Cabinet

West Indies

Report of the Closer Union Commission

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies
CABINET.

WEST INDIES: REPORT OF THE CLOSER UNION COMMISSION.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I CIRCULATE herewith the Report of the Closer Union Commission on their visit to the Leeward Islands, the Windward Islands, and Trinidad, from November 1932 to February this year.

2. The appointment of the Commission arose from a despatch of Lord Passfield (dated the 4th March, 1931) to the Governors of Trinidad, the Leeward Islands and the Windward Islands, in which he stated that he had come to the conclusion that the time was ripe for an enquiry to be held into the possibilities of closer union and co-operation between Trinidad, the Windward and the Leeward Islands, or some of them. The three Colonial Governments concerned concurred in the appointment of a Commission to explore these possibilities, but for various reasons it was not found possible to proceed with the proposal immediately, and the Commissioners (General Sir Charles Ferguson and Sir Charles Orr) eventually set out in November 1932 with the following terms of reference:

"To examine on the spot the possibilities of closer union between Trinidad and the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands, or some of them."

It had been arranged that Sir Sydney Armitage-Smith should also be a member of the Commission, but the Commission was robbed of his services by his untimely death shortly before they were due to sail.

3. After they had spent some time in the West Indies, it became clear to the Commissioners that public opinion in Trinidad was so opposed to any form of closer political union with the northern islands that it would be useless to try to devise any form of Federation which should include Trinidad as well as the Leeward and the Windward Islands. They accordingly set themselves to consider whether there was any system which they could recommend for the latter two groups, and they evolved a series of proposals for this purpose. It should be noted that the Commissioners themselves regard their proposals as nothing more than a first step—and that a tentative one—towards a real Federation, not only of the islands with which they were dealing, but of other units in the West Indies which might eventually be found willing to join. A summary of the chief recommendations of the Commission is printed as an Appendix to this memorandum.

4. One recommendation of the Commissioners I regard as involving an important question of principle, and as being of particular moment, alike owing to its immediate effect in the West Indies and to its possible repercussions elsewhere. This recommendation concerns the question of the method by which the Governor of the Colony should be invested with the power of ensuring the passage of essential legislation. At the present time the Legislative Council of each of the

[8645]
Islands concerned consists of the Governor and an equal number of officials and
unofficials—(the Governor having a casting vote, which enables him to carry or
veto any measure if the votes are evenly divided. The result of this arrangement
is that the Governor may, and on rare occasions does, by the use of the official bloc
and his casting vote, carry measures against the possibly unanimous vote of the
Unofficial Members, and this is the only method open of securing the passage of
legislation which the Governor regards as essential in the interests of the island,
except that in the Windward Islands (unlike the Leeward Islands) the Crown
has the power of legislating by Order-in-Council.

The Commission point out that there are considerable objections to such a
state of affairs. In the first place, it gives the Unofficial Members of Council an
idea of impotence, and, while it seems clear that in their own minds the sense of
grievance arising from this has been magnified to an extent not warranted by the
facts, yet the sense of grievance remains and must obviously militate against the
harmonious working of the constitution. Further, the system necessitates
prolonged attendance in Council on the part of a number of Heads of Depart­
ments, who are said to take little interest in the debates and to be there only in
order to record their votes under instructions from the Government, when they
might be much better employed attending to the affairs of their Departments.

5. The Commission have accordingly proposed a scheme which they hope
will go far to remove both these causes of complaint. While recognising to the
full the absolute necessity of preserving to the Government the power to govern,
they submit "that the same result could be obtained by a simpler, more straight­
forward, and less artificial and mechanical method" than by the use of the official
decl.

They therefore recommend that the official membership of the several
Legislative Councils should be reduced to such officials as form the essential part
of the Executive, leaving the unofficial members in a majority on the Councils.
As a counterpart to this the Commission recommend that, on the rare occasions
when the Governor takes the view that it is necessary in the public interest to
carry a measure decided upon by him and the particular Executive Council but
opposed by the unofficial members of the Legislative Council, he should be
empowered to make a declaration to this effect and the measure should then have
the force of law, subject to its being approved by the Secretary of State. This
would obviate the present unreal procedure by which the Governor has in such
cases to have resort to the expedient of counting up the votes of a number of
officials, who are bound to record them as they are instructed, adding his casting
vote and then declaring the measure to be carried by a majority.

6. I am anxious to emphasise, as do the Commissioners, that this proposal
would in no way alter the powers which the Governor and the Secretary of State
now possessed and which they must in all circumstances retain; it would merely
alter the manner of their exercise. The proposed system would go some way
towards removing the objections of unofficial members who are irked by the
existence of the official bloc; and it would have the additional advantage of
freng the Heads of Departments from the necessity of prolonged attendances in Council, and thus enabling them to devote their full time to the work of their
own Departments.

7. I am myself convinced that it is right that, in order to secure the passage
of essential legislation, the Governor should rely on the special powers proposed
by the Commission rather than on the artificial and cumbersome machinery of
the official bloc. I have, however, thought it proper to seek Cabinet approval
for the action proposed, since the adoption of this principle would very probably
have repercussions elsewhere.

The Commission recommend a combined system of nomination and election of the
Unofficial Members of the Legislative Councils, the proportion of each to depend on the
particular circumstances of each island. They add, however, that "it should be clearly laid down
that a nominated member should have as complete freedom to vote according to his conscience
as his elected fellow-members, and should not be regarded in any sense as a 'Government
Member.'" I have no doubt that it is a sound principle that the nominated Unofficial Members
should be allowed to vote according to their convictions and not merely at the mouthpieces of the
Government; and I have recently approved of effect being given to this principle in the Council
of Government in Mauritius.
The position as regards the West Indies themselves is comparatively simple. Constitutionally, the West Indies and neighbouring mainland territories may be divided for purposes of consideration into three groups:

1. (a) Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados.

These Colonies already possess ancient Constitutions giving them a very large measure of control over their own affairs.

(b) Jamaica.

The Constitution here is of a peculiar character, the elected members possessing certain unusual powers as regards finance. The Governor has the power of overruling them by declaring a matter to be of "paramount importance," but resort to this is very infrequent.

It is thought unlikely that the adoption of the Commission's proposals would lead to any demand for further concessions from the group of colonies under 1 (a), and in the case of Jamaica any such demand could be met by pointing out the wide powers of veto already held by the elected members of Council.

2. British Guiana and British Honduras.

In British Guiana there is already an unofficial majority, but under the Constitution introduced in 1928 the Governor possesses similar powers to those proposed by the Commission for the Windwards and Leewards.

The adoption of the proposed measures in the Windwards and Leewards may very likely lead to a renewed demand from British Guiana for an elected majority in the Council and for fuller unofficial powers. In November 1932 I stated in reply to a Parliamentary Question that "so long as the Colony is in receipt of a grant from the Imperial Exchequer, His Majesty's Government must continue to exercise effective financial control." It is clear that this position must be maintained.

In British Honduras there is an unofficial majority, but here, also, the Governor possesses powers similar to those proposed for the Windwards and Leewards. These powers were conferred on the Governor as a result of the Colony receiving financial assistance from the Exchequer, and in the event of its financial recovery, the question may require reconsideration.

3. Trinidad.

The Governor has at present an original and a casting vote in the Council, which has the effect of giving him an official majority. If the proposed reforms are made in the Windwards and Leewards, it is likely that there will be a demand for similar treatment in Trinidad. In that event, I should see no objection to acceding to the request and thus bringing Trinidad into line with the neighbouring Colonies, where similar conditions obtain, provided that the experiment in the Windwards and Leewards proves to work satisfactorily.

8. Outside the West Indies, it may be taken as certain that the adoption of the Commission's proposals would lead to an early date to a similar demand in Kenya, where for years past constant pressure has been exercised by the unofficial members, with a view to obtaining for themselves a greater measure of power in the Council, particularly on financial matters. In Kenya, however, there are special circumstances which will have to be faced, and this is a case which must be decided separately and on its merits.

The question was, in fact, considered by the Joint Select Committee on Closer Union in East Africa, who came to the following conclusion:

"Different considerations, however, arise directly the question of an unofficial majority is admitted into the discussion. This was suggested with the safeguard, however, of the Governor's veto and power of certification. But it appears to the Committee that, even with the safeguards suggested, an unofficial majority, whatever may be said to the contrary, does morally and in fact become responsible."

This in effect means that the Select Committee held that, in view of the special responsibility of His Majesty's Government towards the native community in
Kenya, the official majority must be maintained there. Having regard to this pronouncement, there would be particular difficulties in abolishing the official majority in Kenya, though, on merits, there is something to be said generally for releasing a large number of hard-worked officers from constant attendance in the Legislature on subjects with which they have little or no concern, and vesting the apparent authority where the real power exists, namely, in the Governor.

9. The fact, however, that it may be impracticable to grant a similar concession in Kenya should not, I submit, be allowed to influence our decision in the case of the Windwards and Leewards, or to deter us from carrying out there the strong recommendation of the Commissioners, which is both desirable in itself and would bring the Windwards and Leewards into line with others of the Caribbean Colonies. I propose, therefore, to adopt generally the recommendations in the Report, with such modifications as may seem necessary or desirable after consideration of any criticisms which the Governors of the Colonies concerned may make.

Inasmuch as the present federation of the Leeward Islands, which the Commissioners recommend should be dissolved, was constituted by Act of Parliament, Imperial legislation would be required to give effect to that recommendation.

10. The Report has been laid before Parliament "in dummy," and I am arranging for its simultaneous publication here and in the West Indies as soon as possible. One advance copy of the text has been sent to each of the Governors of the three Colonies confidentially in order that they may be already acquainted with its contents when publication is effected.

Downing Street, July 14, 1933.

P. C.-L.
APPENDIX.

Summary of Chief Recommendations of the Commission.

THE islands forming the Colonies of the Leeward and Windward Islands should be united in one Colony under a Governor.

The present Federation of the Leeward Islands should be dissolved and each Presidency should be given in general the same independence as is at present possessed by the three islands of the Windwards group, but each retaining, as now, its own Executive and Legislative Councils, enacting its own laws and regulating in general its own finance and local affairs. The three islands of the Windwards group should similarly remain autonomous as now.

There should be no unification of services at the present stage; except in the case of the Police Force and of Agriculture, for which latter a detailed scheme is put forward.

The Governor of the new Colony should take no direct part in the administration of any of the units, but should be the sole channel of communication between the newly-established Colony and the Secretary of State.

The Governor's assent would be required to all Bills passed by the Island Legislatures before they could become law and he would possess the full power of refusing his assent. The usual limitations to his power of assent in respect of the Bills of certain classes would be maintained. He would also be empowered to send Bills to the various Island Legislatures for their consideration, and, where he thought a measure to be necessary in the public interest, even if it had not been passed by the majority of the Legislature, to make a declaration to that effect, in which case it would be given the force of law.

The Governor should keep in close personal touch with all the islands in the group, but should not sit as President of the Executive and Legislative Councils.

The several Legislative Councils should contain both a nominated and an elected element among the unofficial members, the proportion depending on the particular circumstances of each island. This involves an extension of the elective principle to the Presidencies of the Leeward group other than Dominica where there is already an elected element. It should, however, be clearly laid down that a nominated member should have as complete freedom to vote according to his conscience as his elected fellow-members, and should not be regarded in any sense as a "Government Member."
WEST INDIES
REPORT OF THE CLOSER UNION COMMISSION
(Leeward Islands, Windward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago)

APRIL, 1933
Leeward Islands, Windward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago

Report of the Closer Union Commission

Personnel of the Commission:


Sir CHARLES ORR, K.C.M.G.

Mr. S. MACNEILL CAMPBELL (Colonial Office), Secretary.
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SIR,

On the 4th of March, 1931, Lord Passfield addressed a despatch,* which was published in the Press, to the Governors of Trinidad, the Windward Islands, and the Leeward Islands, in which he stated that "he had come to the conclusion that the time is ripe for an enquiry to be held into the possibilities of closer union and co-operation between Trinidad, the Windward and the Leeward Islands, or some of them," and proposed that a Commission should be appointed with very broad terms of reference to proceed to the Colonies concerned as soon as possible with the object of conducting a comprehensive enquiry into the whole question.

The Secretary of State, having subsequently been informed of the concurrence in principle of the three Colonial Governments in the appointment of such a Commission, found himself unable, for reasons into which it is unnecessary for us to enter here, to adhere to his original intention of proceeding with the enquiry in the course of that year; and it was not until late in the summer of 1932 that, after further correspondence with the Governors concerned, plans were concerted for the despatch of a Commission in November of that year with the following terms of reference:—

"To examine on the spot the possibilities of closer union between Trinidad and the Windward Islands and Leeward Islands, or some of them."

When accepting in September last the invitation with which you honoured us to serve on the Commission, we were looking forward to having as our colleague the late Sir Sydney Armitage-Smith, K.B.E., C.B., with whose report† on the Financial Mission to the Leeward Islands and St. Lucia, which he undertook on behalf of the Secretary of State in April to September, 1931, we were familiar. Before leaving England we were privileged to have some brief discussions with him on the larger enquiry with which he was to have been associated with us, and we feel it our first duty, in submitting to you the present report, to place on record our keen sense of the heavy loss which not only we ourselves, but the West Indian Governments concerned, suffered by his sudden and untimely death on 30th October. We were thus deprived, before our mission had begun, of services the value of which it would be difficult to estimate, and to which eloquent and

* Appendix A. † Cmd. 3996.
sympathetic testimony has been borne throughout the Islands which we have visited by all who came in contact with him. We have, however, been privileged to have access to a most valuable memorandum on the general question of federation in the West Indies which Sir Sydney had already prepared in outline, which has been of great assistance to us, and of which we have freely availed ourselves.

In accordance with instructions we left London on 9th November, 1932, and embarked on the s.s. Camito at Avonmouth, transhipping on the evening of 19th November to the C.N.S. Lady Drake at Bermuda, and arriving at Antigua on 24th November, with brief calls at St. Kitts and Nevis on the previous day. From the detailed Itinerary annexed below it will be seen that, discounting the time occupied in inter-island sailings, we spent five weeks in the Leeward Islands (ten days at Antigua, eight at St. Kitts and Nevis, three at Montserrat, and twelve in Dominica), one month in the Windward Islands (nine days at St. Lucia, six at St. Vincent, and fourteen in Grenada), and three weeks in Trinidad. We regret that time or difficulty of communications did not permit of our visiting Anguilla or the Virgin Islands within the Leeward group, nor Carriacou in the Windward Islands. We were, however, enabled to interview Dr. Macfadyen from Anguilla and Mr. Drayton, the Commissioner of Carriacou.

In the course of our tour throughout the Islands we held 172 interviews. The total number of persons who appeared before us individually and in deputations was 304. The following table gives details:

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We have not thought it necessary to indicate in greater detail than appears in the Itinerary the nature of those interviews, but we are glad to say that throughout them we received full and free expressions of opinion from representatives of every section of the community in each unit. We feel confident that our decision, the reasons for which were in each case explained at the inaugural public meetings, to conduct our enquiry by the informal method of frank and intimate conversations across the table rather than in public contributed in great measure not only to the successful accumulation of the large volume of evidence which we received and to its intrinsic value, but to the expedition of business and the convenience of everyone concerned. We fulfilled several engagements other than the principal ones shown in the Itinerary, and our only reason for omitting separate reference to these is that they were less strictly germane to the objects of our mission: we refer to short visits, made as occasion offered, either by ourselves or by our Secretary, to institutions and works of development generally, including schools, prisons, hospitals, agricultural stations and experimental plots, housing schemes, peasant settlements, factories and plantations (sugar, cacao, nutmeg, etc.). We are very grateful to all, whether Government officials or private individuals, who acted as our guides on such occasions, for the pains which they took to let us see as much as possible in the short time available.

We are greatly indebted to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and through them to the Naval Commander-in-Chief, America and West Indies Station, Vice-Admiral the Honourable R. A. F. Plunkett-Ernle-Erle-Drax, C.B., D.S.O., for their courtesy in arranging for the conveyance of ourselves and our shorthand writer, Mr. M. W. Gilkes of Trinidad, on board H.M. Sloop Heliotrope from Montserrat to Dominica, and thereafter throughout the Windward Islands and to Port of Spain; and also to Commander G. Wadham and the officers and men of H.M.S. Heliotrope for their continual courtesy and ready co-operation in all the arrangements which had to be made in regard to our accommodation and conveyance to and from the ship.

We find it a difficult if welcome duty to attempt to acknowledge adequately our indebtedness to everyone in every Island and Colony who contributed to the smooth running of the many arrangements connected with our stay and to our personal convenience and comfort. In Antigua and Grenada we were privileged to be the guests of Sir Reginald and Lady St. Johnston and of Sir Thomas Vans Best and Mrs. Best, and in acknowledging in particular their generous hospitality we are anxious that each and all of our many other hosts and hostesses, official and private, too numerous to mention individually, should know how deeply we appreciated
the warmth of the welcome which they accorded to us, and their unfailing kindness and consideration.

Finally, to the Governors of all three Colonies and to the Administrators, Commissioners, and Wardens in the various constituent units, who gave so willingly of their time and thought in discussion on various aspects of the problems confronting us, and much valuable assistance in the economic use of our time by arranging for us to meet so many representatives of the different communities, we desire to express our grateful thanks.

We have, etc.,

(Signed.) CHARLES FERGUSSON.
C. W. J. ORR.

The Right Honourable
Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, C.B.E., M.C., M.P.
1932.

9th November ... Departed Avonmouth S.S. Camito.
19th November ... Arrived Bermuda.
20th November ... Embarked C.N.S. Lady Drake.
23rd November ... Arrived Basseterre, St. Kitts. Met Administrator and official and unofficial members of Executive and Legislative Councils. Landed at Nevis in the afternoon and paid brief call on Warden.
24th November ... Arrived St. John's, Antigua.
25th to 26th November Visits to institutions, etc.
26th November ... Inaugural public meeting.
28th November to 2nd December Interviews with members of Executive and Legislative Councils (Antigua and Federal), Officials, and representative private individuals.

4th December ... Departed Antigua, S.S. Nerissa. Brief call at Plymouth, Montserrat, en route. Arrived Basseterre, St. Kitts, at night.

5th December ... Inaugural public meeting.
9th December ... Visit to Nevis: five interviews.
13th December ... Departed St. Kitts, S.S. Fort St. George. Brief call Antigua (Government House): arrived Plymouth, Montserrat, about midnight.
14th December ... Inaugural public meeting.
14th to 16th December Interviews:— Members of Councils as above. Private individuals.
1932.

17th December ... Departed Montserrat, H.M. Sloop Heliotrope: arrived Roseau, Dominica.

19th December ... Inaugural public meeting.

19th to 28th December Interviews:—
Members of Executive and Legislative Councils.
Roseau Town Council.
Commercial Deputation.
Planters' and Peasants' Deputation.
Peasant Proprietors' Deputations, Portsmouth (December 23rd) and Roseau.
W.I. National League Local Branch.
Pointe Michel Deputation.
Officials.
Private individuals.
Press.

30th December ... Departed Roseau, H.M.S. Heliotrope: arrived Castries, St. Lucia.

31st December ... Inaugural public meeting.

31st December to 7th January, 1933. Interviews:—
Members of Executive and Legislative Councils.
Castries Town Board.
W.I. National League Local Branch.
Friendly Societies.
Officials.
Private individuals.

1933.

9th January ... Departed Castries, H.M.S. Heliotrope: arrived Kingstown, St. Vincent.

10th January ... Inaugural public meeting.

10th to 14th January ... Interviews:—
Members of Executive and Legislative Councils.
Medical Deputation.
Press.
Officials.
Private individuals.
1933.

16th January ... ... Departed St. Vincent, H.M.S. Heliotrope: arrived St. George's, Grenada.

17th January ... ... Inaugural public meeting.

17th to 30th January ... Interviews:—
Members of Executive and Legislative Councils.
Representatives of District Boards.
Representatives of Chamber of Commerce.
W.I. National League Local Branch.
Grenada Workingmen's Association.
Friendly Societies.
Grenada Agricultural Association.
Public Service Association.
Fellowship of Service.
The Commissioner, Carriacou.
Officials.
Private individuals.

31st January ... ... Departed Grenada, H.M.S. Heliotrope: arrived Port of Spain, Trinidad.

1st February ... ... Inaugural public meeting.

2nd to 20th February Interviews:—
Members of Executive and Legislative Councils.
Port of Spain City Council.
Agricultural Association.
Chamber of Commerce.
Cacao Planters' Association.
E.I. National Congress.
Trinidad Workingmen's Association.
Principal, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.
Officials.
Private individuals.
Press.

13th February ... ... Visit to Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.

17th February ... ... Visit to Tobago: two interviews.

21st February ... ... Departed Trinidad, S.S. Bayano.

5th March ... ... Arrived Southampton.
The task entrusted to us was:

"To examine on the spot the possibilities of closer union between Trinidad, the Windward Islands, and the Leeward Islands, or some of them."

The problem is by no means a new one, and before embarking on it we studied the past history of the islands concerned and made ourselves generally acquainted with the various attempts that have from time to time been made to unite the several scattered British units in the Caribbean seas.

Major the Honourable E. F. L. Wood, M.P., now Lord Irwin, in his report in 1922 on the West Indies (Cmd. 1679), dealing with the question of West Indian Federation, wrote as follows:

"The establishment of West Indian political unity is likely to be a plant of slow and tender growth. If any advance in this direction is to be achieved, it can only be as the result of a deliberate demand of local opinion, springing from the realization of the advantages of co-operation under modern world conditions . . . . I am satisfied that, so long as public opinion stands where it does to-day, it is both inopportune and impracticable to attempt amalgamation of existing units of Government into anything approaching a general federal system."

Our enquiries, therefore, have been directed to discovering, not so much whether there is some form of Government which would suitably embrace the three Governments at present existing, but rather whether local opinion throughout these scattered islands is in favour of some form of closer union between the groups, and, if so, what form of union would be acceptable to them. Our terms of reference limited us to three only of the British possessions in the Caribbean—Trinidad and Tobago, the Windward Islands, and the Leeward Islands—and deliberately excluded one which geographically forms part of the group, the island of Barbados. The main reason for this exclusion is no doubt the difference of constitution which marks Barbados from its neighbours, and we only refer to the point in passing. The three Colonies, however, with which we are concerned, also differ widely from one another in the forms of constitution under which they are governed, and as these differences happen in themselves to illustrate three distinct forms of union we think it advisable to begin our Report with a brief sketch of their several Constitutions.
The Leeward Islands.

The Leeward Islands are a federation of five Presidencies—Antigua (with Barbuda), St. Kitts-Nevis (with Anguilla), Dominica, Montserrat, and the Virgin Islands.

Each Presidency is autonomous so far as its finances are concerned, and has its own legislature. There is, however, a Federal Government, with a Federal Executive and Federal Legislature. The latter meets, usually once a year, in Antigua, the Headquarters of the Federation and of the Governor, and is empowered to make laws of general application and also to deal with any matter which may be delegated to it by all or any of the Presidencies. Federal expenses, which include the Governor's salary, are met by annual contributions from each Presidency: but practically the only Federal officers other than the Governor are the Colonial Secretary, the Chief Justice and Puisne Judge (or Judges), the Auditor, and the Chief Inspector of Police. In immediate charge of each Presidency is an Administrator (or in the case of Montserrat and the Virgin Islands, a Commissioner) who in the absence of the Governor presides over the Executive and Legislative Councils, and who is ex officio a member of the Federal Executive and Legislative Councils.

The Windward Islands.

The Windward Islands consist of three distinct Colonies—Grenada, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia—united under one Governor whose usual place of residence is Grenada. There is no Federal Government and each Colony has its own Executive and Legislative Council with full fiscal autonomy. An "Administrator and Colonial Secretary" is in immediate charge of the Colonies of St. Vincent and St. Lucia when the Governor is not in residence, and communicates direct through him with the Secretary of State. When the Governor is present in either Colony, however, the Administrator thereof becomes for the time being Colonial Secretary, the Governor taking his place as Administrator. The salaries of the Governor, of the Auditor, and of a minor official termed the Secretary to the Government, are divided in certain proportions between the three Colonies. The Governor is, in effect, the sole bond of union between the three Colonies, which otherwise enjoy practically complete autonomy.

Trinidad and Tobago.

Trinidad forms with the island of Tobago one unified Colony, Tobago having been amalgamated with the larger island in 1898.

* In both Leeward and Windward groups the expression "full fiscal autonomy" requires modification in cases where a Presidency or Colony, as the case may be, is in receipt of grants-in-aid or loans from His Majesty's Government.
after a somewhat chequered history, during a portion of which it formed one of the Windward Islands Group: its revenues form a part of the general revenue of the Colony, of which it constitutes a Ward, electing one Member to the Legislative Council.

DIFFERENCES IN CONSTITUTIONS AND CONDITIONS.

Here, then, we have three distinct forms of union:—

1. A loose Federation, with local autonomy of its several units.
2. An association of three Colonies under one Governor but otherwise independent of one another.
3. The complete amalgamation of two units with a common purse and one Legislature.

It is not, however, merely in the form of Government that the three Colonies differ: deep-seated differences exist, not only between the Colonies themselves but between the islands in each Colony. No two islands are alike, whether in geographical configuration, staple products, climate, traditions, historical associations, or mental outlook of the inhabitants. Each cherishes its own individuality, the product of its history and traditions. Islands originally colonized by the French retain the religion and to a great extent the language of the early colonists. One, St. Lucia, has its own code of laws, of French origin. In some islands the large compact estate predominates: in others, owing to the lack of internal communications or some other cause, the land is owned chiefly by small peasant proprietors. Some are almost entirely dependent on the sugar industry, others on cacao or fruit: whilst in Trinidad of recent years the oil industry has reached important dimensions. The first difficulty that obtrudes itself upon any attempt to find a bond of closer union between these scattered islands is the number of divergencies which meet one at every turn. To discover a common denominator is a baffling problem. With these differences in view it is small wonder that each community is interested solely in its own affairs and pays scant attention to those of its neighbour.

Herein lies the root of the difficulty which we have encountered throughout the whole of our investigations. Most of the islands—indeed we may say all—pay lip-service to the general idea of federation: but the corporations and individuals who appeared before us made it clear that to make any federation or closer union acceptable, it must achieve economy in administration combined with other distinct advantages, and must in no case entail the absorption of their island by some larger unit or the destruction of its own individuality.

We have dealt so far with the problem as a whole: we propose now to take each Colony in turn and record as briefly as possible the evidence we obtained, leaving our conclusions to a later part of our Report.
The Leeward Islands.

Antigua and St. Kitts are mainly dependent on sugar, an industry usually carried out on large estates, on which the landowners employ a considerable number of labourers. Political consciousness is hardly awake, and the prosperity of the sugar industry is the main pre-occupation of the large majority of the inhabitants. We need not refer to the financial difficulties to which the sugar industry in the West Indies has been exposed during recent years, since these are made clear in the Report* of Lord Olivier’s Commission in 1930. It is only natural that in Antigua and St. Kitts we found the inhabitants little interested in the question of closer union but greatly disturbed by the state of their finances, and anxious to discover some means of attaining equilibrium by curtailing expenditure on administration. This was a matter clearly outside our terms of reference; but inasmuch as any scheme of closer union must obviously take cognisance of existing constitutions in the several units, we felt that it would be improper and unreasonable here and elsewhere to rule out constitutional questions as inadmissible. In the circumstances described we were hardly surprised to find that many of our witnesses laid the blame for their financial difficulties on the administration, and clamoured for a larger voice in the management of their affairs, claiming that this would lead to greater economy and less extravagance. We did not consider it within the scope of our enquiry to pursue this line of argument or to make any investigation into allegations of extravagance or ineptitude, but confined ourselves merely to recording the statements made to us as expressions of opinion regarding the existing system of government. We were impressed, however, by the weight of opinion in favour of a greater and more effective control of finance by the local community, and by the feeling that local opinions were sometimes perhaps unnecessarily over-ridden or set aside by the permanent officials. We propose to deal later with the questions of representation on the Legislative bodies by election rather than by nomination, and of an unofficial majority, which require separate consideration.

Dominica.

Dominica differs entirely from the other islands of the Leewards Federation. There are few large estates or estate-owners, and communications throughout the island are rendered difficult by its configuration, deep, rugged valleys and steep cliffs making road construction costly, difficult, and in many localities impossible. Fruit-growing is the main industry and is carried out to a great extent by peasant proprietors on somewhat primitive principles. Dominica has always been politically-minded, and is the only

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* Cmd. 3517.
Island of the Leewards Federation in which the electoral principle was introduced after, and as a result of, Lord Irwin's visit in 1922. It has recently passed through a political crisis, and a Conference attended by representatives from the other Caribbean islands had met there a few weeks before our arrival and drawn up a Report, including a proposal for a federated West Indies. On our arrival, therefore, we found the island in a state of political excitement which seemed hardly favourable for a calm discussion of the problem entrusted to us. During the fortnight we spent there, however, we found all those who gave evidence before us, including the leaders of the political movement, ready to discuss matters in a spirit of earnest reasonableness which impressed us very favourably. As was to be expected, the most vocal clamoured for an immediate federation of the British West Indies accompanied by practical self-government, on the lines of the recommendations of the recent Conference, which forms an Appendix* to this Report: but even the most ardent advocates were prepared, we found, to admit that the far-reaching changes which they envisaged could only be attained by stages, and by the mutual consent of all concerned. Other witnesses expressed themselves strongly opposed to any form of self-government, though in favour of increased control in local affairs. It is worth recording that many of the witnesses in this and other islands most strongly opposed to any form of self-government at this stage were coloured, or of direct African descent.

The Windward Islands.

St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada are far more politically conscious than the Leeward Islands, Dominica excepted; but here again we found little enthusiasm for any scheme of closer union, and much anxiety over their own financial situation and prospects. Each, with its own staple products, has its special problems and evinces little inclination at this juncture to turn its mind towards a wider horizon. All, as in the Leewards, were inclined to blame the administration for the financial situation in which they found themselves, and, ignoring the world-wide fall in prices which has had so disastrous an effect on the finances of all countries, to imagine that if they had had greater control over their own affairs their economic difficulties would not have occurred, or would at least have been less grave. Grenada in particular exhibited some of the political excitement which we had already encountered in Dominica, and many witnesses made the familiar claim that all the ills from which the Colony was suffering were directly attributable to what is described somewhat vaguely as Crown Colony government. But here again we found even the most scathing critics of the present form of government ready to discuss matters

* Appendix B.
frankly and reasonably, whilst other witnesses expressed them­
selves as generally satisfied with the existing state of affairs, though
they made various suggestions whereby they thought the position
might be improved.

Trinidad and Tobago.

The conditions in this Colony are entirely dissimilar from those
in the small islands to the north. Whereas for the past five years
the average annual revenue of the richest of the northern islands
has amounted to little over £150,000, this Colony enjoys an annual
revenue of close on a million and three-quarters sterling, whilst
its population according to the latest census is 386,158 against a
total for the whole of the Windward and Leeward Islands com­
bined of 290,085. Port of Spain, the capital of the Colony, has a
population of some 70,000 souls, which is more than the total of
any one of the northern islands. The combined imports and
exports of the Colony reached a total of over 10 million pounds in
1930, whilst nearly 8 million tons of shipping entered and cleared
the ports.

Trinidad is thus a thriving Colony with hitherto ample funds at
its disposal for its own development, though the recent world
crisis has by no means left it unaffected, more particularly as
regards the cacao industry which in the past has been one of its
mainstays. At the moment it is faced with a budget deficiency,
and is not in the mood for taking on new responsibilities until it
has weathered the economic blizzard through which the world is
passing. Tobago has always been a financial burden to Trinidad
since the amalgamation of the two; whatever the advantages of
the union may have been; and Trinidad is strongly averse from
embarking on more experiments in the direction of closer union
with other islands. In the curious amalgam of races which com­
prises its population, of which East Indians form a third, it has its
own problems, and requires time to settle down into a co-ordinate
community. We were assured by prominent citizens that they
were by no means unconscious of their position in regard to the
smaller islands to the north and were willing to extend to these
any reasonable assistance in their power, provided it did not entail
serious financial responsibilities or commitments. It was clear to
us that no proposal of closer political union with any of the northern
islands would receive support at the present juncture, and that
it would be useless to discuss the matter further. There is, how­
ever, a possibility of creating a closer tie between the Agricultural
Departments of this Colony and the others, to which we will refer
later.

POSSIBILITIES OF UNION LIMITED TO WINDWARDS
AND LEEWARDS.

In view then of the impossibility of proposing any kind of closer
union between the Colony of Trinidad and Tobago and the Wind­
ward and Leeward Islands, we were driven to consider whether
there was any system which we could recommend for a closer union between the latter two groups.

A true system of federation between any units which it is desired to combine entails a federal exchequer whose revenue is derived from the proceeds of general taxation imposed by a Federal Legislature, the several units at the same time raising funds by local taxation to meet their local expenses. In this connection, when the present federation of the Leeward Islands was under contemplation in the sixties of the last century, the then Secretary of State, Lord Granville, wrote (November, 1869):

"I am quite ready to concede that every island should have a revenue of its own, raised for local purposes and under local authority; but it is impossible, on any system of union, to dispense with a general revenue raised for general purposes by taxation imposed by the General Legislature."

It is greatly to be regretted that the implications of this pronouncement of policy were not more carefully thought out, for they point to conclusions of permanent value. Lord Granville's dictum should have led to the recognition of the distinction between services of common interest, and services of insular or parochial interest, and to the division of legislative authority, including that relating to the imposition of taxes and rates, between the general and the local authorities. But in the Leeward Islands Act of 1871 which federated these islands, the condition which Lord Granville had pronounced impossible to dispense with was straightway dispensed with. There was not, and there is not now "taxation imposed by the General Legislature for general purposes." Federal expenses in the Leeward Islands are met instead by a contribution levied on each unit on a fixed basis, a system extremely irksome to and unpopular with the bulk of the units concerned.

Division between Federal and Local Legislative Powers.

With regard to legislation, there are two methods of dividing legislative powers between federal and local legislatures. Either the central federal legislative council can be made supreme in all matters of legislation, with permission to devolve upon the local councils such legislative functions as it may think fit; or, alternatively, certain powers can be reserved for the centre, the rest being left to the circumference, with power to increase the first category at the expense of the second. It is the second alternative which was adopted in the federation of the Leeward Islands, and which survives to this day.

Proceeding from these premises, we are of opinion that it is impracticable at this stage to establish a system of real federation between the islands of the Leeward and Windward groups. We
have reached this conclusion partly because it appears to us impos­
sible to conceive of any form of " taxation imposed by a central legislative body for general purposes " which would not include the customs duties of the several units; and this implies a general customs tariff and collection of customs duties. Now it was made abundantly clear to us in each of the islands visited that in no case would they consent to the removal from them of the power to impose and vary their own tariffs, nor would they in any circum­stances agree to a general pooling of their receipts from customs duties.

Even if, however, the several islands were to retain as now their separate tariffs and customs duties, there are still cogent reasons which lead us to believe that even so loose a form of federation as that now existing in the Leewards Group would prove at this stage a failure. In such a federation there must obviously be a federal executive to carry out the legislative measures passed by the federal legislature, and under any system of administration the executive must be prepared to make decisions on any occasion when necessity may arise. Whilst then the Legislature could probably carry out its duties by meeting for a short annual session, the Executive must be continuously available to act throughout the year. Since the taking of decisions by correspondence and circula­tion of documents is obviously out of the question when members reside in islands scattered over a wide area, it follows that the Executive Council would have to be called together at frequent intervals, an arrangement which is clearly impracticable.

The present Federation of the Leeward Islands presents an example of the obstacle to which we have referred. There is no great difficulty in getting together the members of the Federal Executive and Legislative Councils in Antigua, the Headquarters of the Federation, once a year for a few days. But during the rest of the year executive decisions have usually to be made by those members of the Council who reside permanently in Antigua, it being impossible for the other members to spare the time to travel to Headquarters to attend the meetings. Hence the execu­tive work of the Federation is carried out mainly by the Governor and the permanent officials of his Council, aided by the Antigua member or members, a state of affairs which leads to a feeling on the part of the other islands that their interests are being neglected, and that the whole policy of the Federal Government is based on the requirements and interests of Antigua. Were the federation extended so as to embrace other islands, the state of affairs would be rendered more unsatisfactory still.

This consideration leads us to believe that, with islands so widely scattered, it is essential that each should be allowed as much freedom as possible to regulate its own local affairs and finances; otherwise delays and friction are bound to arise, and efficient and progressive administration to be extremely difficult.
Some form of union, however, there obviously must be, for neither would the islands be advantaged if each formed a separate unit, wholly independent of the others, nor could the Secretary of State be expected to deal separately with the affairs of seven or eight small islands.

PROPOSED NEW COLONY AND ITS ORGANIZATION.

We have come to the conclusion, therefore, that under present conditions the situation would be best met by giving each island the greatest possible measure of local autonomy and appointing one Governor for the whole group, attached to no particular island but residing in some central spot, exercising a general supervision over the affairs of the several administrations, touring frequently, and constituting the channel of communication between the administrations and the Colonial Office. The position would in fact be somewhat similar to that now obtaining in the Windward Islands, except that the Governor would not sit as President of the Executive or Legislative Councils of any island, nor directly administer its affairs. He would occupy towards the islands somewhat the same position in miniature as the Viceroy of India holds in regard to the various Provinces of India. His staff should, we consider, consist of a Secretary to Government, through whom all correspondence between him and the Island Governments would pass, but who would himself possess no executive power or authority. All bills passed by the Island Governments would be submitted to the Governor for his assent or otherwise, and would have no legal authority unless and until assented to by him. The Leeward and Windward Islands would then form one Colony under a Governor, the new group being named, we suggest, the British Caribbean Islands, or such other title as may appear suitable. In such a case we suggest for consideration the advisability of grouping the Virgin Islands with Antigua, in much the same relationship as now exists between Anguilla and St. Kitts.

We suggest St. Lucia as the most suitable Headquarters of the proposed new Colony for the following reasons:

(a) It is centrally situated.
(b) It has no historical connection with the Government of any group of islands.
(c) It possesses buildings, now vacant, which might be utilized as residences and offices for a central staff, even on a much larger scale than that now contemplated.
(d) It has a harbour and a wharf, and seaplanes can land and find shelter in any weather.

There would be no Federal Executive or Legislative Council, but the Governor would be charged with co-ordinating so far as possible the policy of the several units of the group. With this end in view he should summon at least once a year a conference of the Administrators and certain delegates from each island, over
which he would preside, and at which matters of general concern would be freely discussed. Such conferences would have no executive or legislative authority but would constitute an invaluable aid to the adoption by the several islands of the group of a common policy when common interests are concerned. The Governor would be the sole representative of His Majesty throughout the group, and an Administrator or Commissioner would be as now in charge of each of the islands but not be regarded as the King's representative. Incidentally, we suggest that the official residence of an Administrator or Commissioner should cease to be known as "Government House"; and that, although the Administrator would still bear the courtesy title "His Honour," the members of the Island Executive and Legislative Councils should no longer be designated "The Honourable."

We are of opinion that such an arrangement would make for efficiency in administration and rapidity in execution, and that it would at the same time constitute a first step in a general federation or closer union of the various West Indian Colonies. By bringing the Leeward and Windward Islands into one group it would make a political unit of a large number of islands, at present divided into two separate Governments, and the psychological effect alone of this would, we think, be considerable and help to encourage the conception of a united West Indies, so far at least as the Colonies south of Jamaica are concerned.

We feel convinced that such an arrangement would meet the wishes of a large majority of the inhabitants of the islands concerned. The detachment of the Governor from immediate connection with any particular island of the group would, it is felt, give each island more confidence that its special problems would be given the greatest possible consideration, whilst in matters which concerned the whole they could speak with a more effective voice than at present, seeing that the group would be twice as large and cover twice the area.

As an indication that such a scheme as we have outlined would be generally acceptable to the islands concerned, we cannot do better than quote from a memorandum handed to us by one of our witnesses whose opinions command great respect and carry much weight in the island where he resides. The memorandum summarizes the views which he had already expressed to us verbally, and is a valuable indication of the trend of thought of experienced men of affairs in the islands themselves who have given the present situation much consideration:

"The experiment of closer union," he writes, "should proceed on limited and conservative lines. It is not the easy thing visualized by political idealists to bring about a fusion of small communities divided from each other by many miles of sea and which have for an appreciable time been allowed
to develop as separate political entities. The fact that Newfoundland on one side of the Strait of Belle Isle, and possessed of a common Anglo-Saxon heritage with the larger part of the great Dominion on the other side of the Strait, continues to maintain a separate political existence more than sixty years after the passing of the British North America Act, should afford a warning of the difficulties attendant on merging communities, severally inured to insular existence, into one political unit. It is my view that each of the Colonies should, in the main, continue to have a large measure of local autonomy and absolute fiscal independence for at least a period of years which might be regarded as a term of experiment. I am wholly unafraid of the charge of illogicality which may justly be levelled at a claim for fiscal independence when the merging of revenues may be regarded by many as one of the objects of pursuit. My answer to such a charge would be that I am not endeavouring to frame an ideal constitution, but to work out a scheme rid of the grave danger of failure which I look upon as certain to result if an attempt were made to at once bring about anything like a common revenue for the group of islands comprehended in the scheme of closer union. It seems to me that a practical, fair, and temporary solution of existing difficulties might be found in the removal of certain matters from the local legislatures and the granting of constitutions whereby a majority chosen by the people will control the local law-making bodies of the several islands.

Another witness says:

"It would be essential for the British Government to make up its mind in regard to orientation of policy towards a West Indian nationhood, not even ruling out Jamaica. The worst way of all would be that the foundation of a West Indian people should come by agitation. If His Majesty's Government accepted nationhood as an ultimate aim, the loyalties of the people would be maintained; meanwhile, those who would like to strain the loyalties must not be assisted, but be brought back into the fold."

In this connection the following passage from Lord Irwin's Report of 1922 already referred to may be quoted:

"It must be borne in mind that in the West Indies there is a considerable population of mixed stock, who while coloured in appearance, possess a large infusion of European blood. Those of mixed race throw up not a few individuals of somewhat exceptional capacity and intelligence, who play a prominent part in the public life of their communities. We shall be wise if, with these facts before us, we take steps to build upon the foundation of the remarkable loyalty to the Throne by which these peoples are inspired, and avoid the
mistake of endeavouring to withhold a concession ultimately inevitable until it has been robbed by delay of most of its usefulness and of all of its grace."

Present position: diversity of constitutions.

The scheme we have outlined is a loose association of quasi-independent units; but it is clear that, in any such association, however loose it may be, there must be some similarity between the Constitutions of the various units. This leads us to a consideration of the diverse Constitutions now in existence in the Leeward and Windward Groups, a subject which most of our witnesses desired to discuss with us and which we could not dismiss as irrelevant.

EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

In general, each Presidency of the Leeward Islands and each Colony of the Windwards Group has its own Executive and Legislative Council, presided over by the Governor when present.

The Executive Council in each Island consists, generally speaking, of the Governor, his principal officials, and two or more unofficials, nominated by the Governor and appointed by the Crown. Members, other than those who hold the appointment ex officio, usually hold office for a period of years, commonly six. The total number varies in different islands and even at different times, being in some cases as small as 4, in others as large as 10. Typical examples are Grenada, where the present number is 8, made up of 4 ex officio, 1 official, and 3 unofficial; Antigua, where the total is at present also 8, made up of 2 ex officio, 3 official, and 3 unofficial; and Dominica, 8 again, made up of 2 ex officio, 4 official, and 2 unofficial.

We consider that these Councils should continue to have an official majority; but that, while the retention of this is essential, the number of unofficials should be increased to the utmost limit, in order that the communities may be given as large a voice as possible in the management of their local affairs.

Some of the witnesses examined by us expressed the view that unofficial members of the Executive Council should not at the same time be members of the Legislative Council, urging that such a dual position presented grave difficulties since a member of the Legislative Council might find himself obliged to vote for a measure which had been decided upon by a majority of the Executive Council but with which he personally disagreed. Other witnesses, however, took the opposite view, and contended that it was a great advantage to the community if some of the members of the Legislative Council had a seat also on the Executive Council, since they were thus in a position to know the full details of a Government measure and the reasons why it was put forward.
There is force in both arguments, but we are convinced that on balance the advantage lies with the second. Policy in any community is in the main decided by the Executive Council or Cabinet, which is in possession of all available information regarding such measures as come before it and is, potentially at least, in continuous session throughout the year. The function of the Legislature is to discuss the measures laid before it, to bring forward the views of all sections of the community, and to decide finally by its votes whether such measures should be adopted or not. With an Executive Council composed half of officials and half of unofficials, the Administrator having a casting vote, the community would have a real voice in the management of its local affairs, both in the framing of measures and their subsequent discussion. If some or all of the unofficial members of the Executive Council were also members of the Legislature, the latter would be strengthened by having the advice of men who had already played a part in framing the measures placed before it and were thoroughly acquainted with the reasons for introducing them. With a Council so composed there could be no justification for the complaint that the community had "no voice in the management of its affairs"; it would in fact be given a very real and effective voice. The sense of responsibility thus engendered would, we hope, render the communities anxious to work with, rather than against, the Government, and enable them to feel that they were playing an effective part in the shaping of their own destinies.

We state elsewhere that nominated members should have complete freedom to vote according to their consciences in the Legislature. The point arises as to what the attitude of a member of the Executive Council who is also a member of the Legislative Council should be, when a matter comes before the Legislature which has been decided upon by a majority of the Executive Council but with which he personally disagrees. We consider that the same rule should apply to the Executive Council as applies to a Cabinet, that is to say that a decision by the Executive Council should be regarded as binding on all the members, unless the Administrator agrees to regard it as non-contentious and informs his colleagues that they are free to vote as they please. If a member feels so strongly about any proposed measure that he cannot conscientiously vote for it (or against, as the case may be), he should be at liberty to resign his seat on the Executive Council, and he will then be free to vote in the Legislature as he pleases. If, on the other hand, he feels that, although personally opposed to a measure approved by a majority of his colleagues, his disagreement is of such a nature as not to require him to press it, he should accept the decision, and vote in the Legislature with his colleagues. A corporate responsibility would thus be given to the Executive Council, without which no stable government is possible.
In selecting the members for recommendation for appointment to the Executive Council, a free hand must be given to the Administrator to choose from the community those men whom he feels are best suited to represent it; they may be members of the Legislature, either elected or nominated, or they may not. Our personal view is that they should, as a rule, be selected from amongst the members of the Legislature, whether elected or nominated; but in some cases the Administrator may feel it advisable to select some member of the community who though not in the Legislature is specially fitted to be associated in the Administration.

As regards the Legislative Councils, each consists of an equal number of officials and unofficials, the Governor having a casting as well as an original vote. This arrangement is set out in detail in Mr. Churchill's despatch* of 28th June, 1922, to the Governor of the Windward Islands, and the enclosure thereto. By it, the Governor has the power with certain reservations in the last resort to carry any measure, even if the whole of the unofficials are unanimously opposed to it; and this power is from time to time exercised (though less frequently than is popularly supposed) more especially in questions of finance.

Electoral Principle.

There is, however, an important difference between the constitutions of the islands of the Windwards Group and of those of the Presidencies of the Leewards Federation, Dominica excepted. We refer to the fact that, as a result of Lord Irwin's visit in 1922 and the recommendations made by him, the electoral principle was introduced into the Windward Islands and Dominica. Since that date the unofficial members of those islands have consisted partly as before of persons nominated by the Governor, and partly of persons elected by the community on a somewhat narrow franchise.

It is unnecessary for us to refer to the reasons which led Lord Irwin to recommend the introduction of the electoral principle into some of the islands and the withholding of it from others: they are clearly stated in his Report. The result, however, of the adoption of his recommendation is that, in all the Presidencies of the Leeward Islands except Dominica, the local communities are represented solely by persons selected and nominated by the Governor, whilst in the remaining islands of the two groups they are represented in part by persons elected by the people, or more accurately by a certain percentage of the people.

We have thus been obliged to enlarge our enquiries and take into consideration the whole question of constitutional theory and practice, although originally it appeared to be outside the scope of our terms of reference, which were confined to the question of Closer Union.

* Appendix C.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF MEMBERS.

At the outset we should like to point out that the unofficial members of these Legislative Councils, whether they are nominated or elected, are still representatives of the community: the only difference is in the method of selection. Where the franchise is granted to a community, certain persons offer themselves for election; and the voters, in theory at least, select the one who can convince them that he will best serve their interests. Where, on the other hand, the electoral principle does not exist and the unofficial members of the Legislative Council are nominated by the Governor, those persons, again in theory, whom the Governor and his advisers consider will best represent the interests of the community, are chosen. If a Governor were always infallible, it is certainly arguable that the latter method of selecting persons to represent a community is better than the former, where the voter is limited in his choice to such candidates as happen to offer themselves for election. This method has, however, the effect of denying to the great mass of the community any direct voice in the control of its affairs; and necessarily results either in a lack of political consciousness or in an agitation for a more liberal form of government. It provides moreover no avenue for any advance towards that ideal, and constitutes in fact a dead end, offering no chance of political progress.

Principle of Nomination and Election. Variety of view.

The views put before us in the various islands as to the respective merits of the nominative and the electoral principles, and their applicability to the community with which each witness was concerned were many, and differed widely. Some witnesses condemned out and out the whole system of nomination and clamoured for its immediate abolition, claiming that the whole of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council should be "elected by the people on a broad franchise," and that in this way "the will of the people" should be ascertained and given effect to. Others were hotly opposed to the whole principle of election in the community for which they spoke, regarding it as mischievous and harmful: they wished to retain or revive (as the case might be) the system of nomination pure and simple, regarding it as the best form of government for the islands in their present stage of development. Between these two extremes there were numerous shades of opinion. We are not here recording the views of Government officials (which incidentally differed widely from one another on this subject), but only those of the unofficial element; and we may remark that views on both sides were expressed by individuals quite irrespective of colour or class.
Arguments against Nomination.

The main arguments advanced against the system of nomination were that it is wrong in principle to leave to one person—and he not a permanent member of the community, but an official from outside, here to-day and gone to-morrow—the choice of the persons who should represent the interests of the community; that a Governor was always liable to select his nominees from amongst the particular class with whom he associated, and that even if he did not he would invariably select those who, he felt, would be subservient and who would support Government policy; that his nominees would be, in a word "hand picked" in the worst sense of the phrase. Furthermore, as regards the nominees, it was claimed that they represented no one but themselves, and that they were never free to oppose the Government, even if their consciences led them to do so, for fear of being discarded in favour of someone more amenable to the Governor's wishes.

There was, however, evidence that nominated members did in fact in most cases vote with perfect freedom of conscience whether for or against Government, and that they frequently represented important interests which otherwise would have had no representation whatsoever.

Arguments for Nomination.

The main arguments put forward in favour of the system of nomination pure and simple were that by it alone could the services of the best men be secured, since many would refuse to stand for election or face the hustings or the taunts and abuse of some unscrupulous opponent; that elections were usually controlled by some caucus through whose agency men were elected who worked only for their sectional or personal interests and wilfully obstructed the Government; and that in the present condition of the West Indies it is only by nomination that the interests of all sections of the community can be represented.

Arguments for Election.

Those in favour of the electoral system argued that "government of the people by the people for the people" was the basic principle on which British ideals were founded, and that to deny to the inhabitants of any part of the British Empire the right to elect their own representatives by popular franchise was to deny them the inherent rights of every British citizen.

Nomination and Election: Combination favoured.

We have considered with great care the views expressed to us on this question throughout the islands, and have done our best to give due weight to all the arguments on both sides. We are of opinion that, were the unofficial element in the Legislative Councils to be composed solely of elected members, the result
would at this stage, for reasons already outlined, be inimical to the interests of the communities themselves and be likely to lead to grave faults in administration, and in this opinion we find we are supported by a large number of the witnesses who appeared before us and who include representatives of all sections of these communities and every grade of thought.

On the other hand, where the system of election is non-existent and all the unofficial members of the Legislature are nominated from amongst those whom the Governor thinks most likely to represent the varied interests of the community, the mass of the people can hardly be expected to concern themselves very largely with public affairs and must remain indefinitely in a state of political apathy.

We have, therefore, come to the firm conclusion that a combined system of nomination and election, as in fact it now exists in the Windward Islands and Dominica, is best suited to present conditions, so far as the islands with which we are dealing are concerned. But it should be clearly laid down that a nominated member should have as complete freedom to vote according to his conscience as his elected fellow-members, and should not be regarded in any sense as a "Government Member."

If, therefore, the Windward and Leeward Islands are to be brought together under one Governor, we consider that the unofficial members of the several Legislative Councils should be composed both of nominated and elected persons. What proportion should be elected and what nominated should, in our opinion, depend on the particular circumstances of each island. For instance, the proportion of nominated members should be higher in those islands where the electoral principle is at present non-existent, and lower in those already accustomed to the principle and where political consciousness is farthest advanced.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: ITS POWERS AND LIMITATIONS.

A further important question now arises, namely, the amount of power to be given to the Legislature to manage the affairs of the island or community which it represents.

As previously remarked, the Legislative Council of each island at present consists of the Governor and an equal number of officials and unofficials, the Governor having a casting vote which enables him to carry or veto any measure if the votes are evenly divided. The result of this arrangement is that the Governor may, and on rare occasions does, by the use of the official bloc and his casting vote carry measures against the possibly unanimous vote of the unofficial members. This gives the latter a false idea of impotence, and witnesses again and again complained to us that the unofficial members "have no voice whatever in the management
of their affairs." This is an obvious mis-statement; and when challenged to give instances where the unanimous vote of the unofficial members had been overcome by the official majority, the witnesses could only point to three or four occasions during the past few years when this had occurred and the Governor had deemed it necessary to use the powers entrusted to him, and they ignored the many occasions when, as we found on enquiry, measures had been dropped by the Government in deference to the unanimous or practically unanimous opposition of the unofficial members.

Nevertheless, objection to the existence of an official bloc was very general, and many witnesses complained of the presence on the Council of certain Heads of Departments who, they asserted, took little interest and practically no part in the discussions and debates, but occupied themselves with their departmental papers until called upon to vote, when they did so automatically and in accordance with their instructions.

We have given much consideration to this point of view, and it seems to us to have no little justification. The present system obviously aims at being, and indeed is, one of majority rule; in actual fact the Governor is equipped with a majority, by means of the official bloc which votes under his orders, and can thus carry his policy against the wishes of the whole of the local representatives on occasions when he deems it necessary. It may be said that under any form of parliamentary government members of each party are bound by party ties to vote with their leaders, and so in fact form a bloc not unlike the official bloc which we have mentioned; and that the executive (or the Cabinet) can always rely on a majority to carry its measures, for if it loses its majority it has to make way for others who can command one. This, within certain limitations, is true. But parliamentary government with a self-governing community differs in one important particular from parliamentary government with a community which is not self-governing; in that there is no alternative government to replace the one in power, nor can there be. In those parts of the British Empire which have not as yet attained to self-government, the Governor and his advisers, instructed by the Secretary of State as the mouthpiece of the Imperial Parliament, must always remain in power. Individuals may change or be changed, but the Government continues.

These are elementary facts, but it is astonishing how few of our witnesses appeared to appreciate them until brought to their notice. It is curious that this should be so, for the position has been made abundantly clear in the past in many official documents and in the writings of competent observers. For instance, in Lord Irwin's Report of 1922, already referred to, the following words occur:

"It is . . . essential that there should be in the responsible head of the administration a reserve power to carry into effect the official policy in matters of first-rate importance."
Again, in the Report* of the British Guiana Commission presented to Parliament in April, 1927, we find these words:

"It is hopeless to expect proper and efficient control over finance unless the Government have power to enforce, in the last resort, their own financial policy. It appears to us essential ... that the authorities finally responsible for the solvency and good government of the Colony should have power in the last resort to carry into effect measures which they consider essential for its well-being."

The Commission also adds this comment to Lord Irwin's words quoted above:

In short, the justification of a reserve power rests on the proposition, which is also a platitude, that under any political system it is desirable that the Government should be able to govern.

**Power to be reserved to the Governor.**

However extended then the power that can be given to a community which has not attained to self-government to manage through its Legislative Council its own affairs and finances, the ultimate decision in all matters except those which are purely local must be reserved to the Governor as the instrument of the Secretary of State and the Imperial Parliament. The greatest possible latitude may and should be given to the Legislative Council to criticise freely any measures brought before it and record by its votes its own convictions and views on every subject. But the Government—that is to say, the Executive—must, as Lord Irwin says, be able to govern. At present, in the Colonies we are discussing the Government is enabled to govern by the permanent majority assured to it by the official bloc and the Governor's casting vote. We submit that the same result could be obtained by a simpler, more straightforward, and less artificial and mechanical method. On the rare occasions when the Governor finds it necessary to carry a measure decided upon by him and his Executive Council, but which is opposed by the unofficial Members of the Legislative Council, it seems unwise that he should be obliged to have resort to the expedient of counting up the votes of a number of officials who are bound to record them as they are instructed, add his casting vote, and then declare the measure carried by a majority. It seems to us preferable that he should in such cases be empowered to make a declaration that the Governor considers the measure in question as necessary in the public interest, and that the measure should then have the force of law, subject to its being approved by the Secretary of State. It may be argued that this would set up an autocracy and contravene the elementary principles of constitutional government. In fact, however, it would not alter in any way the powers which the Governor now possesses, and which, as we have shown, he must

* Cmd. 2841.
possess: the only alteration would be in the manner of exercising them. It would moreover remove the objections so often put forward to us regarding the "official bloc," and allow many heads of departments, at present spending long hours as Members of a Council in whose proceedings they can take little interest or part, to devote their time to the work of their own departments. We are assuming, it will be observed, that under such a system the official membership of the Legislative Council would be reduced to such officials as form the essential part of the Executive—that is to say, the Colonial Secretary (where such an office exists), the Attorney-General, the Treasurer, and possibly the Principal Medical Officer—and would leave the unofficial members in a majority on the Council. Power would be given to summon to the Council any Head of Department for the purpose of explaining a measure which concerned that Department, and this official might sit for the occasion as a Member and take part in the debate, but without having a vote.

The result of such a system as we suggest would be that the unofficial Members would be in a permanent majority on the Council, but that the Governor would still possess the power, which he now possesses, of carrying his policy in the last resort, subject to the Secretary of State's instructions.

FRANCHISE.

With the introduction of the elective principle into the constitution of the Leeward and its extension in the Windward Islands, the questions of the qualifications for Membership of Council and for the exercise of the franchise have to be considered. With regard to the former, the only island in the Leewards Group which enjoys electoral privileges is Dominica. The main differences* between the qualifications there and in the Windwards Group are:—

(a) In Dominica females are not eligible; in the Windward Islands they are eligible, but so far there is no instance of any female having been a member.

(b) In Dominica there is no compulsory residential qualification. A clear income of £200 a year, or alternatively the ownership of real property in the Presidency of the clear value of £500, is sufficient. The residential qualification is only required when a lower income, or ownership of less property, is in question.

In the Windward Islands, on the other hand, a residential or property qualification in the district in addition to the income qualification is essential.

* See Appendix D,
It may be noted that in Trinidad the residential qualification is not necessary; but, in default of it, the ownership of property of substantial value is obligatory.

Opinion in the Windward Islands is generally in favour of the abolition of the residential qualification, as it sometimes happens that there is no suitable candidate actually resident in a district, and it is quite conceivable that in the smaller islands this might often be the case.

We are of opinion that this objection is well founded, and we recommend that the qualifications which rule in Dominica be taken as a general guide in framing the constitution of the new group. We do not, however, think it necessary to extend the Windward Islands qualification for females to the other islands.

As regards voting qualifications, there was great divergence of opinion and it is one of the points on which no agreement was reached at the Dominica Conference. We are definitely opposed to the grant of universal adult suffrage until the present standard of education in the islands has greatly advanced.

The qualifications of a voter in the Windwards are slightly higher in some respects than in Dominica, in that two years' residence is required as against one year, and the value of property ownership is fixed at £150 as against £100. On the other hand, in Dominica there is provision made for the small-holder and taxpayer, which is not the case in the Windward Islands. This provision seems desirable, as recognizing a deserving class of people, with whose claim to a vote we are in sympathy.

Certain considerations have to be borne in mind in determining the extent of the franchise in the conditions under review. If the standard is made too high, the elective power is placed in the hands of a small oligarchy. If too low, a number of people become enfranchised who are educationally and temperamentally unfit fully to judge of the issues involved: furthermore, there is the risk that additional power may be given to the demagogue. The standard of the franchise can always be lowered, but it cannot conveniently be raised—an argument against too wide an extension in the first place. In Trinidad the voters' qualifications are lower than anywhere in the northern islands, and strong evidence was given to us in that island that a mistake had been made originally in making them too low. At present in the islands the number of voters who register is small compared with the number of people who are entitled to do so, which may indicate that a lower standard than that now existing is not required.

After weighing all considerations and the opinions put before us, we are of opinion that for the present, in addition to the usual requirements as regards nationality, etc., the main qualifications
now ruling in Dominica should be adopted as the universal franchise throughout the islands, viz.:—

A previous residence of twelve months in the Presidency, and possession of one of the following qualifications:—

(a) A net income of £30 a year.
(b) Ownership of real property in the Presidency of the clear value of £100.
(c) Payment of rent on real property in the Presidency of £12 a year.
(d) Being resident in the district, payment of direct taxes in the previous year of at least 15s.

As females have now the vote in both Dominica and the Windward Islands, as well as in Trinidad, we think that it should not be withheld from them in the other islands.

We put forward these suggestions relating to constitutional matters with some diffidence, as we are fully aware that they do not come strictly within our terms of reference, and that they trench on wide and important questions of policy with which we are neither competent nor instructed to deal. We could not well, however, exclude them from our Report because the subject with which they are concerned formed a very large part of all the evidence which came before us during the course of our enquiries.

UNIFICATION OF SERVICES.

Having reached the conclusion that there is no form of political union or federation between the Windward and Leeward Islands which we can recommend at this stage, other than a somewhat loose association under one Governor, we proceeded to investigate the possibility of unifying some at least of the services in our proposed association. It was obviously desirable in the interests of economy and efficiency that, instead of each island or unit maintaining a staff of expert departmental officers, the services of one or more of such officers should be shared between them. Directly, however, we began to consider the practical methods of setting up such a unification of services we found ourselves faced by the serious objection that, without a federal bond uniting the islands politically, and without a federal executive or legislature empowered to exercise authority over the combined units, it would be impracticable to formulate any scheme whereby the services of one or more officials should be available for all the islands. It is not inconceivable that each island might agree to subscribe its share to the salary and expenses of one or more highly-qualified experts who would be available to travel round, and not only give expert advice but also co-ordinate the work of the several islands in the particular branch which they represented. But this would mean divided authority; for such officers would, whilst carrying out their duties in any island, be subject to the local Government
of that island, and would at the same time be giving orders to, and would temporarily assume the responsibilities of, the local Heads of the departments with which they were concerned.

A further though minor difficulty arises from the fact that there must be some central authority empowered to decide in what order and to what extent the claims of the various islands to the services of such experts should be met.

It is difficult to see how confusion and friction could in such circumstances be avoided, and although we have given the matter much thought we have been unable to discover any means to obviate the difficulty. It would be possible, it is true, to place such expert official or officials directly under the orders of the Governor, giving the latter the power to decide which claims on the official’s services should first be met. Even if, however, it were possible in this way to assess and satisfy the claims of the several islands, the other difficulty still remains of the division of authority and temporary transfer of responsibility in each island whilst the experts were there. This might possibly be obviated if the experts were regarded merely as technical advisers and given no executive authority, but in such circumstances we feel doubtful if the advantages would be sufficient to justify the cost. We can indeed picture the several islands of the association we propose, each having its departmental heads and staff adequately qualified for its own individual needs, at such cost as the revenue of the island admits; and a small group of relatively highly-paid experts at the Headquarters of the association, available for service in any island where they were for the moment needed, the cost of whom would be met by contribution from the various islands. But the practical difficulties of any such scheme seem to us to be very grave.

Grave as they are, we do not, however, regard the difficulties as insuperable, given a reasonable amount of good-will on the part of all concerned. In the association of islands under one Governor which we are suggesting, there is already in reality one federal officer, namely, the Governor, and we may add, his staff. Nor can we see any inherent difficulty in appointing an Auditor for the entire group, and he would also be a federal officer. We feel indeed that the ideal would be to attach to the Governor’s staff technical advisers on the various branches of administration—legal, medical and sanitary, educational, agricultural, police, public works, customs, and possibly others. But the cost of any such scheme immediately rules it out, and moreover we do not regard it as likely that the island Governments would be willing to defray the salaries and expenses of a number of highly-paid officials at Headquarters, over whose activities and services they would have little or no direct authority. We think, however, that it will be necessary for the Governor to have a Legal Adviser attached to his staff, since on the Governor will lie the responsibility of assenting to or withholding assent from all bills passed by the island Governments;
and furthermore, it may be necessary for him on occasions to enact laws himself, as we shall show later.

**Police.**

We consider also that the federal Police Force which now exists in the Leeward Islands should be retained, with a Federal Chief of Police stationed at Headquarters, and that this should if possible be extended to the three islands of the Windwards Group, where it is agreed that the present system of each island maintaining its own separate police force is unsatisfactory.

**Judicial Services.**

The question of a possible amalgamation of the judicial services is one to which we gave special attention and on which we heard much evidence; but the subject is a highly technical one, and so many conflicting views were put before us that we find ourselves unable to give an opinion or make any recommendation which would be of any value. We suggest that if and when the Windward and Leeward Islands are brought together into one group the question of amalgamating the judicial services might then be considered with the help of those technically equipped to give the necessary advice.

**Administrative Services.**

We also considered the possibility of amalgamating in some way the administrative services of the islands, thereby facilitating the transfer from time to time of civil servants, especially in the junior ranks, from one island to another, a measure which it was generally agreed would be highly beneficial and would tend to increased zeal and efficiency. In the course of our discussions a proposal was made that there should be a closed West Indian Service, on the lines of the Indian Civil Service, open by competition or otherwise to West Indians and other British subjects alike, but for service solely in the West Indies. It was argued that under the present system West Indians have little chance of transfer to British possessions outside the West Indies, whereas officials from outside are constantly appointed to vacancies, especially in the higher offices, in the West Indies; and that such a state of affairs is one-sided and unfair. From this point of view the proposal has some merit, but, apart from the fact that such a scheme would if adopted form a departure from the recently introduced principle of a Unified Colonial Service, it would hardly attract the best candidates from outside, and might seriously handicap the Secretary of State in selecting the best man for each vacancy. These objections were appreciated by the great majority of our witnesses, but it was urged most strongly that whenever a vacancy occurred in the West Indies the list of West Indian candidates should first be consulted, and
that only if no adequately qualified and efficient officer in that list were found available the appointment should be given to an officer from outside. Such an arrangement would, the witnesses claimed, be fair to West Indians, whilst leaving the Secretary of State perfectly free, as now, to make whatever appointments he deemed most suitable.

**Transfer of Officers.**

As regards the transfer of officers, especially in junior posts, within the proposed Colony, variations of pay and cost of living in the several islands might render this difficult, but the advantages are so obvious that attempts should be made to devise such an arrangement; and with one Governor in general control of all the islands of the group it should not be found impossible. The same remarks apply to the Medical Service and to other services, such as the Public Works. We feel that, if the Windward and Leeward Islands are associated in one group under one Governor as we recommend, the unification of such services can best be evolved gradually by the islands themselves.

We are anxious at this stage, especially in view of the present economic conditions prevailing in the Islands and elsewhere, to avoid the establishment of a large central bureaucracy; more federal officers can be added later, should the islands find that they are required.

**AGRICULTURE.**

There is one branch of the Public Service, however, which requires immediate attention, and demands a special effort to organize it on a sound and efficient basis. We refer to Agriculture, and propose to deal with it at some length. We found during the course of our enquiries that of all the services the co-ordination of those concerned with agriculture seemed to excite most interest and to be regarded as of most importance. Yet as regards the development of the land and its resources there is great difference of opinion and divergence of view. The more farseeing of officials, planters, and people recognize the necessity of development with the assistance of scientific guidance, and the futility of any niggardly or starvation financial policy in connection with the Agricultural Services. But, on the other hand, a large body of opinion is apt to forget the benefits which research and expert advice have already conferred, to sneer at what is being attempted, and to make every endeavour to reduce the staff and expenditure on what is essential to the economic welfare of the islands. This short-sighted attitude is due to a failure to recognize that scientific research takes time; that experiments in plant improvement and crop production, in eliminating disease, with all the incidental study connected therewith, is a matter not of months but of years; and, finally, that results and benefits from a co-operative system of
marketing and export cannot be expected at once, but are the outcome of careful enquiry, trial, and experience.

In these services for the development of agriculture more than in any other a strong hand is needed. A definite policy is required, and it must be persevered with in spite of unenlightened and shortsighted opposition. But it is essential that the policy adopted should be on sound scientific lines and directed by expert advice. Agricultural progress varies greatly in different islands, and in some cases advance has been retarded by the adoption of wrong methods. Scientific advice has sometimes been ignored, and uninformed opinions have come into conflict with expert knowledge and have been allowed to prevail. Further, it was noticeable that in agricultural administration there is considerable overlapping and want of co-ordination, which leads to unnecessary expense and waste of energy.

Trinidad has its own very efficient and highly-developed Department. In all the other islands, Grenada excepted, the agricultural departments are under the local government, which draws upon the Advisory Staff of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad for technical advice. The advice given is, however, not always followed, and the local Superintendents of Agriculture are often hampered by contradictory proposals and orders, owing to what may be described as dual control.

In Grenada a different system is in force. There the local department is supervised by the Agricultural Department of Trinidad and does not draw upon the Advisory Department of the Imperial College for advice. Grenada, in consideration for these services, makes a contribution towards the expenses of visiting officers of the Trinidad Department of Agriculture and pays an honorarium to the Head of that Department. From the point of view of Grenada the system works admirably. But it must be noted that the Government of Trinidad gets no benefit, financial or otherwise, from the arrangement and, as a matter of fact, sacrifices some of the time of her agricultural officials. Obviously such a system, although it has been suggested, could not be extended to include other islands without an increase of staff in the Trinidad Department.

We proceeded to investigate the possibility of devising a co-ordinated scheme for agriculture common to all the islands. Two alternatives occurred to us:

1. To extend and possibly amend the present scheme under which the island departments depend for technical advice on the Advisory Department of the Imperial College, and to include Grenada with the other islands if she would give her consent.
A possible solution, but experience has shown that there are difficulties in the successful working of this scheme in the above form.

2. To create a West Indies Agricultural Department to include Trinidad, the Windward and the Leeward Islands.

This we rejected, first because Trinidad has no desire to lose the separate identity of her department; and secondly because the creation of such a new department would mean increased expense and possible further overlapping in scientific research. It seemed better to try to co-ordinate existing "machinery."

After lengthy investigation and discussion the following compromise was suggested to us by Mr. G. Evans, C.I.E., Principal of the Imperial College, in conjunction with Mr. E. J. Wortley, O.B.E., Director of Agriculture, Trinidad, to both of whom we are much indebted for their invaluable advice and co-operation:—

A reorganized Department of Agriculture for the Windward and Leeward Islands to be formed. At the head there would be a Committee controlling the general policy, consisting of—

(a) The Principal, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.
(b) The Director of Agriculture, Trinidad.
(c) The Commissioner, Advisory Department of Agriculture, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.

Departmental Officers would include:—

1. Advisory Staff.
   (a) The Commissioner, Advisory Department of Agriculture, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (Executive Head.)
   (b) The Assistant to the Commissioner.
   (c) The Biologist.

2. Local (Island) Staff.
   (a) The Superintendent of Agriculture.
   (b) Junior Staff Officers.

The relations of the new Department with the Imperial College would be unaltered. All the islands in the Windward and Leeward groups would in common with other West Indian Colonies retain their claim on the College for educational facilities, advice on scientific affairs, and special investigations. The Advisory Staff would still be at the College and carry out its present system of periodical visits of inspection to the islands of the Windward and Leeward groups.

The Trinidad Department of Agriculture would relinquish the direction of the Grenada Department, but in association with the Committee and Advisory Staff would co-operate in administrative and especially in animal husbandry matters for which it has particular facilities and qualifications, as well as in any special projects that might arise. The honorarium to the present holder of the office of Director, now paid by Grenada, would continue, but would be shared by all the islands, and Grenada would share with
the other islands the services of the Advisory Staff. Thus, the Advisory Department of the Imperial College would continue its functions in the islands exactly as at present, but would include Grenada in its orbit, general policy being controlled by a Committee of experts.

The Imperial College would retain its claim on the Windward and Leeward Islands for their annual contributions on the present basis towards the maintenance of the College, its educational and research work, and the advisory services above referred to.

The Trinidad Department would retain its independent identity. No additional burden would be thrown on it, and it would benefit by closer association with the Advisory Staff and, through its Director and the Committee, with the Imperial College itself.

The Windward and Leeward Islands would benefit by association with, and assistance from, an active department of agriculture larger and more fully equipped than their own, which is constantly concerned with a number of problems, including those concerned with livestock, common to and of interest to most of them.

The whole scheme, in fact, of which more details are given in the memorandum attached*, commends itself to us as bringing all agricultural interests in this part of the West Indies into the closest co-operation.

It has the approval of the two above-named officials who would be mainly concerned in its operation and administration, and who are recognized as the most experienced and competent experts on agriculture in the West Indies. While not interfering with the Trinidad department as presently existing, it links up that department with those of the other islands to the mutual advantage of all. Its main advantage appears to us to be that it results in "a definite step forward in the co-ordination of the agricultural services of Trinidad and the Northern islands without serious dislocation of existing arrangements, and without providing justification for adverse criticism, on financial or other grounds, by the Governments or public of the islands concerned."

The scheme as submitted is only in draft. Further consideration and elaboration would be needed before it could be put in operation. First and foremost, the consent of the Governing Board of the Imperial College would have to be obtained; then that of the Government of Trinidad. It is thought, however, that there is nothing in the scheme inimical to the interests of either body, nor, so far as they are concerned, any very drastic departure from existing conditions—on the contrary, as is shown in the draft, there appear to be many points of interest and benefit to all concerned which will appeal to all who have the interests of the agriculture and the economic welfare of the islands at heart.

There is, however, one difficulty to be faced, viz., that of how the executive control of such a department, where the policy is

* Appendix E.
directed by an independent Committee and Advisory Staff, while the local officials are under different authority, is to be exercised.

It has already been explained how difficulties in this respect have arisen in the islands under the present system through the ideas of local officials not coinciding with those of the technical Advisory Staff—and it has been represented to us that if this new scheme is to be effective it is desirable that it should be on an official and not on a voluntary basis; that the Commissioner should be officially recognized and his position secured.

We have come to the conclusion that this difficulty, inherent in any attempt to constitute a co-ordinated department where there is no federal government, cannot be overcome by any hard and fast rule or legislative enactment. The co-ordination of the agricultural departments is one of the most important parts of any scheme of union in the West Indies, and this is generally recognized. It is only by good-will and the spirit of co-operation that any such scheme can be worked. It must, therefore, be left to the good sense of the Administrators, backed by the influence of the Governor, to ensure its success, and to see that effect is given to the policy of the Committee and to the recommendations of the Commissioner. We would suggest that the Governor of the new group should forward to the Secretary of State with his comments such reports by the officers of the Advisory Department on the islands' agriculture as may be made from time to time.

Provided this support and co-operation are given, we feel that this scheme has in it the elements of success. It seems to be in accordance with the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Stockdale in his report last year. It will prevent overlapping in scientific investigational work. It makes full use of existing machinery and personnel, and enlists and co-ordinates the services of all the best technical opinion available. It disturbs existing arrangements as little as possible, and can readily be adapted to any wider or more advanced scheme of federation that may develop in the future. It will place little if any additional burden on the island budgets. And finally, it seems calculated to assist to the fullest extent in the development of the agricultural resources of the islands, on which their prosperity mainly depends.

GOVERNOR’S POWERS.

It is now necessary to deal more closely with the powers which we recommend should be given to the Governor in the event of our proposals for a closer union between the Leeward and Windward groups being found acceptable.

Bearing in mind the fact that under our scheme each unit of the proposed Colony would have an unofficial majority in its local legislature and control over its local affairs and finances, subject only to the authority in certain cases of the Governor, it is necessary to
define the powers of the latter in exercising that authority. We regard it as an axiom that, with every extension of responsibility to representative bodies, care must be taken that the central authority is vested with such powers as will ensure that this responsibility is not unwisely or wrongly exercised.

In so far as concerns the prevention of the enactment of laws that may be deemed inconsistent with the good government or financial stability of the islands or Colony, this is secured by the fact that the Governor has the usual powers of veto entrusted to every Colonial Governor.

We consider, however, that over and above this power of vetoing legislation the Governor must be given a reserve power of enacting legislation which he, as the instrument of the Secretary of State and the Imperial Parliament, considers necessary for the good government of the islands under his charge, even if the Legislature of any or all of the islands should be opposed to the measure. To quote Lord Irwin once more, "The Government must be able to govern." But we are far from suggesting that an autocracy should be set up. The Governor's power of legislation must be strictly limited and defined, and must always be subject to the decision of the Secretary of State. It is clear that, in Colonies which form part of the British Empire and enjoy the protection of the Crown, matters which concern their external relations cannot be left to the decision of local legislatures but must be determined by higher authority. Nor can their financial stability, for which the Imperial Parliament is ultimately responsible, be imperilled by handing over the entire control to local legislatures. And there is one other matter, to which insufficient attention is often paid, with regard to which some power must be reserved to higher authority to exercise control if need be: we refer to the rights and privileges of the public servants in such Colonies. The Colonial Service extends over the whole range of the British Empire, the self-governing Dominions and India excepted, and its officers are subject to the control of the Secretary of State and look to him for the protection of their interests and rights. It is the Secretary of State who selects them for service in the higher ranks of all the Colonies and is ultimately responsible for seeing that the terms under which they contract to serve are observed. It is essential that the conditions under which such officers serve should be subject to review by the Secretary of State, and that he should not be divorced from the power to ensure that the general principles of these conditions are maintained in whatever portion of the Empire they are serving. We do not for a moment suggest that the local legislature should have no voice in determining how many officials it requires, the conditions under which they should be called upon to serve, or the salaries that should be allotted to them. The point we are endeavouring to emphasize is that some power should be reserved to the Secretary of State, on whom the responsibility rests of selecting and
distributing Colonial officials throughout the Empire, to decide ultimately any case where a difference of opinion arises between the local community and the Government in respect of the public servants employed or to be employed in such Colony.

GOVERNOR’S RESERVE POWERS.

We believe that the measure of autonomy which we propose for the several units of the Colony, with unofficial majorities in the Legislatures, would be fraught with no danger if a reserve power were conferred on the Governor, subject to the authority and decision of the Secretary of State, to legislate in the last resort on the following subjects:

(a) Any matter relating to the external relations of the Colony, or in which an Act of the Imperial Parliament is applied to the Colony.

(b) Any matter relating to questions of defence or public security, or any matter affecting naval, military, or air forces or volunteer corps or the control of aerial navigation or aircraft.

(c) Any matter which affects the financial stability of the Colony or any part of it.

(d) Any matter in which the rights or privileges of the public servants of the Colony are concerned.

We consider that such an enumeration of subjects on which the Governor would be empowered to legislate is preferable to giving him the power to legislate on “matters of paramount importance,” a somewhat vague and high-sounding phrase which may be construed to mean much or little. Such a clear statement of the subjects on which the Governor is empowered to legislate would remove, we submit, all uncertainty, and would from the outset enable all concerned to realize fully the limitations of the powers both of the Governor and the Island Legislatures.

At the same time, we desire to make it clear that the powers which we suggest should be conferred on the Governor are instruments to be brought into use should necessity arise, and are not to be regarded as a somewhat shadowy prerogative constituting a theoretical rather than a practical safeguard, to be used only in cases involving major issues. We hope, however, that the necessity for using these powers may seldom arise. It should not, provided that the Island Legislatures realize the extended responsibilities for government placed upon their shoulders under our proposed scheme. The exercise of these responsibilities calls for a ready understanding and statesmanlike handling of questions which are of more than local concern, and which the Secretary of State must of necessity consider from a wider point of view.
Summary.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

We have now reached the point where it is possible to summarize the recommendations which we have to make regarding the union under one Governor of the islands of the Leeward and Windward Colonies. They may be summarized as follows:—

Unification of Leeward and Windward Islands.

The islands at present forming the Colonies of the Leeward Islands and the Windward Islands should be united into one Colony under a Governor, with Headquarters at St. Lucia.

The present federation of the Leeward Islands should be dissolved and each Presidency should be given in general the same independence as is at present possessed by the three islands of the Windwards group, each retaining as now its own Executive and Legislative Council under the Presidency of the Administrator or Commissioner, enacting its own laws, and regulating in general its own finance and local affairs.

The three islands of the Windwards group should similarly remain autonomous as now. We recommend no unification of services at the present stage except in the case of the Police Force and of Agriculture, for which latter a detailed scheme is put forward.

Position of Governor.

The Governor of the new Colony should take no direct part in the administration of any of the units, but should be the sole channel of communication between the newly-established Colony and the Secretary of State, the privilege now possessed by the Administrators in the Windward Islands and the corresponding privilege in Dominica of addressing through him the Secretary of State ceasing to exist. The Governor's assent would be required to all Bills passed by the Island Legislatures before they could become law, and he would possess the full power of refusing his assent. The usual limitations to his power of assent in respect of Bills of certain classes would be maintained. He would also be empowered to send Bills to the various Island Legislatures for their consideration, and in certain circumstances to make a Declaration that a measure, even if it had not been passed by a majority of the Legislature, was necessary in the public interest, in which case it would be given the force of law. Besides his personal staff he would have with him at his Headquarters a Legal Adviser, a Secretary to Government with an adequate but modest secretariat, and a Chief of Police. The salary of the Governor and of the central staff would be met by contributions from each of the islands, assessed on the basis of their respective revenues.
The Governor should tour frequently throughout the islands of the group and keep in the closest possible touch with the Administrators, Commissioners, and Island Executive and Legislative Councils, but should not sit as President of these bodies nor take any direct part in their proceedings, his functions being primarily to co-ordinate the policy of the various units, and guide them towards the ideal of a single Colony with common interests and a common goal.

We are aware that the mere association of these scattered islands, including as it does the local autonomy of each, appears to be a retrograde rather than a progressive step in the direction of closer union. We have already referred, however, to the psychological effect of uniting under one guiding and controlling hand these two groups of islands hitherto separated politically and administratively, and we consider that this is a factor of which the importance can hardly be over-estimated.

We desire to make it clear that our proposals do not pretend to be more than a first step—and that a tentative one—towards a real federation, not only of the islands with which we are dealing, but of other units in the West Indies which may eventually be found willing to join. We hope that, partly as a result of the Annual Conferences between the several islands of the group under the chairmanship of the Governor, the early institution of which we regard as of the utmost importance, the islands may themselves evolve a much closer union than the very loose one we are now suggesting. Obviously the next step should be the establishment of Federal Executive and Legislative Councils, dealing with matters of common interest to all the islands, as distinguished from those of purely local concern. In this connection we should like to refer to the West Indies Conference inaugurated in 1926, at which delegates from all the islands meet periodically to discuss matters of common interest. Meetings of this Conference at regular intervals will, we trust, be continued, and by this means the idea of a wider West Indian Federation will be kept in sight, and, it is to be hoped in course of time, be attained.

Our endeavour has been to lay a sound foundation for a structure designed eventually to grow, if the communities concerned desire, into a West Indian Federation, taking its proper place in that intricate mosaic which constitutes the British Empire. Such a federation must necessarily, to change the metaphor, be, in Lord Irwin’s phrase, a plant of slow growth. The essential thing is to form a clear conception of what is being aimed at, and then to devise the successive steps by which that conception may become a reality.
In conclusion, we wish to express our warm appreciation of the services rendered to the Commission and ourselves by our Secretary, Mr. S. MacNeill Campbell.

The arrangements in advance for our visits to a number of islands, together with the preparation of a programme of interviews in each place, involved much forethought and organization. The summarizing and collating of a mass of evidence from day to day, in itself a heavy task, was especially arduous coming, as it did, after the strain of concentration during many hours on the verbal evidence put before us. That this work was not only fully and accurately carried out, but moreover was never in arrear, is a great testimony to Mr. Campbell's energy and ability. Lastly, the preparation of our Report entailed on him much consultation of references and attention to a variety of detail, and without his constant assistance in such matters our labours would have been considerably more arduous and prolonged.

In all these respects the Secretarial duties were most admirably carried out by Mr. Campbell, in a way which contributed much, not only to our own convenience and comfort, but to the economical and efficient conduct of the work of the Commission.

(Signed) CHARLES FERGUSSON.
C. W. J. ORR.

(Signed) S. MACNEILL CAMPBELL,
Secretary.
Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officers Administering the Governments of (1) Trinidad, (2) Windward Islands, (3) Leeward Islands.

Downing Street,
4th March, 1931.

SIR,

I have the honour to inform you that I have recently been giving careful consideration to the question of the possibility of bringing about some form of closer union between Trinidad, the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands, and to the many issues which such an administrative change would involve.

2. It is, of course, common knowledge that the subject of federation in the Caribbean area has over a long period attracted the attention not only of many of the West Indian Governments, but also of the section of the general public which is interested in the political and historical development of that part of the Empire. Many proposals of varying scope have in the comparatively recent past been laid before my predecessors. Later, and in 1925, in accordance with the instructions of Mr. Amery, discussions took place between Sir Samuel Wilson, who was then Governor of Trinidad, and Sir George Haddon-Smith, Governor of the Windward Islands, on the question of some form of closer union between Trinidad and the Windward Islands. At the close of the year 1929, I received from [to (1) and (2) the Governor of the Leeward Islands] [to (3) you] a Petition signed by the unofficial members of the Executive and Legislative Councils of Antigua, Mr. G. Moody Stuart, C.B.E., and Mr. Joseph T. Dew, in which the petitioners suggested a possible combination of the Governments of Trinidad and the Windward and Leeward Islands under a single Governor. The petitioners contemplated that all the existing Legislative Councils should be replaced by one Legislative Council, and that there should be one series of laws, and a Commissioner and a Local Council (not Legislative) in each island, consisting of the Commissioner as Chairman and unofficial members to deal with local matters and empowered to impose rates and incur expenditure subject to the approval of the Governor in Legislative Council. It was also suggested, for the sake of economy, that the Commissioners should be qualified to perform judicial duties. In paragraph 474 of the Report of the West Indian Sugar Commission (Part IV*) the Commissioners express the following views:

"It appears to us not only that the simplification of the system of government of the Leeward Islands and St. Lucia is necessary, unless the existing system is to be maintained continuously at the cost of the Imperial Exchequer, but that an administrative association of all these islands with St. Vincent and Grenada would be more conducive to their agricultural progress and prosperity and to the maintenance of a continuous, instead of an intermittent, policy of land settlement and improvement of peasant agriculture and co-operation. We think that a conjunction of all these islands could not fail to be advantageous, and we strongly recommend the consideration of these possibilities to your Lordship."

[To (1). The question has also been engaging your attention and was referred to in a recent debate in the Legislative Council.]
[To (2) and (3). The question has also been engaging the attention of the Governor of Trinidad and was referred to in a recent debate in the Legislative Council of that Colony.]

* Non-Parliamentary Publication (Colonial No. 49), 1930.
3. The present crisis in the sugar industry has brought about an economic situation, particularly in the Leeward Islands and St. Lucia, which makes it important to explore every possible avenue to the increase of economy and efficiency in the administration, while the improvement of sea communications and the rapid development of aerial navigation have materially diminished the obstacles formerly existing to closer union, and have emphasized the possibilities of co-operation in many of the activities of government. Moreover, as you will be aware from the grave statement recently made in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the financial situation of the Imperial Exchequer itself is now such that His Majesty's Ministers on their side are bound to ask that every possible means should be explored which may lead to a reduction of the burden which the necessity of affording relief to distressed Colonies during the present depression imposes on the Home taxpayer. I have accordingly given the subject considerable attention, and have now come to the conclusion that the time is ripe for enquiry to be held into the possibilities of closer union and co-operation between Trinidad, the Windward and the Leeward Islands, or some of them. I may add that it appears to me that, at least at the present time, there is little likelihood that such an enquiry could usefully be extended to other Colonies.

4. I accordingly propose that a Commission should be appointed, probably consisting of two or three persons, with terms of reference which I consider should be left very broad, to proceed to the Colonies concerned as soon as possible, with the object of conducting a comprehensive enquiry into the whole question.

5. Before coming to any decision, however, as to the appointment of the Commission, I should be glad if you would inform me by telegraph whether you concur in principle in the proposal. If you have observations to make which are too lengthy to be telegraphed, I am prepared to await a despatch, provided that it is sent at an early date.

6. There is no objection to the publication of this despatch.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

APPENDIX B.

DOMINICA CONFERENCE.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Federation of the British West Indies.

Proposals for the Federation and General Government of the British West Indies were considered, and the following recommendations were adopted:

Constituent Sections of the Federation.—The Federation shall consist of the Colonies of Trinidad, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and the Leeward Islands.

Provision for bringing other Islands within the Federation.—It shall be lawful for His Majesty, by Order in Council, from time to time, on address from the Legislative Body of any of the West Indian Colonies not included in the Federation, or of the Colony of British Guiana, and from the Federal Legislature, to bring such Colony within the Federation on such terms and conditions in each case as are in the addresses expressed.

Constitution of Federal Legislature.—There shall be a single-Chamber Legislature to be styled "The Federal House of Assembly," composed of 27 elective and six official members.
The Distribution of Elective Seats.—The 27 elective seats shall be distributed amongst the constituent sections of the Federation as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts-Nevis</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgin Islands</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 27

Elected Members.—The elected members of the Federal House of Assembly shall be elected from year to year by the elected members of the Island Legislatures from their own membership. In the event of any elected member of the Federal House of Assembly losing his seat on the local Legislature, his seat on the Federal Assembly shall ipso facto become vacant.

Official Members.—The official members shall be such persons holding office in the public service of the Federation as may be nominated by the Crown. If any official Member of the Federal House of Assembly shall cease to hold office in the public service of the Federation, his seat upon the Federal Assembly shall thereupon become vacant.

Procedure.—The Federal Assembly shall elect a Speaker to preside over its deliberations. And the general principles of May's Parliamentary procedure shall govern its deliberations until Standing Rules and Orders are adopted.

The Legislative Powers of the Federal Assembly.—The Federal Assembly shall have power to make laws for the Federal Group on the following subjects:—

1. Commerce, Shipping, and Aviation.
2. Agriculture.
3. Trade Representation.
4. Education.
8. Police and Defence.
9. Quarantine.
11. Weights and Measures.
12. Federal communications.
15. Lunatics, Idiots, and other mental defectives.
18. Bankruptcy.
20. Public Loans.
22. Civil Service.
24. Such other subjects as the Island Legislatures may declare to be within the competency of the Federal Assembly.
In case of any repugnancy or inconsistency in any Act of the Federal Assembly and the provisions of any law enacted by any local Legislature, the former shall prevail.

Quorum.—The Federal Assembly unless otherwise determined thereby shall not be considered as constituted for the despatch of business unless at least seventeen members be present and assisting thereat.

Federal Executive Council.—There shall be a Federal Executive Council composed of a Governor-General, three officials nominated by the Crown, and six Elected Members of the Federal Assembly to be elected by the Federal Assembly.

Status of Governor-General.—The Governor-General shall be the Chief Federal Executive Officer, and in the exercise of the powers and authorities committed to him shall act upon the advice of the Federal Executive Council.

The functions now exercised by the Colonial Office in relation to the British West Indian Colonies shall, as far as practicable, be transferred to the Governor-General.

Seat of Government.—The seat of the Federal Government and the place of meeting of the Federal Assembly shall be either Trinidad or Barbados.

Expenses.—The travelling and subsistence expenses of the Members of the Federal Assembly shall be defrayed by the local Governments, the amounts thereof to be determined by each unit. Special provision to be made for the remuneration for loss of time of the Unofficial Members of the Federal Executive, when financial conditions permit.

Initiation of Money Votes.—Money votes shall be initiated by the direction of the Governor-General-in-Executive-Council, but members of the Federal Assembly shall be at liberty to take the opinion of the House, by Resolution, as to the advisability of any expenditure, for the guidance of the Executive.

Conflicts between the Federal Executive Council and the Federal House of Assembly.—In the event of any conflict between the Executive Council and the Federal Assembly, it shall be the duty of the Unofficial Members of the Executive Council to tender their resignations to the Governor-General, whereupon the Assembly may supply the vacancies, or to advise the Governor-General to dissolve the Assembly and call for a general election.

Finance.—An estimate of Federal expenses shall be prepared every year by the Federal Executive, and when approved by the Federal Assembly shall be met by a pro rata contribution calculated in accordance with the relation between Federal expenses and the public revenues of each unit.

Unification of the Civil Service.—The Conference recommends the creation of a unified West Indian Civil Service. Such unification of the Public Services will lessen the cost of administration and promote greater efficiency. Appointments and promotions in the West Indian Civil Service shall be opened to natives and non-natives on equal terms.

The appointment of all civil servants, other than Officers Administering the Island Governments, shall be made by the Governor-General upon the recommendation of an Appointments Committee to be set up by the Federal Assembly.

The Chief Executive Officers of the Island Governments shall be appointed by the Crown, and shall be Lieutenant-Governors, Administrators, or Commissioners, as the case may be, according to the size, population, and resources of the several units.

The Governorships and Colonial Secretaryships of the Windward and Leeward Islands respectively shall be abolished on the establishment of a federal system of government.
A West Indian Judiciary.

The Conference recommends that a High Court of Justice, with jurisdiction throughout the Federation, be established; and that for the convenience of litigants, and for the purpose of distributing and regulating sittings of the Court, the Federation be divided into three Circuits, namely:

(a) The Trinidad Circuit;
(b) the Barbados Circuit; and
(c) the Windward and Leeward Islands Circuit.

The Court shall consist of the Chief Justice of the West Indies, who shall also be President of the West Indian Court of Appeal, and of the full complement of Judges now required for the due administration of Justice in Trinidad and Barbados, with three Puisne Judges to serve in the Windward-Leeward Circuit.

Customs.

The Conference recommends that a Customs Convention be set up with a view to securing the greatest possible measure of uniformity in island tariffs, and of lowering or removing inter-insular tariff barriers, wherever practicable.

Reconstitution of Island Legislatures.

It is necessary and desirable that in each island the nominated and unofficial element should disappear and be replaced by elected members; and that the number of elected members should be increased so as to provide for a clear elected majority; in case of conflict between the Island Government and the Island Legislature in any matter of paramount importance the issue to be referred to the Governor-General.

Qualifications for Membership of Island Legislatures.—No person shall be capable of being elected a member of the Island Legislature unless he or she (a) possesses a clear annual income of two hundred pounds, or (b) owns real property in the island of the value of at least five hundred pounds above all charges and incumbrances affecting the same, or (c) is in occupation of lands in the island of an annual rental value of at least fifty pounds; and is (a) a British subject and (b) a registered voter.

Qualifications of Voters.—For the time being the question of voters' qualifications shall be left to the local Legislatures, it being understood that no adult who pays any direct tax shall be deprived of a vote, and that any property or income qualification that may be imposed shall be sufficiently low to provide for the free expression of opinion of all classes, and that adult franchise is the ultimate aim of the Federation; the qualifications of voters to be reviewed triennially in each unit with a view to bringing adult suffrage gradually into general operation.

Effective Control of Public Moneys.—A Finance Committee shall be appointed by each Island Legislature to assist the Officer Administering the Government to prepare and submit estimates and supplementary votes, provided that all aids and supplies to the Executive shall be the sole gift of the Legislature, and that no public expenditure shall be incurred without the sanction of the Legislature having previously been obtained.

Municipal Government.

The Conference recommends the establishment of Municipal Councils or Boards to manage purely municipal affairs in all towns and villages of importance, with a controlling elective element, wherever practicable, the enjoyment of a full measure of municipal autonomy by every centre of population being regarded as essential to the ultimate realization of Dominion Status.
Publicity.

It was decided that copies of the Report of the Conference be forwarded to (a) the Secretary of State for the Colonies, (b) the Governments of the Colonies concerned, (c) the Closer Union Commission, (d) the British Labour Party, and (e) the Press.

Closer Union Commission, Reception of.

It was agreed that provided the terms of reference of the Closer Union Commission were extended so as to include a constitutional advance towards self-government, a delegation representative of the Conference should meet the Commission at each island to urge that the recommendations of the Conference be implemented; but that, unless the terms of reference be widened to include this subject, no Conference Delegation should meet the Commission.

Political Organization.

It was decided that a political organization be formed to carry on the work of the Conference, to defend the liberties and promote the political interests of the people of the British West Indies, and to secure common political action in matters of common interest. This organization, to be called the "West Indian National League," will have its headquarters at Grenada, and will seek to work in association with existing progressive political institutions throughout the West Indies.

Dated at Roseau, Dominica, the Second day of November, in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-two.

Signatures to Report:—

Cecil E. A. Rawle.
Arthur A. Cipriani.
C. L. Elder.
J. S. Sainsbury.
Jno. F. Fleming.
Ebenezer Duncan.
Robert M. Anderson.
Geo. S. E. Gordon.
M. S. Osborne.
Harold T. Wilson.
Thomas Manchester.
W. H. Seaton.
R. E. Alford Nicholls.
G. F. Ashpitel.
Jno. B. Charles.
H. D. Shillingford.
Randall H. Lockhart.
Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of the Windward Islands (Grenada).

DOWNING STREET, 28th June, 1922.

SIR,

I have the honour to invite attention to the Note on pages 27-8 of Mr. Wood's Report* (a copy of which is enclosed for convenience of reference) dealing with the use of the Official Majority in the Legislative Councils of the Leeward and the Windward Islands and in the Court of Policy of British Guiana.

2. I have considered the recommendation made by Mr. Wood in regard to cases where a measure introduced by the Government meets with the unanimous opposition of all the unofficial members of the Legislature, and I am prepared to accept it. I have therefore to request that when cases of the kind mentioned by Mr. Wood arise you will follow the procedure which he suggests, and instruct the Administrators of St. Lucia and St. Vincent to proceed similarly in the islands under their administration.

3. It is perhaps advisable to explain within what kind of limitations the procedure laid down must necessarily operate. For instance, the fact that during the deliberation of a measure the Government has insisted on provisions which are objected to by the whole of the unofficial members of the Legislature, and the Governor should, in accordance with the procedure now approved, withhold his assent until reference has been made to the Secretary of State, unless he has been instructed by the Secretary of State to pass such legislation or in the case of urgency. It should also be clearly understood that the arrangement which I have approved applies only to Government bills and financial resolutions and that it does not apply to Ordinances varying existing taxes or imposing new taxes.

4. I request that you will take steps to publish this despatch after laying it before the Legislatures of the three Colonies under your Government.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

Extract from the Honourable E. F. L. Wood's Report.

F.—Note on the Use of the Official Majority in the Legislative Councils of the Leeward and the Windward Islands, and in the Court of Policy of British Guiana.

In the three Presidencies of the Leeward Islands, and in the three Windward Island Colonies, considerable misconception seemed to exist as to the reasons why, when the unofficial members of Council were unanimous in opposition to Government proposals, the Executive should retain the constitutional power in the last resort to over-ride them. In British Guiana, where the Executive exercises a similar control in matters other than financial through the Governor's casting vote in the Court of Policy, the

* Cmd. 1679.
same question was also raised. Unofficial members and, in some cases, the general public inclined to take the view that, when there was unanimous unofficial opposition to a proposal of the Government, such unanimity was tantamount to evidence that the proposal was either unreasonable or, under local conditions, inexpedient.

I took pains in every Colony in which the question was raised to point out that under every type of Government some machinery must exist in the event of deadlock between the different elements of the constitution. The machinery existed automatically under a system of pure Crown Colony Government, and it also existed under a system of responsible government. In the former case the Governor could over-rule the opposition, and in the latter the Government disappears, and a new Government which can command the necessary majority in the legislature takes its place. I pointed out that so long as the responsibility for the administration of the Colonies rested with the Secretary of State it was essential that the Secretary of State should have this ultimate power, in order to preserve the executive from being rendered impotent. I further pointed out that where you had the power to-day there was no case which would justify you in agreeing to so great a change as to deprive you in the last resort of the power to carry measures which you regarded as essential for the sound conduct of administration. As none of the islands was prepared to argue that they were in a condition to receive responsible government, the only recommendation which I could make to you was that in such circumstances the utmost consideration should be given to the views of unofficial members of Councils. With this object I said that I would advise that a general despatch should be sent to the Colonies concerned, laying down that when there was such unanimous opposition on the part of all the unofficial members of Council the Governor should refrain from bringing the contested measures into operation until further reference had been made to the Secretary of State. In cases of urgency, however, or when the Secretary of State had already given instructions in the matter, and no new material was brought forward, the Governor should be empowered to take immediate action, but in these circumstances the matter should be at once reported to the Secretary of State for confirmation. In either case the dissentient minority should have the right of simultaneously forwarding to the Secretary of State, through the Governor, a statement of their views which they might themselves desire to prepare, provided that such statement were forwarded without undue delay. If this is done, it must be distinctly understood that financial measures, such as taxation ordinances, must always be treated as urgent when there is any possibility of evasion by forestalment or of serious loss of revenue by delay. It would be fatal, for instance, to allow an Ordinance imposing increased customs duties to remain in abeyance pending reference to the Secretary of State.

This is in fact no great constitutional innovation, and I understand the question was dealt with some years ago in relation to St. Lucia much on the lines indicated above. But a general statement of this character would allay doubts and be of assistance to Governors in the performance of a difficult duty. I therefore recommend that a despatch in this sense should be sent to the Leeward and Windward Islands and to British Guiana, and that the Governors of these Colonies should be directed to publish the despatch after laying it before their legislative bodies.
APPENDIX D.

Qualification of Members.

**Leewards (Dominica).**

Females not eligible.
A clear income of £200 a year.

or

Owns real property in Presidency of value of £500 clear.

or

Occupies land in Presidency of annual rental value of at least £50.

and one of the following qualifications:

(a) Has resided for preceding 12 months in district.

(b) Owns real property in district of value of £500.

(c) Occupies land in district of annual rental of £50.

Note:—Residential qualification not essential.

**Windwards.**

Females eligible.
A clear income of £200 a year.

or

Owns real property in Presidency of value of £500 clear.

or

Occupies land in Presidency of annual rental value of at least £50.

and one of the following qualifications:

(a) Has resided for previous 12 months in district.

(b) Owns real property in district of value of £500.

(c) Occupies land in district of annual rental of £50.

Note:—Residential qualification not essential.

**Trinidad.**

Males only eligible.
(a) Real estate £2,500 in value, or from which he gets an annual income of £200.

or

(b) A clear annual income of £400 from any source.

Qualification for Members of Districts.

(a) Residence in district for 12 months before date of election.

or

(b) Possesses real estate in district of value of £5,000 or from which he derives a clear annual income of £400.
LEEWARDS (DOMINICA).

Males and females eligible—21 and 30 years of age respectively. 12 months residence in Presidency and one of the following qualifications:

(a) Net income of £30 a year.

(b) Owns real property in Presidency value £100 clear.

(c) Pays rent on real property of £12 a year in Presidency.

(d) Being resident in the district, has paid direct taxes in previous year of at least 15s.

APPENDIX D—continued.

Qualification of Voters.

WINDWARDS.

Males and females eligible—21 and 30 years of age respectively. Two years residence in the island and one of the following qualifications:

(a) Net income of £30 a year.

(b) Owns real property in the island of value £150 clear.

(c) Pays rent on real property of £12 a year in the island.

(d) Not provided for as in Dominica.

TRINIDAD.

Males and females eligible—21 and 30 years of age respectively. Residence in Colony for 2 years and has one of following qualifications in the electoral district in which registration is claimed:

(a) Occupies as owner premises of rateable value £12 10s. in Port of Spain or a Borough, and of £10 elsewhere, or pays such rent as tenant.

or

(b) Pays £12 10s. per annum as rent, or £62 10s. for rent and board in respect of lodgings.

or

(c) Occupies land taxed at 10s. per annum.

or

(d) Has an annual salary of not less than £62 10s.
DRAFT SCHEME FOR CLOSER CO-ORDINATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL SERVICES OF TRINIDAD AND THE WINDWARD AND LEEWARD ISLANDS.

A. EXISTING ORGANISATION.

1. Departments of Agriculture in the Windward and Leeward Islands (except Grenada).
   (1) Supervised by Advisory Staff of Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.
   (2) Receive assistance from the Scientific Officers of the Imperial College.

2. Grenada Department of Agriculture.
   (1) Supervised by Director of Agriculture, Trinidad.
   (2) Receives assistance from scientific officers of:
       (a) The Department of Agriculture, Trinidad.
       (b) The Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.

B. PROPOSED RE-ORGANISATION.

Department of Agriculture, Windward and Leeward Islands.

1. Committee (General Policy): —
   Principal, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (Chairman).
   Director of Agriculture, Trinidad.
   Commissioner of Agriculture.

2. Departmental Officers: —
   (1) Advisory Staff—
       (a) Commissioner of Agriculture (Executive Head).
       (b) Assistant to Commissioner.
       (c) Biologist.
   (2) Local Staff—
       (a) Superintendent of Agriculture.
       (b) Junior Staff.

3. Relation with Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.
   As in the past, headquarters of Advisory Staff is to remain at the College and the Principal will remain in charge as at present: advice and assistance to the Commissioner of Agriculture; special investigations when practicable, subject to the consent of the Principal.

4. Relation with the Trinidad Department of Agriculture.
   The Trinidad Department to relinquish the directorship of the Grenada Department and in substitution to exercise, in association with the Committee suggested earlier and the Advisory Staff, a certain measure of responsibility for assistance in administrative and animal husbandry matters, as well as in respect of special projects that may from time to time arise.

C. ADVANTAGES OF PROPOSED CO-ORDINATION.

1. General.
   The proposed scheme would result in a definite step forward in the co-ordination of the agricultural services of Trinidad and the Northern Islands without serious dislocation of existing arrangements, and without providing justification for adverse criticism, on financial or other grounds, by the Governments or the public of the islands concerned.

2. Grenada.
   An equitable adjustment of the Grenada problem would result that would presumably be acceptable to that Colony provided certain wishes of the planting community are respected.
3. Agricultural Services of Windward and Leeward Islands.

(1) In relation to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.—Grenada would share with the other islands the services of the Advisory Staff and all the islands would retain their claim on the College for (1) educational facilities; (2) advice of scientific officers; and (3) special investigations.

(2) In relation to the Trinidad Department of Agriculture.—The Windward and Leeward Islands would benefit by association with, and assistance from, a functioning Department of Agriculture that is larger in size than their own and that is constantly concerned with administrative, livestock, and other problems as they directly affect the practical agriculturists of the colony. A number of these problems are common to all the islands.

4. Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.

The College would retain its claim on the Windward and Leeward Islands for their annual contributions.

5. Trinidad Department of Agriculture.

Co-ordination of the agricultural services of Trinidad and the Windward and Leeward Islands, to the extent contemplated, would not throw any extra burden on the Trinidad Department than has been sanctioned by the Legislature in respect of the relationship with Grenada. Closer association of the Trinidad Department with the Advisory Staff holds out a promise of reciprocal benefits for Trinidad, as a claim would be established for some degree of assistance from these officers. The Committee representing the Imperial College, the Trinidad Department, and the Advisory Staff would be for the purpose of assisting the Northern Islands, but there is likely to be an important reflex action in closer practical co-operation between the College and the Trinidad Department of Agriculture to the benefit of Trinidad.

6. Instances that illustrate the possibilities of useful co-ordination.

Plant Quarantine Station.—The Plant Quarantine Station that is shortly to be established in Trinidad is to be drawn upon to some extent by the other islands.

Publications.—Joint preparation of popular agricultural journals, leaflets, and bulletins, would allow of raising the present standard of effort.

Field Experiments.—Co-ordinations of co-operative trials in different islands could usefully be arranged.

Marketing.—The grapefruit experience in Trinidad would be of value to the other islands; the tomato experience of the Northern Islands of value to Trinidad.

Restriction of crop areas.—Rationalization of crop production (e.g., limes and sea island cotton) in the various islands may assume an important aspect; always likely to be difficult, but will be less so with closer co-ordination.

Legislation.—Uniformity of legislation with respect to entry of plants and animals and to grading of produce for export is desirable.

Specialists.—Looking to the future, the joint employment of experts for solving difficulties that may arise would have the advantage of economy.

D. FINANCE.

The financial re-arrangements involved do not appear to present any serious difficulties.

E. IMPORTANCE OF CLOSER CO-ORDINATION BEING PLACED ON A FORMAL BASIS.

A number of the proposals outlined in this draft scheme are, in fact, more or less in operation at present on a voluntary basis. Formal acceptance by the Governments concerned of these and other measures designed to co-ordinate the agricultural services of Trinidad and the Northern Islands would consolidate and strengthen the present position and safeguard the future in the event of a change in personnel.