progressive increase in the food production of this country, by the various food production schemes of the Land Commissioner, of the Irrigation Department, of the Emergency Kachcheries, and of the Agricultural

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

Department to which you have now added a new Department—Land Development Department. We ask for greater details in regard to the nature of work, the scope of the work, and what results you expect, for instance, at the end of a year, and what results you propose to have at the end of a period of five or six years through the workings of this Department.

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to food production, the hon. Member for Galle has just pointed out to you that the seven Civil Servants would direct 90 clerks. I would also like to point out that these seven Civil Servants are going to direct the activities of only 11 Land Development Officers.

With regard to food production, I would strongly urge that the land given to the villagers on permits for food production during the war years should be——

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That was raised under the Land Commissioner.

Mr. S. A. Silva:——handed over to the Land Development Officers and not to the Revenue Officers. I urge this because I am fully aware that people who have been producing food during the war years, the landless people who have——

The Chairman: That has nothing to do with this Vote.

Mr. S. A. Silva: So that these Land Development Officers may go to these lands and find out for themselves whether all these lands are required for reservation, and if so——

The Chairman: I think the hon. Member is making a mistake. That comes under the Land Commissioner's Votes which we discussed yesterday.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I want this work to be taken over by this Department.

The Chairman: It was under this Department, but now it is taken over by a new Department.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I want those lands that have been given to these people

taken over by the Land Development Department, in which case most of these allottees would get their lands.

Mr. Sri Nissanka: I should like to say, with regard to this matter, that we are all interested in land development and that we would like to see the land very well developed. But, speaking for myself, I feel that the multiplication of various departments would be adding further burdens to our taxpayers. That is incidental and by the way.

The real purpose for which I got up to speak was to ask the Hon. Minister what actually happened to the scheme of treating paddy electrically. A great deal of fuss was made some time ago in the local papers——

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Not by the Department.

Mr. Sri Nissanka: We were told that when paddy was treated electrically, it yielded a hundred-fold. I am wondering whether this Department hopes to introduce this scheme which was invented in this country.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: On the question of the increase of the yield of paddy, I would like to know whether it is not the function of the Department of Agriculture. Or are the Agricultural Instructors being brought under this new Department?

5.15 P.M.

Mr. Bauddhasara: Sir, I do not wish to criticize an entirely new Department, but I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands what is happening at the Hingurakgoda colony. The houses that are built by this Department, which are, I believe, called rubble masonry buildings, will not last for more than two or three months after construction. I say this because I personally visited about ten or fifteen of these rubble masonry buildings and I noticed that house No. 863 has already cracked. When I asked for an explanation, the engineer told me that unfortunately they had had bad masons at the beginning. Therefore, if the Department had closed its eyes till about ten or fifteen houses had been put up, I do not know what will happen to this Department.

I earnestly represent to the Hon. Minister that most of these colonists are thoroughly dissatisfied with these rubble masonry houses. In fact, I inspected a house with a foundation twelve inches thick and a superstructure twelve feet high; so that as soon as the roof is put up, the whole building will come down. If such houses are given to these colonists, I do not think they will stay long at the Hingurakgoda colony. Therefore, I beg of the Hon. Minister to look into this matter.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: For the purpose of information, may I know from the Minister whether special aid is being given to big landlords under this development scheme?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: No.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: For instance—

The Chairman: The Minister says, “No.”

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As regards this Vote, too—

Mr. Mathew: Will the Hon. Minister please let us know what will happen to the vast army of officers who were engaged in food production activities—whether, under Sub-head 4, “Food Production”, all of them will be absorbed by this Department?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: As regards this Vote, too, there seems to be a general misconception in regard to its work. Formerly, as well as in the current year's Estimates, the land development and food production activities were under the Land Commissioner's Vote.

Now, Sir, if the hon. Members of this House had followed the speech of the Minister of Finance during the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, they would have noticed that one of the main items contemplated was the opening up of 132,000 acres of land over a certain period. I want hon. Members of this House to realize the magnitude of the task involved. I had occasion to quote the fate of the groundnut scheme in East Africa where, with 300 tractors and

bulldozers, the British Government set out to bring under cultivation 150,000 acres, and ended up with only 8,000 acres for one year. In the light of that statement, I want hon. Members to realize what opening up of 132,000 acres over a period of six years would involve.

The hon. Member for Galle spoke of the number of Civil Servants for supervision—probably that is the cadre provided here; but does he realize that there will be 20,000 to 30,000 men employed at different places in this country, carrying out this programme?

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: The number is only 18,500.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: At the present moment there are about 11,000 to 12,000 men.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: At the end of six years there will be only 18,500.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That is only in the industries. At the end of the six-year programme there will be 20,000 to 30,000 men. I want hon. Members to realize the immensity of the task.

Food production is only a part of this Department's activities. The main item is the land development programme, which will include the construction of a great many cottages—almost 15,000 to 16,000.

The hon. Member for Polonnaruwa complained of a case of cracked foundation. I might inform him that only one house had cracked out of about 500 which had a rubble foundation. The Superintending Engineer himself says so. However that may be, I would like to ask the hon. Member whether if he goes round areas like Kagama and various other places, he will say that generally the buildings are bad. I certainly ask that question from the hon. Member, who is in that area and who must have frequently seen the construction work going on.

Mr. Bauddhasara: The point is that I had made no complaints after the new Department started working.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Sir, the other day, I think it was considered a great feat when the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works stated

[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.]
that labourers' houses were being constructed at the rate of three a day in Colombo—

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: One a day.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Well, our rate is going to be much faster than that. Already, at the end of this financial year, we will have 900 houses of a type better than the labourers' houses.

Therefore, the main item under the six-year programme is going to be that of land development; and do hon. Members seriously say that that item should be the part-time activity of another department? The main activity of the Government for the next six years is going to be performed by this new Department. I am sure hon. Members did not appreciate the extent of the work involved—the work that this Department will have to carry out—when they made their statements.

As regards food production activities, it was unfortunate that the hon. Member for Galle was not here during the Second Reading stage of the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. Dahanayake: I have read through the speeches.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
He was otherwise engaged, and unfortunately engaged, not only otherwise engaged!

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake:
In a useless occupation!

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
I had occasion to mention what steps will be taken in future regarding past food production activities. I can read out to him the number of items on which this Vote was spent in the past. If hon. Members want to know details of any particular areas, I can give even those details.

Mr. Dahanayake: Will the Hon. Minister furnish a copy of those details to hon. Members in respect of their own areas?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
Certainly, I will furnish them with a list of the activities on which this Vote is expended, and another containing details of the activities relating to particular areas, such as manure and various other matters.

I would also like to mention that hitherto the D. A. Cs merely concerned themselves with determining irrigation priorities; but, in future, food production activities also will be discussed at the quarterly meetings of the D. A. Cs, and every hon. Member will be given the opportunity to come armed with official extracts and ask the Revenue Officers. "Well, these are the purposes for which the Vote is meant; how much have you spent in my particular area?". I am sure that if hon. Members will look at it in that light, they will pass this Vote.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Arising from what he stated. I would like to have some clarification on one point. A sum of Rs. 2,500,000 has been provided for "Food Production"—is that to be spent entirely in terms of the new areas which you are opening up, or does it include assistance given in the past?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
This Rs. 2,500,000 does not include all. I have a Vote of Rs. 15,000,000 under Loan Fund Expenditure for the land development programme.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: You have provided Rs. 2,500,000 under the Land Development Vote for food production. What I wish to get clear about is whether the money spent by the Government in the past in various ways in assisting people to produce food, as well as on any new purposes, is also included under this Vote; or, is this a supplementary amount independent of the amounts ordinarily spent in the past? Have I made myself clear?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:
The amounts already spent will have been met out of the previous Budgets. This amount is for the money that will be spent on these activities during the coming financial year.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If I understand—

The Chairman: What the hon. Member wants to know is this. Certain items have been provided for the same purpose under other Departments also. Does this Rs. 2,500,000 supplement all those Votes?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Yes, this supplements all those Votes.

Mr. Dahanayake: So that, this is something altogether new.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: One other point which I want to ask the Hon. Minister is whether he has got any plans for the settlement of people in the areas which he is intending to open up in this way. I mean, wherefrom does he intend to draw the people, how does he intend to draw them, and is there any special scheme prepared in relation to the population to be settled in those areas?

Mr. Sri Nissanka: I want to state that I am quite serious about my question. This country is rather notorious for its low yielding paddy, and it will be worth considering the merits of the method that was publicized in the papers with photographs of the experimental plots that were expected to yield a hundred-fold when paddy was treated electrically by a particular gentleman.

The Chairman: In Timbirigasyaya.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: That was an activity of the Municipality.

Mr. Sri Nissanka: One of the experimental plots was perilously close to where I stay.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Those experiments have not reached a stage where it can be definitely stated that they will yield a definite percentage.

There is one more question that was raised by the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa. As hon. Members must be well aware, there are thousands of people already engaged—and have been engaged—in these areas, clearing jungle and doing this work, some of them with the hope of having their cases considered when Land Kachcheries are held to alienate land.

5.30 P.M.

It is the intention of the Government to give a proportion of the land to them. In places where there is a desire on the part of the local people to go and reside in the areas selected, the Government will ask the Government Agents to advertise and hold Land Kachcheries to select people from those places also.

Mr. Mathew: My question—

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: With regard to sub-head 5, “Loans for Food Production Purposes (token vote) Rs. 100,” will the Minister please state—

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The loans are given through co-operative societies.

Mr. Mathew: Will the Land Development overseers be reinstated?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: They are taken over.

Sub-head 8.—Cost of living allowances, Rs. 607,640.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I move, “That the Vote be increased by Rs. 317,726 in respect of sub-head 8.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Question, “That the sum of Rs. 2,753,672 for Head 76, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule”, put, and agreed to.

Head 76, Vote 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 77.—Debt Conciliation Board (Debt Conciliation Ordinance)

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Debt Conciliation Board, Rs. 27,797.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If the Minister of Agriculture and Lands will permit me to hark back to the last Budget, I asked him for certain figures. He has had nearly a year: Has his Department furnished him with those figures?

[Dr. Colvin R. de Silva.]

The Minister gave me figures relating to the volume of the debts: I want a list of the debts. I will tell you why I ask for that. According to my information, the Debt Conciliation Board, which was created for the benefit of the poor, is benefiting quite a different stratum of the population. I have no objection to the other strata being benefited, if it has also benefited the stratum for which it was intended. The figures will show the need to inquire——

The Chairman: Is it benefiting anybody at all?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: That is also a question worth asking.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I do not know whether it was intended to benefit a particular section, but presumably, even a rich man when he gets into debt, can be considered a poor man for the moment——

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: No.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake:——because he has been reduced to those circumstances and is seeking the relief afforded by the Debt Conciliation Ordinance.

129 applications, as against 48 in the previous year, were dealt with from 1947 to June 1948. The Board settled 101 cases during the period.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: The volume of the debts?

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: I cannot tell you.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If we know the total——

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: 129 were dealt with.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: You will see, Sir, that this Board is costing us Rs. 27,000. If the debts, in volume, were small, it might be cheaper to give this Rs. 27,000 to the parties!

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: The debts would amount to very much more!

Mr. Dahanayake: I would ask that information on the working of this Board, and the Ordinance, be made available to the average man through the Kachcheries. A notice might be published, giving the information about the working of this Ordinance, so that the average man may apply to get concessions through the working of this Ordinance.

Very few people know of the existence of this Board. Only those who are in Colombo, or those who come in contact with highly placed officials, are in a position to apply for relief now. I am certain that if this information were published in the country, a large number of deserving cases will come before the Board.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: Owing to the fact that the activities of this Board were not generally known, the Chairman of the Board had an advertisement inserted in some of the local papers. The advertisement was published in the following papers,—“Thinakaran”, “Lankadipa” and “Dinamina”. Subsequent to that there has been a great increase in the number of applications, presumably, as a result of that advertisement.

Mr. Dahanayake: Repeat the advertisement: You will get more debtors flocking in.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Advertise in the *Gazette*? [Interruption.] I thought the hon. Member for Galle did not want Government advertisements to be inserted in the newspapers!

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: That is when you have the alternative medium available.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: It is probably not generally known that for any debt under Rs. 500, loans can be given through co-operative societies. Even without a proper title deed, you can get a loan from a co-operative society. That is how we seek to relieve the poorer people——

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: I did not follow that.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I am speaking from memory. Any debt under Rs. 500 can be settled through a co-operative society.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Money can be borrowed from a co-operative society?

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: Money can be given through a co-operative society. If a "Land Redemption Co-operative Society" is started with collective responsibility, even if the title deed is not perfect, loans of under Rs. 500 can be given to those who need them.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: This is Debt Conciliation, not Land Redemption.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I am speaking of —

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: The Prime Minister has two matters mixed up.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: I am speaking of the Board of which Mr. F. H. B. Koch is Chairman.

The Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake: That is the Debt Conciliation Board.

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake: For smaller debts there are two provisions in the Ordinance; one is to the effect that you can get loans through a co-operative bank, or from the Ceylon Savings Bank. Those who cannot get the loan from the Ceylon Savings Bank can get it from the co-operative bank. It would be very much cheaper for these people if they could organize themselves into a co-operative bank and get their loans from that bank. These facilities are not being utilized now.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 27,797 for Head 77, Vote No. 1, be inserted in the Schedule", put, and agreed to.

Head 77, Vote 1, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 87.—Minister of Health and Local Government

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Minister of Health and Local Government, Rs. 168,364.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 250 in respect of sub-head 1, New Item 'Overtime to Peons, etc.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

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

I note Sir, that there are four other hon. Members who have given notice of a similar Amendment, to effect a cut in respect of sub-head 1, item "Minister". This in itself shows that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the working of the very important departments that come under the Minister of Health and Local Government.

I must say that the country and Parliament expected a great deal of work from the Minister of Health and Local Government. He has a reputation in this country as one who can do things, and that was probably why he was chosen to be in charge of a Ministry in which there were two such important departments as Medical and Sanitary Services, and Local Government.

Under the last regime, he presided over the destinies of the Department of Local Government only, and when the other very big and important Department of Medical and Sanitary Services was entrusted to him, we all expected him to produce some good results. But having watched him at work during the last nine months, I am afraid that he has proved himself, what I may call, a "lotus-eater", one who sings many songs but has forgotten the goal for which he set out, one who is quite satisfied with the state of affairs as they are today—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: No. The nine months are not over yet!

Mr. Dahanayake: It is my duty to offer certain criticisms against his policy. I must explain at the outset that I offer this criticism in the earnest hope that he will, even at this stage, rouse himself from his slumbers and get away from the lotus-eating habit, and set his feet towards the goal for which he set out at the beginning.

If, at the end of this discussion, hon. Members on this side are satisfied that he is going to give a square deal to us, in regard to the very many important departments he has charge of, then, Sir, we shall gladly withdraw the Amendment that stands in my name and in the

[Mr. Dahanayake.]
names of other hon. Members. Unless very definite assurances are forthcoming, we shall press for a cut in his salary, much as we would regret that step.

The first point I would like to mention in regard to the work of the Minister is the very indifferent manner in which he has decided to tackle the housing problem of this country. He himself told us about two years ago, in the State Council, that the housing needs of the country totalled as much as 300,000 houses, comprising of houses in the slums within the City and houses in the villages.

He himself told us, two years ago, that it was necessary that this country should have a comprehensive and up-to-date housing plan. There are in existence today houses which are unfit for human habitation, and new houses should have come up to keep pace with the increase in population during the last ten years. We expected the Minister to do something concrete in this direction.

The Minister, as I said earlier, has talked a good deal about housing schemes. I do not know whether he, like the other Ministers, has a scheme behind him, but we are unable to see the fruits of his scheme. What he is doing at the most is to offer to the local bodies of the Island a scheme through which the local bodies would erect some of the houses that are sorely needed.

What is the method he has introduced for the erection of these buildings through local bodies? He has told the local bodies that they must be responsible for the acquisition of the land on which the houses are to be erected, and that local bodies must also pay one-third of the cost of construction.

It must be plain to the Minister, as it is to every hon. Member, that there is hardly a single local body in the Island, from the North to the South, and from the East to the West, which can afford to pay one-third of the cost of construction as well as pay for the acquisition of new lands.

Where then does his housing schemes end? They end in the land of no-where, they end where they began, with the housing shortage going on for ever and ever.

This is a matter with which we are very much concerned. We want the Minister to place before us, here and now, a comprehensive plan, outlining to us a comprehensive scheme of housing, through which, by gradual stages, year by year, within a limited period of years, this great hunger for houses will be even partially satisfied.

It is needless for me to say that the way in which the Minister should set about to solve the housing problem is not the way in which he is today setting about to solve it. What he ought to have done, if I may venture to say so, was to have created a National Housing Commission.

5.45 P.M.

He should have, through a National Housing Commission, drawn up a comprehensive all-Island plan for the erection of houses where they are most needed. He should have, through this National Housing Commission, got together all the material, from the brick to the cement, having drawn up a list of every detail that a housing programme needs. He should have, through this National Housing Commission, indented for and obtained, with the quickest despatch, whatever building material that was not immediately available in this country. And, furthermore, he should have, through this Commission, set up in various parts of the country factories and workshops for masons and carpenters, in which the Government employees would have turned out the bricks, the tiles, the lime, the mortar and the cement that this housing scheme demands. That is how he should have set about things, Mr. Chairman.

But how has he done it? He has passed on this baby to the local bodies. The local bodies have to carry more babies than they are able to handle. And then, what has happened to this housing baby of the Hon. Minister? That housing baby is lying today ill-nourished, ill-fed, uncared for and unattended. We cannot be satisfied, Sir, with the manner in which the Hon. Minister of Health and Local Government plays the role of the *ayah* over our housing plans. Unless the Hon. Minister is prepared, even at this stage, to tell us that, for the coming year, he has other and new proposals, proposals that will lead us to

the goal, we on this side of the House, I am afraid, will have to agree to a cut in his salary.

Now, I want to get on to another point, over which I think the Hon. Minister has, on many an occasion, given promises, both on the Floor of this House, as well as when he was Minister in the last State Council. I refer to the sad plight in which the various local bodies of the Island find themselves today. The Hon. Minister must hold himself responsible for that sad plight. Of the 30 to 40 urban councils in this Island, 75 per cent. find that, financially, they are left in a parlous condition, and this fact had been brought to the notice of the Hon. Minister from the very first day that he became Minister of Local Administration in the last State Council. He did nothing about it. I recall the days when he, without going into the root cause of the trouble, very often used to hit us back. We who were members of local bodies received a thumping whack from the Hon. Minister for even venturing to point out to him that, in matters of finance, the condition of local bodies was topsy-turvy. I recall the days not long ago, when the Hon. Minister as Minister of Local Administration, and I, as Mayor of Galle, had a very friendly tussle over the question of the finances of local bodies. He then told the State Council that Dahanayake had ruined the Galle Municipal Council. But it became evident to the public at large that all the local bodies in the Island were in a state of bankruptcy, and that Dahanayake was a member of only one of them. Assuredly, something was wrong somewhere.

It took six long years or more for the Hon. Minister to realize that something was radically wrong with the finances of the local bodies. And when he realized, through the urgings of the three leading municipal councils of the Island, that something was wrong, and when the various local bodies pressed on him to take some action, what did he do? He introduced a system of block grants just before the life of the last State Council ended—a system which was condemned roundly by all the local bodies. I recall that he introduced the system of block grants a few months before the dissolution of the last State Council. I do not know whether the time-factor in

that case was significant, but, in any case, at the time the Hon. Minister introduced the system of block grants for local bodies in order to help the local bodies out of the parlous condition in which they were, he assured the State Council that that would be a temporary measure, and that the entire question of the financial relations between the local bodies and the Central Government would be reviewed by him, would be looked at from a fresher and newer angle as soon as he got another opportunity. He got that opportunity nine months ago, but he has yet to look into those papers which deal with the question of the financial relations between local bodies and the Central Government.

What really is the trouble with these local bodies? I know that the Hon. Minister does not like that we should keep on criticizing him in this manner. There are some people in this country who think that they are the repositories of wisdom and of knowledge and of good intentions. We on this side of the House have also some good intentions, and we would, on this occasion, speaking on this subject, without giving him advice of our own, give him the advice of one of his own officers, the Commissioner of Local Government, who has written on this very matter in his Staff Administration Report. This is what Mr. V. C. Jayasuriya, Acting Commissioner of Local Government, tells the Minister on December 15, 1947, in his Annual Administration Report of the Urban Councils for 1946, paragraph 71, page 10:

“Finally, there is the important problem of the reform of Local Government finance. The rating system, which provides local authorities with their main sources of revenue, is criticized *inter alia* on the ground that it falls heavily on small incomes, that it falls unequally on families with smaller incomes, that it puts large resources at the disposal of some authorities and extremely small resources at the disposal of others. It has been suggested that a graded system of tax will greatly reduce inequality and enable more revenue to be raised.”

Mr. Jayasuriya continues, in paragraph 72:

“There can be little doubt that, unless additional sources of revenue are made available to local authorities, it will be impossible for them to provide the civic amenities which ratepayers demand incessantly, to prepare a comprehensive town planning scheme, and to make available to ratepayers those social services which are essential to the well-being of any progressive community.”

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

May I hope that the Hon. Minister will not need our advice, that he will take the advice of his trained subordinate, and that he will, without further delay, settle once and for all the question of the financial relations between the Central Government and the local bodies and solve the problem of the reform of local government finance?

May I, at this stage, from the subject of local government, go on to the question of the Health and Sanitation Services of the Island? I will not tread the beaten track by repeating to the Hon. Minister that one of the gravest problems in this country is the congestion existing in the hospitals.. I thank the Hon. Minister for his good intention in endeavouring to provide Rs. 20,000,000 for the expansion of the various hospitals of this country. We thank him, indeed, for his good intention. It would appear that he proposes to put aside Rs. 20,000,000 to relieve the congestion in the various hospitals. Well and good, Mr. Chairman. But will that satisfy us? It is said that the Public Works Department will be able to do only Rs. 2,000,000 worth of work in the coming year and that, at that rate of work, it will take 10 years for the Public Works Department to fulfil the expansion scheme the Hon. Minister has in mind. On this subject, I will not blame the Hon. Minister, but, unless he is prepared to give a very hard knock to his colleague, the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works, I do not think there will be much headway made in this respect.

I also wish to touch on certain other subjects which come under Health and Sanitation, particularly on the Hon. Minister's cold and callous neglect of the tuberculosis patients of this country. He knows, as well as we do, that there are over 50,000 tuberculosis patients in Ceylon. The number of beds available for these patients is only 2,000. Surely, all of us have had, at some time in our career, visited a provincial hospital, particularly the tuberculosis ward, and we can testify to the fact that we have not seen a more pathetic, sorrowful, humiliating sight than those young men and women in the full bloom of their lives slowly hastening to death because of the attack of tuberculosis, and how often have we not felt that, if our lives were worth living, it was worth making

a strenuous effort to save the lives of those young men and women! Has the Hon. Minister given one cursory thought to this very grave, menacing problem that faces him, particularly in the cities of this country?

I have with me papers which prove that this Minister, as well as his predecessor, had been very callous over this matter. There is a gentleman down South, Mr. E. W. Goonetilleke of Haliela Group, Weligama, who, in November, 1943, made a donation of Rs. 50,000 for the erection of a Tuberculosis Home in Hambantota. This very thoughtful gentleman who hails from the South could have made this benefaction of his for various other less-deserving causes. It stands to his eternal credit that he picked out this one great cause, which many other benefactors would have overlooked.

6.0 P.M.

There are other benefactors in this country who like to do things with a flare of trumpets, who like to do things that the man in the street could easily see. Here was a gentleman who offered in November, 1943, a handsome donation of Rs. 50,000 for the erection of a Tuberculosis Home in Hambantota. How many years have passed?—1944, 1945, 1946, 1947—and time rolls on and takes toll of thousands, 3,000 a year. And the foundation-stone has just been laid of this Tuberculosis Home at Hambantota. Is this the way, Mr. Chairman, that responsible Ministers should act?

Mr. Goonetilleke—a very patient man—wrote a very impatient letter to the Hon. Minister very recently. On the 15th of June this year, Mr. Goonetilleke wrote:

“ I must now make it quite clear that I am not at all satisfied with the progress made in regard to the donation made by me five years ago. There will be no alternative but to request you to return to me the sum of Rs. 50,000, with any interest which may have accrued thereon, unless you could assure me that the work in this connection will be started at once by giving me an approximate date.”

He wrote that in June. More letters have passed, and a personal letter was written by the Hon. Minister on 19th July in which he explained, incidentally, that there was a blunder made by the previous Minister, that the previous Minister went and laid the foundation stone for a hospital near the Saltern, and that

the new Minister found that that site was unsuitable and chose a new site at Wirawila, that tenders for this work had been called for and—here is the snag in it—that the Public Works Department has been asked to prepare the revised plan, and that they had told him that they were preparing the necessary drawings for it. And, Mr. Chairman, while the drawings are being prepared, while the plans are being prepared, thousands more are going to their graves. And this gentleman himself told me that he had written to the Minister in sheer disgust at the lethargy and inaction of the present Government. I ask that the Hon. Minister should make a very definite statement as to what he proposes to do with the 50,000 tuberculosis patients in this country.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to go into another much neglected aspect of the Medical Department of this country. A number of years ago, in response to public agitation, particularly from the Leftist-minded gentlemen, the Government inaugurated what is called the School Health Work. It is a very important branch of the Medical Department. It is not a branch of which one hears much. It is not a branch of which the newspapers publish letters. It is not a branch of work which is visible to the capitalistic ladies of Cinnamon Gardens who run Social Service Leagues and write letters to the Press. The school health work is going on slowly unseen.

My grievance is that this work has been neglected in the past few years. According to the figures available, the total number of schools in the Island was 6,125. The total number of schools taken up for medical inspection was only 1,202, that is, the children of nearly 5,000 schools were not medically examined. Then, the number of children who were medically examined was 62,000 in 1946—62,000 children were medically examined in 1946. How many children are there on the rolls of all the schools? There are 850,000 children in all the schools of Ceylon. There are about 1,500,000 children both in the schools and outside and out of these 1,500,000 children in Ceylon, 60,000 were medically examined and defects discovered. Now, this is the most important point in the whole matter. The number of defects

that were discovered was 56,000, and out of that a certain number were treated. The pity of it is that the number of defects corrected was only 34,000, or only 42 per cent. of the defects discovered. A minute fraction of the children were medically examined, and of the defects discovered, only 42 per cent. were set right—why?—because not in all cases was there a follow-up of the original inspection. In order to have a follow-up of the original medical inspection of a child, you must provide for at least three or four medical inspections of a child when he is between, say, five and fourteen years of age. In other words, a school-going child, when he is five, should have himself medically examined, and by the time he is fourteen we must ensure that he has been medically examined at least three times. That is the ideal which we should set before us. That is the ideal that advanced countries have set before them. In order to do this, I ask the Hon. Minister to take steps to expand that sub-branch of the Medical Department by six times its present strength, because all Members are agreed that this work is a work of very great importance.

Then, I wish to pass on to the manner in which the Hon. Minister has overlooked the maternity and child welfare work. No doubt the hospitals engage the attention of everybody. The hospital nurses are in the newspapers and in the limelight. They come in deputation to see the Hon. Minister, and we are very glad that he is attempting to redress their grievances. But maternity and child welfare work which is of the greatest importance has not yet received the attention which it should receive from the Hon. Minister. Is the Hon. Minister aware, I wonder, that in this respect, in regard to the care of mothers and children, Ceylon is the last in the world? It was only the other day that we were told that Duncan White, running second in the Olympic Hurdles, has joined the ranks of the immortals. May I point out to the Hon. Minister that Ceylon had achieved world fame, Ceylon had become first in the world for a number of years in yet another aspect—infant mortality rates?

Will you permit me, Mr. Chairman, to read a list of eight countries in the world, including Ceylon, to show how high about Ceylon carries its banner?

[Mr. Dahanayake.]

Here, Sir, are the infant mortality rates per thousand births: New Zealand, 32; United States, 56; England and Wales, 57; France, 67; Italy, 102; Japan, 115; British India, 169; and Ceylon 171.

Now, Sir, how much attention has been paid to maternity and child welfare work? There are, we know, a number of health centres and maternity homes—a little less than 600 for the whole Island—and in 1945 about half the total number of births was cared for in maternity homes or hospitals. We want a progressive expansion of maternity and child welfare work. We want that this Government should take it into its head to consider this subject of maternity and child welfare as a great and uplifting work which is of immense benefit to the people, because unless the Government actually begins with maternity and child welfare work, it cannot build up for itself that structure, beautiful structure, which it would like to see over the whole field of human activity. We plead with the hon. Members of the Government that the work in connexion with maternity and child welfare should be accelerated, should not in any way be hampered, and that the Hon. Minister should see that there is a special little Department in the Secretariat to deal with this very important branch of health work.

I know that there are many things in the Medical Department over which the Minister is not to blame. He has had a legacy. He has had to shoulder the burden of the past. Let us forget the wretched past. What we want is that he should set about it in the right way. We all know that there are only 700 doctors in the Island.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Six hundred.

Mr. Dahanayake: Well, 600 in Government Service, and with those in private practice, the number is about 700. We also know that the rate of output of the Ceylon Medical College is about 50 doctors per year. We need, on the basis of a doctor for every 2,000 of the population, about 3,000 doctors. And to reach the figure of 3,000 from 700 at the present rate of output, it would take—how many years—forty-six years; The other day the Hon. Minister of Finance outlined a six-year

plan. Does the Hon. Minister of Health outline for us a forty-six year plan? Or will he tell us now how he proposes to increase the number of doctors in order to bring it up, if not to 3,000, at least to 1,500—half the number we need?

But it is not only in respect of doctors that there is a terrific dearth. Take the number of nurses that we have. Each nurse in one of our hospitals has got to look after 120 patients. Can the Minister challenge that statement? I do not think he can. One hundred and twenty patients being looked after by one nurse! I think the Hon. Minister taxes the nurses far too much. However willing, however devoted a nurse may be to her work, there must be fair play in these matters, and she must be given work which she can reasonably carry out with diligence. Therefore, I ask that there should be—the increase in the number is, I believe, 100—greater provision for a very large increase in the number of nurses. It is very difficult for him, I know, to increase the number of doctors, but it is certainly not so very difficult to increase the number of nurses, if he has the heart to do it.

Then, think of the question of attendants. Do you know, Mr. Chairman,—or perhaps you do not know because you have not seen it, because when you were in the General Hospital the whole world must have been around you: doctors, nurses, attendants; there was no dearth of people—but do you know, Sir, in the case of the average man or woman, he gets very little attention, because an attendant has to look after thirty patients?

6.15 P.M.

An attendant sometimes has to look after 30 patients upstairs and 30 patients downstairs, from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. I know that the Hon. Minister has made provision for 300 additional attendants, but it is not only additional attendants that we need. We need 3,000 of them because I am able to see the position correctly. There is many a patient whose life is lost through lack of attention, not wittingly but unwittingly, because the attendant and the nurse and the doctor are far too overloaded with work.

These are matters which the Hon. Minister can attend to immediately, but, as I said at the outset of my speech,

the Hon. Minister is such a clever orator that he is fond of hearing his own voice,—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Like you.

Mr. Dahanayake:—his own swan-song sung to his own melodious tune. We want the Hon. Minister to translate this melodious tune into action, so that the Health and Medical services of this country may be something of which the country may be proud.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: After really so brilliant an exposition of the major aspects and the criticism we have had of this Department, I am rather reluctant to descend to the bathos of parochialism. But I wish to refer to one or two lesser matters and also to one or two general matters, because I have already overstepped an appointment with a medical man.

The first, and parochial point, is this. Does the Hon. Minister of Health and Local Government intend to carry out at all what I believe was intended by this Department in the past, the opening up of a subsidiary branch of the General Hospital in the Mount Lavinia area? I am only asking whether the Hon. Minister has any such intention. It would be a very useful thing.

Secondly, I am constrained to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the conditions, in particular, of the Eye Hospital. I happened to have gone there very recently—once or twice—and, honestly, I must say the situation is beyond bearing even for the staff there. I found that in one particular ward where there were 10 beds—in the surgical ward—there were as many as 120 patients sleeping on the floor, under the beds and in the verandahs, with the rain beating in upon them and with the staff simply unable to provide any kind of alternative accommodation.

I want to tell the Hon. Minister that in these matters it is to the future he has to look because the past is already there. But I think he has got to make some list of priority, seeing that he can do a certain quantity of construction in a year under his schemes. He should, I think, make a list of priorities in order to improve in a certain way the hospitals.

There is also one general matter which I wish to remind him of, that is in regard to the housing question. The Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands is planning to build 16,000 houses—according to his own figures—in the jungle. The Hon. Minister of Health and Local Government, I do not think has yet informed us how many thousand houses he intends to build in the already populated areas. But I wish to remind him that no Minister of Health or Housing who ever undertook a housing scheme was ever able to develop it at an adequate pace if he placed the interests—(a) of private property and (b) of so-called private enterprise first in his scheme of things. Not unless the Hon. Minister is ready to ride rough-shod over both these aspects of property interests, will he ever be able to put into operation an adequate scheme of housing.

There is a vested interest in the housing shortage, and that is what the Hon. Minister must bear in mind, and that vested interest is not constituted only by the owners of house property, but is also constituted by the builders, for, in the circumstances of the shortage, the profitability of jerry-building becomes high. So the Hon. Minister has, on the one hand, to cut across private enterprise through some machinery of his own which will engage the Government directly in building. I do not want to go into the matter as it has been referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Galle.

The other aspect is this. There is a disproportion in housing costs between the cost of land and the cost of building; especially in built-up areas, land values are extremely high, and the amount of money that has to be spent on acquisition, even if Government uses its powers of compulsory acquisition, is so high that it becomes a controlling factor in the rate of building development.

The Hon. Minister must here tackle it at the root. He must recognize, and I submit he must in his legislation operate the principle, that where social development rises independently of the individual enterprise of the owner, the Government and the community are entitled to the increased value of landed

[Dr. Colvin R. de Silva.]

property, site values, and the like, and the owner of the property should be entitled to no more than was the actual undeveloped value of the land before social development took place in that area.

I know—and I think the Hon. Minister appreciates—that I am raising a big question. But he will appreciate I think that, without addressing himself to that question, even in our country it will be utterly impossible for him to develop that adequate scheme of building. There is another matter to which I wish to refer and that is, while he is developing his other schemes, he has to attend to the land question as existing that has been debated in this House. So I do not propose to entrench upon that matter except to remind him of this, that it is clear that present methods of rent control leave a number of loop-holes which he must early close. I will leave it at that.

The third question is the question that was also adverted to by the hon. Member for Galle, and that is the question of the resources of the local authorities. I think people who have given their time and thought to the study of this irritating question have amply proved that this system is hopelessly out of date and unsuited to modern times. It leaves a rigid resource structure in relation to the Hon. Minister and the local authorities, and therefore some new system related to actual graduated income questions has to be adopted some time or other by the Hon. Minister.

Here there is another aspect that he has to pay attention to. Local authorities can tap every source of income if once again the Hon. Minister, in line with the policy of the Cabinet to which he belongs, does not give priority to that euphemism called private enterprise, but gives priority to the public interest. I mean there are various utility services which, in other countries, are now directly managed by the local authorities, not only because they have reached the stage of being ripe for municipalization from the point of view of the question of ownership and property, but also because they provide an expanding source of income to these local

authorities. I would suggest the Hon. Minister takes the question of the municipalization of certain services into more thorough and comprehensive consideration.

There are many other matters, but I do not propose to go into them. I trust the Hon. Minister will consider these matters in their inter-relationship and not separately and singly.

Mr. P. G. B. Keuneman (Third Colombo Central): The hon. Member for Galle, whom I must congratulate, has very adequately dealt with the general question which would arise from the Opposition Benches in criticism of the departments under the Hon. Minister who is at present under fire. I would like to deal, therefore, with only two questions relating to the administration of the Health Services in this country.

The first point is this. The Hon. Minister has been stoutly refusing the widespread public clamour that there should be a thorough public investigation into the conditions of the provincial and out-station hospitals. When he was questioned earlier on this matter, the Hon. Minister sought to convince this House that the personal investigations which he could carry out through normal departmental channels were sufficient to tackle this problem.

The Hon. Minister must now be aware that the public, and, even another place, the Senate, have publicly passed resolutions asking that the scope of this inquiry, of a public investigation, should not be confined to the General Hospital of Colombo, but should take in the whole administration of the hospital system in this Island. And the Hon. Minister has not been able to give this House or any person in this country any adequate reason why he is resisting this demand. Is the Hon. Minister trying to cover up this matter? Is he satisfied that, apart from the General Hospital, Colombo, there are no serious administrative defects in the whole working of the hospital system?

The hon. Member for Galle referred to the Hon. Minister as a lotus-eater. Certainly the dilly-dallying of this Minister has become a public joke.

The Hon. Minister always tells us to wait. He tells us that he is going to do things. But nothing gets done.

The Hon. Minister is in charge of housing. But we find that a Minister who has nothing to do with housing—the Minister of Transport and Works—has got some houses built. But the Hon. Minister who is in charge of housing has not built any houses. The Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands told us how many houses he was going to build. But the Hon. Minister in charge of housing is very generally silent on this question.

I think any hon. Member in this House will be able to describe the tremendous delay, the administrative defects which are present in the provincial hospitals. In the course of my visits round the country I have gone to several of these hospitals. There are hospitals where there is supposed to be one medical officer in charge. For 4 days in the week that medical officer is in the Courts, giving evidence in cases. The entire hospital is run by an apothecary. The patients who come in for serious complaints are dealt with by the apothecary, and they are lucky if they survive. Yet the Hon. Minister tells us that a private investigation of his is going to be enough.

Every hon. Member has not failed to complain about hospital conditions. I have gone to hospitals where there were shortages of drugs and linen. There was a hospital which I went to which complained that, owing to the lack of a refrigerator—and refrigerators could be seen in plenty in the show-rooms of certain engineering firms in the Fort—valuable drugs could not be kept. That is the state of the provincial hospitals today, and I feel that the wrath of the public on this matter will not be appeased until the Hon. Minister gives concrete proof to the House and to the country, that a serious attempt is being made to rectify the errors of previous administrations. I think the Hon. Minister is not wholly to blame; he has a very unfortunate past to live down—not his past but his predecessor's past. Very often we come across those brassplate hospitals and very often the present Minister has to take the blame for the sins of his predecessor. But I think the Hon.

Minister cannot escape the blame, because we do not see evidence of drive on his part to gear up and put into line the administration of provincial hospitals with up-to-date standards.

6.30 P.M.

I hope the Hon. Minister, even at this stage, will give an assurance to the public that he will extend the scope of the inquiry that is now going on, because the Hon. Minister has a scheme for spending Rs. 20,000,000 on hospital extension. That is very necessary. But what is the good of extending hospital buildings if you are not going to convince the people that a decent hospital administration is going to be set up, not only in Colombo, but also in the provinces?

The hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa referred to the conditions in the Eye Hospital in Colombo. I do not want to go into details, but, apart from the General Hospital which is now under investigation by a Committee—set up, I believe, by the present Hon. Minister—there are many other hospitals in Colombo which will well bear investigation. In particular, I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the conditions prevailing in the Lady Havelock Hospital where infants and children are treated. I have had occasion to go there and I have seen five children—all about one year old—in a single cot. The hon. Member for Wariyapola (Mr. Ivan T. Dasanaike) has stated that he has seen children with coughs and colds, pneumonia, and other diseases, all in one cot, with only one nurse to supervise the entire ward. I think the Hon. Minister should give an assurance to this House and satisfy the people of this country that something is being done to improve this state of affairs.

The other point I wish to raise is the question of health propaganda. I have a feeling that the departments under the Hon. Minister are not carrying out their duties sufficiently in spreading health propaganda in this country and, in particular, reassuring the people whenever there are talks and rumours of epidemics. In this connection I would draw the Hon. Minister's attention to the newspaper stories about the epidemic of Polio-myelitis or Infantile Paralysis

[Mr. Keuneman.]

The newspapers were splashing these stories to such an extent that considerable alarm was spread in the country, so much so that people who had a slight cough and a bad throat thought they had contracted Poliomyelitis. There was considerable alarm, but there was not one authoritative statement by any medical officer to indicate whether there was in fact a serious epidemic of Poliomyelitis; what was Poliomyelitis or what were the symptoms; or whether the public should be seriously worried about it. There was panic spreading as regards this epidemic, but our "lotus-eaters" were still sleeping. When I made private inquiries, I was told by certain medical authorities that this was not a serious matter; there were certain cases but they were not out of the ordinary and that they were more or less what would be normally expected. But how could the public know this when the newspapers were successfully making a mess of this matter? I think the Hon. Minister should give instructions to those officers who are under him that, whenever there are talks and rumours of small-pox, poliomyelitis and other infectious diseases spreading, they should make a definite statement—a statement by the Government—as to the exact position, otherwise it is going to be extremely difficult to restrain one's natural feelings of panic.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: Mr. Chairman, when, with the inauguration of the new Constitution, the Hon. Minister for Local Administration took unto himself the long coveted matron of Health and Sanitary Services, there was raised in our minds a glimmer of hope. But a significant nine months have passed and the future is blank—absolutely blank. When the Budget proposals were discussed last year, he gave us a sort of fatherly assurance that this union would be fruitful. But what is the situation today? We only see the dismal spectacle of rolling pins flying about and talks of co-respondents. There is something wrong in his Denmark. I have sometimes wondered and tried to get at the root of his difficulties, wherefrom arises this sterility. There are certain conditions beyond his control. On the question of equipment he has

assured us that efforts would be made to obtain them; that he will turn away from the United Kingdom to distant countries like America. But there are certain factors within his control to which I think he has not addressed himself seriously. When I sought to investigate the root causes of this malady I was able to discover something else. This union has degenerated into an unfortunate triangle. . . .

Mr. Dahanayake: A clandestine love affair!

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: It is at this point that the Hon. Minister of Transport appears. He plans and cogitates on the problems; he puts forward his blue prints and hands them over for execution to the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works. There, Mr. Chairman, is the bottle-neck. . . .

The Chairman: This is irrelevant.

Mr. Reginald Perera: No, this is the most important point—his plans for building new hospitals. Take, for instance, the case of the Tuberculosis Hospital. What has happened? It has come to the stage where it has been handed over to the Public Works Department, but nothing has been done.

In my electorate a certain gentleman donated Rs. 25,000 for the construction of a maternity ward over six years ago. Six years have passed, but nothing has been done, and it now remains in the lap of that god, the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works.

Mr. Dahanayake: Tin god!

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: These plans have not been executed. He must make every effort to co-operate. If he is unwilling to execute those plans, he must come before this House and say so.

I took the Hon. Minister round the main hospital in my own electorate. I pointed out to him the absolute lack of equipment; lack of medical facilities; and lack of attendants in the hospital. What has he done to improve this hospital? On the way back from the hospital we dropped in at the nurses' quarters and the only thing that the Hon. Minister has done in respect of the

Hospital is that he has allotted Rs. 2,000 for additions to the nurses' quarters! Is this the way the Hon. Minister is addressing himself to one of the most important problems in the country?

I do not want to take up the time of the House. I think I can draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the main problems in regard to hospitals and sanitary services by merely endorsing everything that has been said by the hon. Member for Galle.

Mr. S. A. Silva *rose*.

The Chairman: Sufficient speeches have been made on this point.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Hon. Members can speak on the various heads and sub-heads.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I want to speak on the Hon. Minister's policy.

The Chairman: Sufficient speeches have been made on this point during the last one and a half hours.

Mr. S. A. Silva: When sub-heads are taken up, they could be discussed, but I want to speak on policy.

The Chairman: I will not allow details to be discussed at this stage unless the hon. Member refers to matters not covered by the other sub-heads. Hon. Members who have already spoken have put these matters very brilliantly before the Committee.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I would like to speak on the question of policy with regard to taxation of local-governing bodies.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: You can deal with it when we come to Local Government.

The Chairman: You may go on, but if you digress I shall call you to Order. Are you going to deal with the Health Department or the Local Government Department?

Mr. S. A. Silva: Local Government and Health. You are aware that, at the last discussion on this subject, it was pointed out by more than one hon. Member that there should be a graded

scheme of taxation with regard to assessment taxes in local government bodies. Practically all the urban councils and town councils are unanimous with regard to this question, and they passed resolutions and sent them to the Hon. Minister so far back as 1943, and the Hon. Minister gave these local government bodies the assurance that he will introduce legislation for a graded scheme of taxation. But up to the present moment he has not taken any steps to introduce this graded system of taxation. I cannot understand why there is no graded system of taxation in regard to assessment of properties when there is a graded scheme in regard to income tax, estate duty, and so on. I should like to see a graded scheme of taxes with regard to the assessment of property.

The other point I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister is the question of un-built areas in towns. There should be legislation to tax un-built areas. There is this housing problem to be solved. There are acres and acres of land on which there is only one solitary building in developed areas. This should not be allowed to continue, and landowners should be asked to pay a very heavy tax to compensate for not building houses on these lands.

The other aspect is, as the Hon. Member for Galle pointed out, the financial provision for these local government bodies.

The Chairman: You can bring up that point when the Hon. Minister for Local Government takes up Head 91.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister to refund to local government bodies the revenue derived from licences issued for sale of certain things within the urban council or town council areas.

The Chairman: That again is under Head 91—Grants to Local Bodies. You can bring all this up under Head 91.

This Amendment is really directed against the work done by the Minister as Minister of Local Government. You are now referring to policy which was discussed during the Second Reading Debate. I allowed the hon. Members for Galle, Third Colombo Central and Wellawatta-Galkissa to speak because they were not present during the Second

[The Chairman.]

Reading Debate. All hon. Members had their chance of bringing up all matters of policy during the Second Reading stage.

6.45 P.M.

Mr. Nadarajah: I have given notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote, and I hope you will permit me to make a few remarks.

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Nadarajah: I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Health and Local Government the great injustice done to my electorate, by the decision to do away with the establishment of a hospital in Bandarawela town, and also by not taking steps to implement the Ohiya water supply scheme to serve Bandarawela, Diyatalawa and Haputale.

The Chairman: The hon. Member mentioned both those points in his speech in the course of the Second Reading Debate, and I cannot allow him to speak on those matters again.

Mr. Nadarajah: Since I have heard from the Hon. Minister that he has not abandoned the idea of establishing a hospital at Bandarawela, I now seek a definite assurance from the Hon. Minister that he has not abandoned that project and that he would take early steps to proceed to implement that scheme. I want him to assure this House and my electorate that steps will be taken to do that work out of the sum of Rs. 20,000,000 that is being allocated to him.

The Permanent Secretary to the Hon. Minister wrote to me on 16th January, 1948, regarding the Ohiya water supply scheme as follows:

"With reference to the interview you had with the Hon. Minister of Health and Local Government on the above subject, I have the honour to inform you that, according to the observations of the Director of Public Works, it is apparent that Ohiya is the most prominent source and if investigations prove successful, it will be adopted."

That was on the 16th of January. We are now in August, and I am sorry to say that nothing has been done to make a start.

The Chairman: The Hon. Minister has made his explanation and given minute details regarding water schemes.

Mr. Nadarajah: In the same letter it is stated:

"It is hoped to expedite the work with the reorganization of the waterworks department which is expected shortly."

My complaint is that something could have been done all this time; at least readings might have been taken. I am not such an optimist as to believe that a water supply scheme can be put through in a year. I know that to complete such a scheme it will take about five years, but some start must be made immediately. I hope the Minister will take steps to see that a start is made and at least readings are taken immediately.

The Chairman: I hope hon. Members will bear with me. I do not want anticipation. I do not want repetition just within a few days. It is only a waste of time. The Committee stage is not meant for that purpose. During the Committee stage Members can elicit information and ask for their requirements when particular Heads are taken up.

This particular Amendment under discussion has been brought forward in order to bring to the notice of the House or the Minister certain defects in the administration. Those defects have been placed before the House in a most brilliant manner. Let the Minister reply now. Members can bring up other matters when the Heads are considered.

Mr. S. A. Silva: The issue of licences is a general subject.

The Chairman: The hon. Member can raise that question under Head 91.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I must express my thanks to hon. Members who have spoken for their eloquence, even if that eloquence was partly due to misunderstanding and partly due to lack of knowledge of the facts. I am grateful that they have drawn attention to a number of matters regarding which they feel there are defects.

The hon. Member for Galle, both in this House and in a previous House, year in and year out, whenever my votes came up, thundered forth. If I may, I

would refer to him by adopting a phrase used of the Bourbons of old. You know it was said of the Bourbons that they forgot nothing and forgave nothing. The hon. Member for Galle forgets everything and learns nothing, because year after year, in spite of every explanation given, he keeps on repeating the same thing without perhaps bringing his mind to bear on the actual position of the matter to which he is referring.

Mr. Dahanayake: Because you are doing nothing.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: He says I am doing nothing. I know what he is doing and what he did in the Municipal Council of Galle. I am not here to engage in personal recriminations. I would like to deal somewhat more fairly with the matters he has referred to than he has had the courtesy to deal with them himself.

Now, there are general criticisms levelled against me on matters which hon. Members know, or should know if they have the least degree of a desire to be fair and understanding, which cannot possibly or conceivably be held against me as matters for blame.

The last Budget was passed in January, and we are now in August. Some of the indents in respect of some of the works for which money was provided have only been issued a month or two ago, and some hon. Members expect me, by the wave of a magic wand, to show a vast increase in the accommodation of hospitals, to have new buildings put up in the space of two or three months, extensions made, equipment obtained, nurses and attendants trained, and a large number of doctors provided, when in the case of doctors they have to pass out after a strenuous period of training of over 5 years. These matters are held against me as matters for blame and negligence on my part in the administration of the departments entrusted to me in my capacity of Minister of Health and Local Government.

Surely, can that type of argument be seriously brought forward? It is true one hon. Member referred to the difficulties of execution of work. It is not altogether the fault of the Minister in charge of an executive department like the Public Works Department. Now,

take this very Eye Hospital referred to. One of the provisions I made was for building, both at the Eye Hospital and the Children's Hospital, buildings—two-storied or three-storied buildings—in order to relieve the congestion and put those things right. There is provision for the purpose in the current Estimates, and I have been told—no doubt it is not their fault—by the P. W. D. that they cannot get the materials for the buildings. They have indented for the materials but have not been able to obtain them yet. Therefore, if the materials cannot be imported from abroad for these big buildings, it is not possible to proceed with their construction.

From the amount of dollars allocated to us under the Sterling Balance Agreement for the period ended 31st December, 1948, a very large sum is provided to obtain materials, hospital equipment, and drugs from dollar countries like the United States of America which are in a position to supply them. I have been in touch, besides England, with the United States of America with regard to drugs and equipment already, and when the dollar releases are available, before December, 1948, and certainly in the next financial year, most of these things can be obtained.

Therefore, when criticism like that is levelled seriously, violently, vehemently, surely is it not fair for me to expect even from a Member of the Opposition a fair and just consideration of the situation which must, of necessity, be within his knowledge?

I am not here to cast any blame upon my predecessor or upon other departments. I am ready to bear the full blame in my Ministerial capacity for the work that is entrusted to me, but I would also require, and I have no doubt that I shall obtain, a reasonable appreciation of facts from hon. Members regarding the limiting circumstances over which no one can have any particular control.

Now, I would like to deal with one matter that was mentioned by the hon. Third Member for Colombo Central about the inquiry into hospital administration. What a hare has been started over this! What a ramp has been created over a Commission to inquire into hospital administration! I shall tell hon. Members that I am faced with three

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types of problems in dealing with the Medical and Sanitary Services of this country, a certain set of problems which I can and I should, if I am to perform my duty, act on at a Ministerial and departmental level. What is the point in having highly-paid departmental officers, what is the point in holding the position I hold, if on problems that should be legitimately tackled by us, I am to sit quiet and ask some extraneous body to go into them? I know the defects. They are lack of accommodation, lack of equipment, lack of staff. I do not want a Commission to point those out to me.

With regard to internal administration, I have an officer in England, now being trained in hospital administration, who will be here next year to take charge of the administration of the General Hospital. I intend to establish an administrative branch of my departments. The present position with regard to administration is that doctors are appointed as Medical Superintendents, and so on, and at the Head Office doctors are doing administrative work without any particular administrative training. Owing to seniority, they have been promoted to these posts without any particular training in administration.

It is my intention, both at the Head Office and for the internal administration of hospitals, from the General Hospital downwards, to establish a service so that doctors need not be taken away from curative or preventive work and appointed to fill these posts. If necessary, I shall have men trained abroad. I am prepared to do that. Already I have one in training in England.

Surely hon. Members must agree that I do not want a Commission to do that job for me. If I had come to this House and asked for a Commission for that purpose, I think quite justifiably hon. Members could have passed a vote of censure on me for not being able to do one of the most elementary duties for which I am responsible in my capacity as Minister.

Another set of problems, on a higher level, that faces me, is the proper co-ordination of the health side with the curative side, and certain other matters

of policy of that sort in regard to which it may be necessary to obtain a technical adviser with the necessary background and knowledge to come here and spend sufficient time here to study our particular problems and make recommendations. That is a point on which the doctors who saw me were satisfied—they were under a mistaken idea and were asking for a Commission for a limited purpose—when I told them that I was prepared to perform my duties myself, and that I was able to obtain the services of an expert to spend, not 3 months as a Commission would do, but 2 years or more to study all our problems, and bring an unbiassed and impartial mind to bear on the recommendations he would make.

7.0 P.M.

There is a third set of problems which must be settled at the policy level by me—not me alone—with the approval of the Cabinet. One, for instance, if I may give an example, is the position which the Ayurvedic system should hold in this country. I am now being faced with the position when probably there is a duplication of work as between Ayurvedic and Western treatment, as to what should be the proper position of Ayurvedic treatment when there is an overwhelming bias towards Western medicine. The question is, how should the two fit in together if we are to serve the best interests of the people of this country? That is a matter of high policy on which I will have to put up recommendations before long to the Cabinet. So that, it becomes a matter of high Governmental policy. In those circumstances, what is the use of asking me to appoint a Commission for some limited purpose? I hope to obtain the assistance and advice of the expert I mentioned. Those are matters of such high policy involving not merely technical policy. There are matters of national policy such as the question of Ayurveda and the position which it should rightly occupy in this country. It is a matter of Governmental policy—Cabinet level—which I should have to get Cabinet approval for.

All these three sets of problems are under consideration.

The House knows that, although some countries thought us not fit to be members of the U.N.O., we have been not

only elected a member of the World Health Organization, but we have been elected to the Executive Committee of the World Health Organization over the heads of many members who happen to be members of the U.N.O.

Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawela: How does that solve our problem?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: The World Health Organization will be very helpful to us. As a matter of fact, one gentleman of international fame, Dr. Gilner, who has gone out on behalf of the World Health Organization to India in connection with tuberculosis work, is coming to Ceylon and is going to spend a certain amount of time here. The expenditure that will be involved will be barely his living expenses in Ceylon. He is coming over from South India and his advice will be most valuable to us.

Mr. Dahanayake: When that advice is rendered, all our patients will be dead.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Sir, the hon. Member for Galle talks glibly. I ask, what is the work that I am neglecting with regard to tuberculosis patients? I am only too well aware that there are a large number of tuberculosis patients here in Ceylon. I stated quite clearly that I considered that matter as one of the main problems of this country.

Mr. Dahanayake: What are you doing?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: The hon. Member asks what I am doing.

Mr. Dahanayake: Did you even put sheds for those patients?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I will explain what the position is. A sanatorium has been opened at Kankesanturai, and a big Military hospital has been taken over for this purpose. The moment I became Minister, that hospital was taken over. There is provision for three to five hundred tuberculosis patients at the Civil Hospital at Kankesanturai, which was a Services hospital taken over by us.

The hon. Member for Galle talked about the Hambantota sanatorium. What is the blame he attaches to me with regard to that sanatorium? A very benevolent gentlemen, had promised in the previous regime a sum of Rs. 50,000 for this purpose. As a matter of fact, the money was paid, and the foundation was laid in 1945. But the work could not be proceeded with during the war. After the war, when we examined the site, it was not chosen. It was found to be utterly unsatisfactory. In the meanwhile we had taken over the Wirawila camp, which was a very fine site indeed. Probably hon. Members may know it; we are proceeding with the establishment of the sanatorium at the Wirawila site. Plans have been drawn up and the P. W. D. is now calling for tenders. In the meantime, the benevolent gentleman wrote to me, it is true. But if he only brought his mind to bear on the reply, which the hon. Member quoted only in parts, he would have seen the decision arrived at. There is money available for the purpose; Estimates have been prepared and even tenders for the necessary contracts for the work at Wirawila have been called. What is the blame then that the hon. Member attaches to me? One of the first matters I went into, the moment I was appointed Minister, was the question of this Hambantota site. We are also going to establish another sanatorium at Puttalam.

Then, again, in every hospital there are certain wards reserved for tuberculosis patients. We have gone out of our way in enlisting the assistance of the public in this matter. Our war against tuberculosis will be a total war; it is not professional soldiers that will have to fight it, but everybody. Every resource of men and women, whether they are laymen or nurses, doctors or Government institutions—all will have to be mobilized in dealing with the disease, the implications of which are not merely to be judged from the disease point of view but also from the social, economic and national points of view. So that, as far as we are able, we are proceeding with the work.

There is provision here in the Estimates to send more medical officers abroad in order to get them specially trained in tuberculosis—probably in

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India. And we are arranging for getting the services of specialized nurses from the United States of America to be in charge of the Welisara sanatorium, who, themselves, will form the nucleus of training, because the work wants experienced nurses.

I am sure hon. Members will agree that, for the period of the few months since the introduction of the last Budget, the amount of work done is not to be despised. Of course, when you say that there are 50,000 tuberculosis patients in Ceylon, what is the Minister to do? Surely, the impression that such a statement makes is by no means a correct one. It is a distorted statement of the facts.

Hon. Members talk of only Rs. 20,000,000 being provided for new buildings. That is so, but right through these Estimates are scattered and littered items referring to the medical and sanitary departments that are under improvement. Already, in dealing with Miscellaneous Services, you see certain provision for improving electrical installations. There is a further substantial amount provided for a large number of electrical installations for these hospitals in order to provide those who make use of them with light as well as to pump water. There are wells opened up and reservoirs built to service the hospitals with water. In addition to that, we are providing hospitals with refrigerators and there is provision made for that too.

If hon. Members will look at items 46 to 58 on pages 450 and 451 of the current year's Estimates, they will see provision made for continuation works. Those are for medical buildings in addition to the Rs. 20,000,000 included under Loan Works.

There is also one block vote of a certain sum of money provided in the P. W. D. Estimates, and during the Committee stage a sum of Rs. 500,000 will be added. Additions and improvements to minor buildings are also provided to the extent of about Rs. 545,000 in the P. W. D. votes.

Mr. Dahanayake: How long will that take to complete? 20 years!

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Again, under Loan Fund Expenditure, in addition to the sum of Rs. 20,000,000, there is provision in a sum of Rs. 16,526,550.

I quite admit that the rate of progress, the rate at which the buildings can come up, does not satisfy hon. Members. But I can assure them that it by no means satisfies me. It is partly due, perhaps, to the lack of staff the P. W. D. is experiencing today owing to the vast number of extensions to buildings, not only for my Ministry but also for the various other Ministries. There is the lack of building material. I can assure hon. Members that, as far as I am aware, I know that the P. W. D. does its best. As far as possible I shall try to get them to expedite the work themselves. Failing that, not only I, but certain other Ministers as well, will have to consider the possibility of utilizing whatever other resources we have—other private companies, and so on—for expediting the work of these buildings to a great degree.

I fully agree with hon. Members that the present pace of building, through no individual's fault, is much too slow. We will take every step to expedite the work.

With regard to the question of housing which was referred to, actually, in the current year's Estimates, a sum of Rs. 11,000,000 has been provided for smaller local authorities such as urban councils, town councils and certain village committees. We are also experimenting in the rural areas, but hon. Members know that it is not an easy matter when it comes to putting up buildings in rural areas.

Then, the Colombo Municipality is spending Rs. 1,000,000, the Galle Municipality Rs. 450,000, and the Kandy Municipality Rs. 900,000 on small housing schemes. In the coming year we have increased the Rs. 1,000,000 to Rs. 2,000,000. The hon. Member for Galle says that on the contributory basis of 2/3 to 1/3, we are not spending money; that is, when we find any local authority needs money and it is poor and has no power to raise that amount, it is not given. We have already explained the position that housing is a primary obligation of the Central Government. It will meet the full expenses wherever necessary. In addition to that, four urban councils are receiving money for building houses. They are Kotte, Moratuwa, Hambantota and Nuwara Eliya. If hon. Members will refer to Page 564 of the Estimates under Loan

Works, they will find a number of housing schemes which are to be given effect to and which will receive money in addition to the block vote of Rs. 20,000,000 that is provided for the bigger schemes. Members will, therefore, see that one important step has been taken in regard to housing.

The Town and Country Planning Ordinance having been passed, and the necessary Board under it having been appointed, they have already started work. That is going to be the real basis of this building structure of this country. Already they are preparing, with the assistance of Professor Abercrombie, a big regional scheme for Colombo and Kandy. There are a number of other building schemes which are being planned. It is not possible to proceed with building houses directly you see some empty space of land in front of your eyes. When the Town and Country Board gets on with its work—it has already started very well—most of the housing schemes will be proceeded with. It is not a matter of preparing a comprehensive housing scheme for the whole of Ceylon. That is not the problem.

Mr. Dahanayake: That is the problem.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: “That is the problem,” says the hon. Member for Galle. If that is the problem in his eyes, I can say that it is not the way to tackle it. We are planning as an organization, and as the houses are built, we will proceed, as far as possible, with the finances that we have. Hon. Members will realize that a fairly large sum of money is provided here in the Estimates. This is not the only sum that I intend to expend on housing. In the course of the coming year, as schemes mature with all the speed that is possible, I shall come to the House for an additional vote. Already preparations are complete and the work is quite ready to be started. That is the position with regard to the housing problem.

With regard to the question of finances of local bodies, I pointed out the difficulty to the hon. Member for Galle from time to time. I used that phrase of his earlier and said that it was

not a question of dealing with the financial relations between local authorities and the Central Government that we are worried about. The financial relations themselves can be reasonably settled as between the Central Government and the local authorities. It is a question of fundamentally altering, if necessary, the structure of local government finance itself, apart from its relations with the Central Government, so that local bodies can get a larger income than at present. The hon. Member quoted something from what the Acting Commissioner of Local Government had said. He was merely repeating what I said time after time. Instead of his giving advice to me, he was merely repeating what I was impressing on various occasions.

7.15 P.M.

They talked about a graded tax. Do they realize that I am considering this question from the point of view of recovering a certain fraction of revenue resulting from the present type of actual assessment tax? A graded tax is not going to add considerably to the revenue of local authorities. It may be that in many cases a graded tax may, in fact, result in reducing the actual amount of revenue accruing. I have to consider other means whereby the revenues could be increased. Their revenues could be increased by various forms of taxation. It is not altogether an easy task for me to produce in half an hour the entire taxation structure of the local authorities. That will have to be recast. It is receiving my attention. One of the first steps has been to obtain the services of Mr. Stewart Orr who is an expert on the subject, particularly in rating taxation. I hope that I shall be able to bring up satisfactory suggestions about that before long.

In the meanwhile, I have assisted local authorities in a hundred and one ways by providing assistance from the Central Government. The primary responsibility for housing and water schemes has been taken over by the Central Government. All these have proved a considerable relief to local authorities. Now they have to help themselves by levying taxation themselves. That is the question to which I am now addressing my mind. I am sure hon. Members

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do not want me to produce half-baked ideas in dealing with the entire financial structure of local authorities. I have already got the views of the Municipal Council of Colombo and other bodies, and I have got to deal with them as soon as I can.

Reference was made to school health work. I do not think that that work is sufficiently satisfactory. I admit that. What did the hon. Member for Galle say? He said that five or six times the present number of doctors will be required if that work is to be done efficiently. I have got only 600 doctors for my hospitals and my health work when I should have 3,000 doctors for purely curative work in this country. It is really coming back to the old problem of the difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of qualified doctors at the moment. I am trying to increase the number in every way I can. I hope that the Peradeniya branch of the Faculty of Medicine will be established within the next two years when we will double the number that are obtainable. When the Peradeniya branch materializes, which I hope will materialize within two years, we hope we will have about 200 doctors a year passing out. We hope to have annually, even in the Colombo section, at least between 60 and 70 doctors.

The hon. Member referred to nurses. I would like to say that there is only one training school for nurses, and that is in Colombo. We are obtaining certain highly-qualified religious sisters on a contract basis. They are qualified to train our nurses. So that, a second training school in Kandy will be established in addition to Colombo. I am introducing training centres at Galle and Jaffna, and I also hope to have one at the Kurunegala hospital—

An Hon. Member: What about Hambantota?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike:—in order to further train our *swabasha* nurses, nurses who only know Sinhalese or Tamil—highly qualified in those languages—and who have been wrongly termed basic nurses hitherto. I do not understand how they came to be known as basic nurses. They are going to be trained for 18 months, as against three years now. They will be taken in large

numbers into these training schools and given further training. They will be first recruited to the assistant nursing grade—not temporary appointments. After a further period of 18 months all those qualified to be promoted to the trained nurses' grade will be so promoted. That will enable us to have more nurses.

With regard to attendants as well as midwives, provision has already been made in the current year's Estimates to increase the number of attendants and midwives that are turned out.

The hon. Member also referred to infant mortality. I know that in 1943, the infant mortality rate per thousand was 132. But in 1947—it is the lowest ever recorded—it was 101. In other words the percentage of infant deaths per thousand has gone down considerably. So also mortality rates of mothers as well as others have all gone down in the year 1947 as compared to five years earlier. I do not say it is quite satisfactory. My hon. Friend need not quote figures from highly advanced Western countries to show that those figures are much lower than in Ceylon. I know it, but until we reach the ideal state of development in Ceylon, we cannot produce the same results as in other countries.

I think the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa asked me about a hospital at Mount Lavinia. I intend to have more than one hospital in Colombo. I intend to proceed, in the first instance, with another hospital in Colombo North and later another hospital in Colombo South which will be proceeded with after the project for Colombo North has advanced to a certain point of maturity.

The Rent Restriction Ordinance is ready and will be introduced in this House at a very early date. The Ordinance is now ready in the form in which the Government has approved it. I admit that, in dealing with the question of housing, there is a great deal of substance in what the hon. Member for Wellawatta-Galkissa said. It must be a fundamental angle of vision from which the problem should be dealt with. I do admit that the interests of private property in certain ways hinder and in certain ways assist the solution of the problem. I am quite satisfied

that the housing problem is a national problem which must be begun outside the range of purely private enterprise for profit—profits to be made by way of dividends to be received on capital expenditure. But the extent to which I can take it outside the purview of private interest is somewhat problematical. But I am making every endeavour from the point of view which we all accept, that housing must be treated more and more as a national service rather than purely an individual service. I shall do my best.

As I mentioned, the Rent Restriction Ordinance is ready. I am sure hon. Members will not be satisfied with it. I am perfectly sure that some of my landlord friends will probably get a fit when they see the provisions of the new Rent Restriction Ordinance. I will not satisfy either party fully. But I think in the circumstances the House will see that it is the fairest possible.

Mr. Keuneman: What about propaganda regarding polio?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: That question is very important. I wonder whether hon. Members know what steps have already been taken. I do not want to take too much of their time in explaining to them the steps that have already been taken. Last May there were some cases among Service personnel; that was followed shortly by cases in the environs of Colombo—one case at Moratuwa and two cases at Nugegoda among children. Immediate steps were taken by the Department to institute a full examination of school children; the school authorities were asked to report any absent cases so that they could be followed up by visits to their homes to see whether there were any cases of polio developing.

Copies of a memorandum prepared in the United Kingdom on this subject were sent to all Government doctors and private medical practitioners. In this connection I might say that I must be grateful to the Press, because the Press also co-operated in the matter by giving sufficient publicity to the memorandum. Actually there is no serious epidemic in our country. There were some 60-odd cases of which there have been only four

deaths—four deaths out of some 67 cases. The problem is being dealt with. If my hon. Friend feels that the propaganda put forward has not been sufficient, I shall most certainly go into the matter so that the ordinary citizen can have some knowledge of the symptoms of the disease and need not be alarmed unnecessarily. I will not talk any further—

Mr. Keuneman: The point I was making is this. The Government should indicate in such cases of outbreaks whether they are serious or whether they are normal occurrences of a particular disease. Some such indication will be greatly helpful in stopping panic.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I do not want to create a false sense of security by telling people not to worry about it. Nor do I want to alarm them until the need for it arises. That was the actual position. We did not want to broadcast, "This is nothing; do not worry about it". It is dying down. Any further propaganda that is necessary, I am prepared to take. I do not want anything to go wrong.

The Chairman: Are you pressing your Amendment?

Mr. Dahanayake: No, Sir. We should like to give the Hon. Minister another chance.

Question, "That the sum of Rs. 168,614 for Head 87, Vote No. 1 be inserted in the Schedule," put, and agreed to.

Head 87, Vote No. 1, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 88.—Medical and Sanitary Services

Vote No. 1.—Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Medical and Sanitary Services including cost of indoor and outdoor treatment of patients in Government Medical Institutions, &c., Rs. 51,190,514.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,800 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Female Ward Clerks' (Temporary)".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be reduced by Rs. 1,200 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Manager, Dairy Farm, Angoda'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 720 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Assistant Manager, Dairy Farm, Angoda'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 2,000 in respect of sub-head 1, item 'Fees for Lectures to Apothecary Students, &c.'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 18,000 in respect of sub-head 1, New item 'Allowance to new-entrant Medical Officers functioning temporarily as Medical Officers of Health'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 180,000 in respect of sub-head 18."

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 1,745 in respect of sub-head 26."

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 59,416 in respect of New sub-head, 'Dairy Farm Buildings at Angoda'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 2,250 in respect of New sub-head, 'Training of Workshop Technician, Rehabilitation Centre, General Hospital'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 24,000 in respect of New sub-head,

'Purchase of 2 ambulances for control of communicable disease'".

Question put, and agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I move, "That the Vote be increased by Rs. 35,600 in respect of New sub-head, 'Purchase of cattle and construction of calving shed, Dairy Farm, Angoda'".

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Dahanayake: On what page do you find these Amendments?

The Chairman: Page 27.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: These are Amendments to Vote 1.

The Chairman: Any comments please.

*Sub-head 1.—Personal Emoluments,
Rs. 26,986,968.*

Mr. Dahanayake: The Hon. Minister knows that there was a good deal of agitation on the part of members of the Medical and Sanitary Services in regard to the manner in which the Director of the Department should be appointed. There is a school of thought which thinks that the Medical Services should be entirely separated from the Sanitary Services, and that there should be two Directors instead of one.

7.30 P.M.

Then, Sir, there is yet another school of thought which thinks that the Directorship should be offered to the Medical side at one stage, and to the Sanitary side at another stage. Whatever may be the merits of the arguments for and against these suggestions, Mr. Chairman, this is a matter which has aroused the deepest interest amongst all medical men; and, in order that the officers of the Department may not continue discontented, it is necessary that the Hon. Minister should lay down clearly what his policy on this matter would be in the future. I would, therefore, ask him what his policy would be.

I want to invite his attention, Mr. Chairman, to another matter, namely, the conditions of service of what is known as the Hospital Clerical Service. Now, Sir, these members of the Hospital Clerical Service do work that

is identical with the work done by the Members of the General Clerical Service, and, in certain respects, of even a more responsible nature. They have to offer security, they work longer hours, they are not given the normal leave facilities which are given to the members of the General Clerical Service; and during the last two or three years, members of the Hospital Clerical Service have expressed their grievances in no uncertain terms before the Director as well as the Minister. I trust, Sir, that the Minister will look carefully into their case.

I want also to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister the large number of grievances which the minor employees of the hospitals have often expressed. There is one particular matter over which these minor employees have suffered in the recent past. When the new salary scales were drawn up, the minor employees of the hospitals were deprived of the diet that they received while they were working in the hospitals. A certain sum of money was added on to their salary, and these minor employees were told that if they chose to have the diet in the hospitals, their salary would be something less than the normal salary. Now the result of that has been, Mr. Chairman, that the minor employees in hospitals, like attendants, orderlies and others, have all been deprived of the diet which they had received so long in the hospital itself. The difference in salary—the increase in salary—which they received was meagre, Mr. Chairman. It was nothing very much.

The Government, of course, can turn round and say, "We deprived you of the meal, but we added something to your salary." But the addition to the salary was not something so overwhelmingly great as to compensate for the loss of the meal. Besides, Mr. Chairman, the point which I want to stress is that the nature of work of the hospital minor employee is such that, in the best interests of good and efficient work in the hospital, it is necessary that he should be provided with a meal on the premises at the proper time. If that point, Mr. Chairman, is borne in mind, the Hon. Minister will concede that it is well worth his while and that of the country to spend a little more in giving the minor employee his meal on the

hospital premises, because, as a compensation for the money we spend on that meal, we shall have smoother and more efficient work on the part of the minor employee. I would strongly emphasize this aspect of the matter, and leave it to the good sense of the Minister to see that the meal the minor employee lost is given back to him.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene

I wish to refer to just two points. The first is with regard to the temporary nurses in the Medical Department. These nurses were taken on about the year 1940 when there was an acute shortage of nurses and the country was in dire need of them.

The difference between these temporary nurses and the permanent nurses is that the former have not gone through a course of training at the training school, but it could be stated, judging on the number of years during which they have worked at the hospitals, that they have as deep a knowledge of nursing as the permanent nurses have who have undergone a course of training.

But, Sir, even now, after all these years of service, these temporary nurses are not entitled to the same leave privileges as are enjoyed by the permanent nurses. Today, temporary nurses are not given their annual leave with pay.

The Chairman: Are they the same as pupil nurses?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Pupil nurses are learners, but temporary nurses are put to work straightway. They are quite different from pupil nurses.

Mr. Dahanayake: Pupil nurses are nurses under training.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: Today I know that these temporary nurses are not——

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: We will absorb them to the permanent service; till then, they will be entitled to the same privileges as those enjoyed by the permanent nurses.

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: The other point I wanted to mention is with regard to the shortage of doctors. I wish to make a suggestion in this

[Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene.]
respect. I referred to this matter even during the last Budget Debate.

I know that a number of doctors in outstation hospitals have to spend a good amount of their time doing clerical work, making up their monthly returns of drugs, and so on. The hon. Member for Galle referred to the fact that the doctors have to spend three or four days in the week in giving evidence in Court. I know that a good amount of their time is also spent in doing clerical work, which could be done by a senior member of the Clerical Service. In the large hospitals there are certain officers who attend to this sort of work; and I say that this system should not be confined to the larger hospitals in the Island. I feel that the district hospitals, too, should have a person like that to attend to that type of work and relieve the doctors of the unnecessary burden that is thrust upon them.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: That is now being done.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister what he has done about the promise he made of getting down six specialists from Vienna.

Mr. Keuneman: I want to raise a point under the item "Medical Superintendent, Mental Hospital, Angoda," regarding the general question of the treatment of lunatics and people suffering from mental diseases in this country.

I think this House has not paid sufficient attention—and I do not know whether the Hon. Minister has paid sufficient attention—to the very deplorable plight which faces people who are suffering from mental diseases. Today the only way in which anybody suffering from mental illness can get competent treatment is by getting himself certified as a lunatic in a Court and by entering the Mental Hospital. There they will try to cure him. In other words, though psychiatry and psychology have developed as special sciences—diseases of the mind being recognized by medical science as diseases which are quite curable and which need special

treatment—this country is in such a backward position that the only possibility of a person getting attention for a mental disease is to go to a Court, make application and get himself declared a lunatic; then go to the Mental Hospital and there get the only competent available advice and medical attention.

I am very pleased indeed to see that the Hon. Minister has made provision for the training of a psychiatrist in England. This is a very welcome sign indeed, because I feel that there should be a complete reorientation of policy towards mental diseases in this country.

It is necessary that the Medical Department should open up a special section dealing with those people who are suffering from mental diseases. Otherwise, we will really be placing such persons under a tremendous humiliation and making their lot a completely intolerable one; and I hope that the Hon. Minister will also, when he replies, tell us that in addition to this question of sending an officer for training as a psychiatrist in England, provision is being made at the existing mental institution for patients suffering from mental diseases to receive advice and treatment without having to go through the humiliating process of being certified as lunatics in order to receive the most elementary medical attention available to them at present.

Mr. D. B. R. Gunawardena: I want to ask the Hon. Minister a question regarding minor employees. There are quite a large number of minor employees who work on a temporary basis. Several times we brought the question of temporary attendants to the notice of the Hon. Minister, but it appears as if they do not want to make these temporary attendants permanent.

Although there is a shortage of attendants in the General Hospital, they have not made the slightest effort to absorb these temporary attendants—nearly 200 or 300 of them—into the permanent service, in spite of the fact that some of them have put in ten, fifteen, twenty, or even twenty-five years' service. Daily they are being turned out of the hospital gates. I would urge on the Hon. Minister to give this matter his close attention.

Mrs. Kusumasiri Gunawardena: I would like to know whether the Hon. Minister is aware of the fact that the attendants at the Mental Hospital are punished and have fines imposed on them without a proper inquiry.

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to minor employees, specially temporary employees, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that the prevailing practice in the Medical Department, especially in maternity homes and minor hospitals in the outstations, is for the officer in charge to give them 24 hours' notice and dispense with their services if they do not attend to the domestic duties of the officer in charge.

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: Question!

Mr. S. A. Silva: I think that authority should not be given to the officers in charge of these institutions to deal with temporary workers in that way.

7.45 P.M.

There are a large number of minor employees who have been employed on a temporary basis for over two or three years. It is true that a certain number of attendants were taken into the permanent establishment, during the course of this year, men who had done continuous work for 300 days. I would ask the Minister to extend this concession to others who have done satisfactory work for over 300 days continuously—

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: One point—

Mr. S. A. Silva: Sir—

The Chairman: I thought you had finished.

Mr. S. A. Silva: With regard to temporary nurses—

The Chairman: That was referred to by the hon. Member for Kalutara.

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: They have taken all the nurses under their charge!

Mr. Dahanayake: We all love the temporary nurses!

Mr. S. A. Silva: The temporary nurses are not provided with uniforms. I do not know why. Most of them are married women, who come to work in the hospitals from their homes. They are "temporary" because they are married, otherwise they are qualified to be treated as nurses on the permanent establishment. I suggest that these temporary nurses also should be provided with uniforms.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: I referred to the question of doctors working on the preventive side as medical officers of health being utilised for work on the curative side. In cases of emergency, when the District Medical Assistant is away, the District Medical Officer should be asked to utilize the services of the Medical Officer of Health.

Mr. Wilmot A. Perera: I want to revert to the question of medical inspection of schools. In the old days we had special Schools Medical Officers, but today the Medical Officer of Health is expected to do the work. Cannot they attend to this work more regularly?

Mr. Keuneman: I would be glad if the Minister would inform us what he has done about the "chit" system. I presume the Minister knows what I am referring to.

In the course of the last Budget Debate, the Hon. Minister himself expressed considerable dislike of this system. As far as I know, the system still continues. It is a standing disgrace to the medical profession, and a standing disgrace to the administration of our hospitals.

I should have thought that the Minister, who likes to give us an appearance of energy and determination, would have wiped out this evil. That has not been done. Will he give us an assurance that he will see that this is finally eradicated, that it is not allowed to continue?

Mrs. Florence Senanayake: May I draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that the permanent nurses have only one day off for the month, while minor employees—

The Hon. Sir J. Kotelawala: They get the nights off!

Mrs. Florence Senanayake: You could know best.

The minor staff get a day off for the week. Will the Minister give his attention to this matter, and see that the permanent nurses also get a day off for the week?

Mr. Cholmondeley Goonewardene: Twelve ambulances were provided for last year. What is the reason for the delay in getting them down? We are satisfied with the good intentions of the Minister. Our criticism is directed against the delay in carrying out his good intentions.

Mr. S. A. Silva: Before the Minister replies, may I ask whether he is replying only to the questions asked under sub-head 1?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Yes.

Mr. S. A. Silva: I would like to refer to the question of the transfers of members of the Visiting Staff. Is the Minister going to give effect to the suggestion I made during the Second Reading Debate, that the Visiting Staff of the General Hospital,—Surgeons and Physicians Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5—be transferred to outstation hospitals, and men with the Edinburgh M.R.C.P., and F.R.C.S., qualifications now serving in the outstation hospitals be brought down to the Colombo Hospital for training?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I shall deal first with the question about the “chit” system. I assure the House that I have already dealt with this as effectively as it could be, in my opinion, short of its complete abolition.

When a doctor attached to the General Hospital gives a “chit” to the admitting officer in the O.P.D., I do not think it is necessary to lay it down that the Admitting Officer should pay no regard whatever to the “chit”. All that I was anxious to do was to remove the evil effects of that “chit” system. There were two ways of doing it. One was to restrict the number of patients

admitted, or rather the extent of over-crowding that should be permitted in any ward. Whereas there was some time ago over-crowding to the extent of 300 per cent., I have at the moment limited it to 100 per cent.

The second check I have introduced is this. Regardless of whoever issues the “chit”, the Admitting Officer is to have regard to a priority list, which he is required to keep, and he will admit into the wards patients in the order of the urgency of the case. If, say, the case seeking admission can wait another week or two weeks, and there are a large number of other more urgent cases seeking admission, these cases will be admitted in preference to those that can wait.

Subject to these conditions, the “chit” system can be permitted to operate without any evil effects resulting. It is so operating now.

With regard to the staff of temporary nurses, I am going into the question of providing them with uniforms, and into the other matters mentioned by hon. Members. I dislike this system of employing temporary nurses and temporary attendants. I feel that these people should be taken on to the permanent staff, without being asked to “hang on,” with no security of tenure. This is also essential in the interests of the Department itself.

All I can do in the matter is to facilitate the entry of these temporary employees into the permanent cadre on as easy terms and as quickly as possible. I am taking steps for the temporary nurses and attendants to be absorbed into the permanent cadre.

With regard to the clerical work of doctors, hon. Members will observe that we have increased the number of clerks intended for this type of work, from 159 to 175, with a view to the purely clerical work now being performed by doctors being entrusted to clerks, so that doctors and apothecaries may be relieved of purely clerical work.

With regard to the Hospital Clerical Service, the Treasury has been addressed by the Permanent Secretary with a view to effecting an improvement in the conditions of service, including salaries.

Reference was made to the time taken by doctors on judicial work. I am hoping to get several more judicial medical officers appointed. There are three or four only at the present moment, in Colombo, Kandy, Jaffna and Galle. The additional appointments will relieve the D.M.Os in charge of hospitals of judicial work.

The hon. Member for Galle referred to the post of D.M. & S.S. Requests have been made to me to separate the Departments and have two Departments, one for the sanitary services, and the other for the curative side. I am certain that complete division in that way is neither justified nor advisable. There is considerable inter-connection between the preventive and curative sides, and it is necessary that there should be one Head of Department to co-ordinate the work of the two branches. I also feel that much greater responsibility should be placed on the Deputies or Assistants to the Director, who will be placed in charge of the curative and preventive sides of the Department. Much greater responsibility should be placed on the head of each branch in dealing with their own subjects, than in the past. If that is done, there must be one co-ordinating officer at the head of the entire service.

I want the whole matter to be examined by the Adviser whom we hope to obtain—the question of co-ordinating the work of all these Departments,—so that the whole Department may work satisfactorily. I hope to be able to get that advice before I come to the House with definite proposals. There must be co-ordination in that way.

An Hon. Member: What about getting doctors from Vienna?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: A number of applications have been received in response to our representations. Some of the applicants do not possess any qualifications superior to those possessed by many of our own medical men, to justify our obtaining their services as specialists. I refer to both surgeons and physicians. There are just a few whose qualifications may be considered to be sufficiently high to justify their being regarded as specialists.

and brought here. The rest have qualifications which a good many of our own doctors here possess.

In the meanwhile, I am not depending on Vienna alone. I have approached the Rockefeller Institute in the U.S.A., which has already been helping us. The authorities there have told us that they will be able to pursue the question of obtaining certain specialists whose services are worth obtaining as specialists, not merely as medical men. The matter is being pursued. They have promised about two or three men before long. I am pursuing the matter.

With regard to the Vienna doctors, I repeat that, except for one or two, the others have merely ordinary qualifications which do not justify our obtaining their services on the footing that they are specialists.

Mr. A. Reginald Perera: My question about co-operation between Medical Officers of Health and the officers in charge of hospitals in the area—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Medical Officers of Health now are very busy men, in charge of large areas, looking after maternity and child welfare work. All the apothecaries and the dispensaries in the area are under the control of the M.O.H. They have a great deal of work. If in addition to that, they are called upon to help in the hospital work, their legitimate work will suffer. Wherever it does not so suffer, I shall consider favourably the suggestion to make use of them for the purpose mentioned.

Mr. Keuneman: My question about the mental patients—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I do not know whether the hon. Member has read the very interesting report of Dr. Mapother, who presented a very valuable report on the question. His suggestions are being pursued—

Mr. Keuneman: Was it published by Government?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Yes.

There is a psychiatric clinic already established in Colombo to treat incipient cases, with a ward attached, with a certain number of beds. Already there is one attached to the General Hospital.

[Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike.]

We hope to get a portion of the land at Katukurunda for another institution for curable but advanced cases. A third institution is being established for cases of a criminal nature. Angoda will be utilized purely as a place for the incurable lunatic.

Mr. Keuneman: Will people have to be certified as lunatics before treatment can be given?

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: Under the scheme we have in view, the present system will cease to exist altogether.

Mr. S. A. Silva: My question about the concentration of the specialists in Colombo—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: They all like to remain in Colombo. A large number of our doctors are being trained to take the F.R.C.S. examination. When they have passed that, they will be available for work in the provincial hospitals. The same applies to the M.D. qualification. We are getting a larger number of doctors for training as specialists. There are over 50 doctors undergoing training in England. The number has been increased to 65.

Mr. S. A. Silva: My question about the dismissal of minor employees by outstation doctors—

The Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike: I shall look into that.

It being 8 p.m., the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Committee report Progress; to sit again on Monday.

8.0 P.M.

IRRIGATION REGULATIONS

Resolved:

“That the following Regulations made by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands under sections 15 (2), 16 (3), 45 (2), 60 (1), 63, 75 (4), 86 (2) and 116 of the Irrigation Ordinance, No. 32 of 1946, as modified by the Proclamation under section 88 (1) of the Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council, 1946, published in *Gazette Extraordinary*, No. 9,773 of September 24, 1947, be approved:—

Regulations.

Section 15 (2).

1. Notice of the fact that any resolution has been approved under sub-section (1) of section 15

of the Ordinance shall be given by notification published in the *Gazette*.

Section 16 (3).

2. Meetings of a committee shall be summoned by notice given in accordance with the provisions of section 20 of the Ordinance.

3. No business shall be transacted at a meeting of a committee unless the meeting is attended by not less than one half of the total number of members of the committee.

4. No rule shall be made by a committee unless it is approved by not less than two-thirds of the number of members of the committee present at a meeting of the committee.

Sections 45 (2) and 60 (1).

5. Notice of the confirmation of a scheme relating to a major irrigation work under sub-section (1) of section 45 of the Ordinance, or of the confirmation of a scheme relating to a minor irrigation work under sub-section (1) of section 60 of the Ordinance shall be given by notification published in the *Gazette*.

Section 63.

6. No person shall damage any irrigation work or divert any *ela*, channel or other water-course comprised in any irrigation work.

7. No person shall encroach upon any *ela*, channel or water-course comprised in any irrigation work.

8. No person other than an irrigation headman or an officer authorized by the Divisional Irrigation Engineer shall in any way interfere with or alter the level of, any sluice, dam or regulating machinery or device in or upon any *ela*, channel, or water-course comprised in any irrigation work.

9. (1) No person other than an officer of the Irrigation Department shall distribute or cause the distribution of water from any major irrigation work.

(2) No person other than an irrigation headman shall distribute or cause the distribution of water from any minor irrigation work.

10. The person in charge of any irrigation work may stop the supply of water from that irrigation work to any lands in which waste of water occurs on account of any neglect or default of the proprietors or cultivators in attending to any work for which they are responsible.

11. No proprietor of any land shall take water from an irrigation work out of his turn or for a longer period than he is entitled to or convert to his own use such water supplied to an adjacent land.

12. (1) No person other than the proprietor of a land included in a specification prepared or deemed to have been prepared in respect of a major irrigation work under section 49 of the Irrigation Ordinance, No. 32 of 1946, shall use the water supplied from that irrigation work.

(2) No person other than a proprietor maintaining a minor irrigation work shall use the water supplied from that irrigation work.

13. (1) No proprietor of any land to which water is supplied from an irrigation work shall, without the written permission of the Assistant Government Agent, use that water for any purpose other than paddy cultivation.

(2) Where the water supplied from an irrigation work to any land is used by the proprietor of that land in contravention of the provisions of paragraph (1), the person in charge of that irrigation work may stop the supply of water from that irrigation work to that land.

14. (1) The Divisional Irrigation Engineer shall determine the total extent of land to be cultivated under any major irrigation work and the dates for the commencement and completion of cultivation in each season, and shall, not less than one month before the date for the commencement of cultivation, in writing notify such extent and dates to the Assistant Government Agent.

(2) The Assistant Government Agent shall cause the extent and dates notified to him under paragraph (1) to be published by beat of tom-tom or in such other manner as he may determine.

Section 75 (4).

15. In lieu of the registers required to be kept under section 17 and sub-section (1) of section 75 of the Ordinance, the Government Agent of a revenue district may, with the approval of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, keep in the Kachcheri of such district a register of all proprietors of lands under the irrigation works in such district.

16. A Government Agent who keeps a register under regulation 15 shall cause to be specified in the register—

- (a) each major irrigation work in the revenue district to which the register relates,
- (b) each minor irrigation work in such district,
- (c) the name and address of each of the proprietors of lands under each such irrigation work, and
- (d) the name and extent of each such land.

17. When the particulars required by regulation 16 to be specified in a register kept under regulation 15 have been entered in the register, the Government Agent of the revenue district to which the register relates shall cause notice to be given, by beat of tom-tom and by notification published in one or more of the newspapers in circulation in such district, that the register has been prepared and is available for inspection.

18. A register kept under regulation 15 shall be available for inspection by any person free of charge.

19. Any person may, within a period of two months from the date of the notice given by a Government Agent under regulation 17, apply in writing to such Government Agent for amendment of the register to which the notice relates on any of the following grounds:—

- (a) that he is the owner or a co-owner of a land specified in the register, but that he is not mentioned in the register as such owner or co-owner.

(b) that he is the owner or a co-owner of a land which is not specified in the register but which ought to be specified therein; or

(c) that the particulars given in the register against his name are incorrect.

20. (1) A Government Agent to whom an application under regulation 19 is made shall hold an inquiry regarding the application. He shall by notice in writing request the applicant and any interested person to be present at the inquiry on a date and at a time and place specified in the notice, and shall forthwith after the inquiry make an order allowing or disallowing the application.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) of this regulation, "interested person" means—

(a) Any person in place of whose name the applicant desires his own name to be substituted in the register, or

(b) any person whom the Government Agent has reason to believe is likely to be affected by the application.

(3) If any person requested by notice to be present at an inquiry under this regulation is absent without reasonable cause, the Government Agent holding the inquiry may in the absence of that person proceed to consider and make an order on the application to which the inquiry relates.

(4) A Government Agent holding an inquiry under this regulation may adjourn the inquiry from time to time.

21. Where a Government Agent makes order allowing an application under regulation 19, he shall specify in the order any necessary amendments to the register to which the application relates and shall cause those amendments to be made in the register.

22. The Government Agent of a revenue district to which a register kept under regulation 15 relates shall certify the register after the expiry of two months from the date of the notice given by him under regulation 17 and after such amendments as may have been specified by him under regulation 21 have been made in the register.

23. (1) After the certification under regulation 22 of a register kept under regulation 15, further applications may be made for the amendment of the register on any of the grounds set out in regulation 19. Such applications shall be inquired into in the same manner as applications under regulation 19, and accordingly the provisions of regulation 20 and 21 shall apply in the case of inquiries into and orders on such applications.

(2) Where in consequence of an application made under paragraph (1) of this regulation a name has to be inserted in a register kept under regulation 15, a fee of one rupee shall be charged from the person who has applied for the insertion of the name.

24. Every register kept under regulation 13 shall be revised at intervals of five years. The revision of such registers shall be carried out in the same manner as their original

Section 86 (2).

25. The certificate of sale issued under sub-section (2) of section 86 shall—

(a) where the land to which the certificate relates is purchased on behalf of the Crown, be substantially in the form set out in Schedule I. to these regulations, and

(b) where such land is purchased by any party other than the Crown, be substantially in the form set out in Schedule II. to these regulations.

26. In these regulations—

“committee” means a committee appointed under sub-section (1) of section 16 of the Ordinance;

“Government Agent” includes an Assistant Government Agent; and

“Ordinance” means the Irrigation Ordinance, No. 32 of 1946.

Schedule I.

I, _____, Government Agent/Assistant Government Agent of the _____ Province/_____ District, hereby certify that the land described in the Schedule hereto was sold under Section 77 of the Irrigation

Ordinance, No. 32 of 1946, to _____ for and on behalf of the Crown on

Government Agent/Assistant Government Agent of the _____ Province/_____ District.

, 19 .

Schedule II.

I, _____, Government Agent/Assistant Government Agent of the _____ Province/_____ District, hereby certify that the land described in the Schedule hereto was sold under Section 77 of the Irrigation Ordinance, No. 32 of 1946, to _____ on

Government Agent/Assistant Government Agent of the _____ Province/_____ District.

, 19 .”

—[Hon. Mr. Dudley Senanayake.]

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: “That this House do now adjourn.”—[Hon. Mr. Bandaranaike.]

Adjourned accordingly at 8.02 P.M. until 10 A.M. on Monday, August 9, 1948, pursuant to the Resolution of the House this Day.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION

Speaker—The Hon. Mr. A. F. MOLAMURE (*First Balangoda*)

Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees—Mr. R. A. DE MEL (*Colombo South*)

Deputy Chairman of Committees—Mr. J. A. MARTENSZ (*Appointed Member*)

Abeygoonewardane, H. D. (*Matara*)
Aboobucker, A. R. A. M. (*Mutur*)
Amarasuriya, Mr. H. W. (*Baddegama*)
Attygalle, C. E. (*Ratnapura*)

Banda, M. D. (*Maturata*)
Bandaranaike, The Hon. Mr S. W. R. D. (*Attanagalla*)
Buddhasara, P. L. (*Polonnaruwa*)
Bulankulame Dissawa, P. B. (*Anuradhapura*)

Chandrasiri S. (*Moratuwa*)
Chelvanayakam, S. J. V., K.C. (*Kankasanturai*)

Dahanayake, W. (*Galle*)
Dasanaikie, Ivan T. (*Wariyapola*)
de Silva, Dr. Colvin R. (*Wellawatta-Galkissa*)
de Silva, G. R. (*Colombo North*)
de Silva, P. H. W. (*First Ambalangoda-Balapitiya*)
de Zoysa, G. A. W. (*Second Ambalangoda-Balapitiya*)

Ebrahim, Mudaliyar M. M. (*Pottuvil*)
Ethirmannasingham, S. U. (*Paddiruppu*)

Fernando, J. J. (*Chilaw*)
Fernando, W. Leo (*Buttala*)

Goonesekera, D. S. (*Udugama*)
Goonesinha, The Hon. Mr. A. E. (*First Colombo Central*)
Goonewardene, Cholmondeley (*Kalutara*)
Griffith, F. H. (*Appointed Member*)
Gunawardena, D. B. R. (*Kotte*)
Gunawardena, Mrs. Kusumasiri (*Avissawella*)

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