

10. Some explanation is desirable as to the importance attached by the committee to the establishment of the Agricultural Research Council in advance of the inauguration of the single Colonial Agricultural Research Service. The committee are in general agreement as to the functions of the Council recommended in paragraph 25 of the report of the Conference Committee. It, is, however, recognized that no final definition of the work of the Council can be laid down until after the Imperial Agricultural Research Conference has met in October next, when the question of establishing further Imperial bureaux to deal with soil science and plant genetics is likely to be considered. In any event, it is agreed that the Council will have to deal with the following important matters: (a) Supply and training of the necessary scientific workers in conjunction with the recruiting authorities at the Colonial Office; (b) group research stations in the colonies; (c) relations with analogous bodies outside the colonial Empire; (d) relations with the research staffs in colonial Agricultural Departments; (e) the collection and publication of information where this is not already done by existing agencies; (f) the consideration of the major questions of research; (g) the general guidance of research work in the colonies.

Evidence was received from the Director of the Imperial Institute, who gave the committee his views regarding (1) the intelligence work to be performed by the Council, and (2) its relations in this respect with the Imperial Institute.

The Committee are unanimous in the opinion that the intelligence staff already existing at the Imperial Institute should be regarded as the nucleus of the organization now contemplated as regards the collection and publication of information, and that the Council should build on what is already being done at the Institute, and should in no way attempt to create a separate organization of its own. While the Imperial Institute is primarily concerned with bringing the produced output to the notice of the utilizer, the Council will be more particularly concerned with the actual producer and grower of the crop. It is recognized, however, as important that the closest possible touch should be maintained between the two bodies in their closely related spheres, and that the intelligence work to be initiated by the Council should be regarded as complementary to that of the Imperial Institute. In particular, the Council should interlock with the Plant and Animal Products Council of the Institute.

The committee are confident that the arrangements which they will propose in this respect will be found entirely satisfactory, and that excellent results will be secured by the linking-up of agricultural research in the colonies with the work done by the Imperial Institute.

As regards the constitution of the Council to fit it for the functions indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, the committee are in general agreement with the membership proposed in the Report of the Committee of the Colonial Office Conference. They are, however, of opinion that the two principal whole-time officers of the Council should be known as the Chief Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State and Assistant Agricultural Adviser respectively. This would make it clear that the functions of the chief technical officer would be analogous in the field of agriculture to those of Dr. Stanton, the recently established Chief Medical Adviser in that of medicine. It is contemplated that the Chief Adviser's special duties will lie more particularly in the purely scientific sphere, while on his assistant will devolve relations with Agricultural Departments and Administrations in the dependencies. Both officers will thus have duties of a general character of value to the colonial Empire over and above the special functions of the proposed Research Council.

The committee consider that the Director of the Imperial Institute should represent the Institute on the Council, and, while the importance is recognized of keeping the numbers of the Council as low as possible, it is proposed to give further consideration to (1) the desirability of giving power to the Council to co-opt additional members if necessary, and (2) suggestions which were made for adding to the Council a geneticist, a representative of animal physiology, and a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

I have no doubt that you will agree, in the light of the foregoing explanation, that it is essential that the Agricultural Research Council should be established at as early a date as possible, as a preliminary to the more effective organization of agricultural research in the colonial Empire.

11. You will appreciate that the discussions and recommendations of the forthcoming Imperial Agricultural Research Conference will have a direct bearing upon the scheme of colonial agricultural research which the committee are considering. I am therefore arranging for the colonial delegates to that Conference to be informed of the probable recommendations of the committee before the Conference meets. A copy of this despatch will also be sent to each delegate for his information.

12. As indicated in paragraph 5, I have thought it desirable to inform you of the action already taken on the resolution of the Colonial Office Conference, and to give such forecast as it is at present possible of the main problems, the details of which will require some time to elaborate before effect can be given to the recommendations of the Conference Committee. I feel sure that you will agree that the proposals for the establishment of a central Council and of a unified service of research officers are matters of great importance, which, if successfully initiated, should materially assist in colonial development. I confidently recommend these proposals to the sympathetic consideration of your Government, and shall be glad to receive at as early a date as possible an expression of your views upon them.

I have, &c.,
For the Secretary of State,
W. ORMSBY GORE.

The Office Administering the Government of