

My very humble good Love
I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your letter of
the 10th inst. in relation to
the proposed amendments to
the Constitution of the State
of New York. I have the
pleasure to inform you that
the same have been referred
to the proper authorities
for their consideration.
I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. B. [Name]

...the very humble good Love
...I have the honor to acknowledge
...the receipt of your letter of
...the 10th inst. in relation to
...the proposed amendments to
...the Constitution of the State
...of New York. I have the
...pleasure to inform you that
...the same have been referred
...to the proper authorities
...for their consideration.
...I am, Sir, very respectfully,
...Your obedient servant,
...J. B. [Name]

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1935; a sum of £6,129 has actually been advanced to Mr. McCrae, and that the Committee has recommended that a final sum of £617.10.2. should be advanced to him to enable him to discharge his existing commitments. The Committee also recommended that the repayment of the loan, in all £6,746.10.2., should be deferred until the end of 1939; that thereafter the loan should bear interest at 4% per cent

and be repaid in 150 parts of £1,000 per annum

the circumstances in which it became

necessary to reconsider the continuance of

advantage from the approved loan of £10,500 are

described in the correspondence accompanying

the Committee's letter of the 1st of April.

Briefly the position is that Mr. McCrae has

been forced to the conclusion that the sisal

softening and splitting process, upon which

he commenced his researches, cannot be

profitably employed. In the course of his

experiments and trials with various machinery

he has, however, been able to construct an

efficient type of sisal decorticator and he

has good reason to believe that capital will be forthcoming from

commercial sources to provide for the development and manufacture of this

decorticator. [In an interview at the Colonial Office, Mr. McCrae stated that

the capital proposed was £30,000, which would be allocated as follows:-

£15,000 to Mr. McCrae and his two brothers

£3,000 to Messrs. Fairbairn, Thomson

Combe, Barclay & Co.

£5,000 to Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, and

Company.

£2,000 to Lord Howard de Walden

£1,000 each to a Mr. Mackenzie and a Mr. Shand, who are friends of Mr. McCrae.

It is possible that Messrs. Dalgety

and Company may also be interested in themselves in the new machine.

Mr. McCrae's proposition Mr. McCrae

proposes to form a Company which will

proceed to manufacture a machine and to

send it out to Kenya to undergo full

trials in the field. If it is

successful the machine will be manufac-

tured for commercial production.

? suit
9/8.

The repayment of the money advanced to Mr. McCrae from the C.D.F. will be a first charge upon the Company.

With regard to Government finances.

Mr. McCrae realised that he could not expect much more, since he was now getting into commercial production on something akin to, but different from, the original purpose.

4 Their Lordships will recall that the terms and conditions of the advance of £10,500 were embodied in an Agreement dated the 7th of October, 1936, entered into by the Crown Agents for the Colonies (acting on behalf of the Government of Kenya) and Mr. James McCrae, and that with a view to remedying deficiencies in that Agreement, the draft of a new Agreement was prepared and approved in Treasury letter No.S.34609/0226/2 of the 6th of January 1937. The execution of the revised Agreement has been deferred in the circumstances mentioned in the previous paragraph. Having regard to Clause 2 of the signed Agreement, it would appear that as the usual softening

process

? next.
99B

Copy below
No 33 on
the 1937 file

No 1
38159/37

G. O.

- Mr. ...
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Sir C. Parkinson.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Perm. U.S. of S.
- Parly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

DRAFT.

FURTHER ACTION.

process is now being abandoned as ~~unworkable~~ ^{economically unwise}, the question of repayment hardly arises, but since Mr. McCrae has developed an entirely new machine, it is proposed to invite him to ^{agree to} refund the £6,746.10.2. on the terms set out in the Committee's letter of the 1st of April.

Sam, etc.

S. a copy of recent correspondence with Mr. McCrae is enclosed for their Lordships' information.

Sam.

~~_____~~

Communications on this subject
should be addressed to—

THE SECRETARY.

Telephone: WHITEHALL 9191.

C.D.A.C. 2167.



COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE,
COLONIAL OFFICE,
DOWNING STREET,
S.W.1.

1st May, 1937.

RECEIVED

23 MAY 1937

C. O. REGY

Sir,

I am directed by the Colonial Development Advisory Committee to request you to inform Mr. Secretary Ormsby Gore that, at their 97th meeting on the 28th of April, they had before them a Colonial Office memorandum (C.D.A.C. 2160) regarding the loan from the Fund to the Government of Kenya, which is being advanced to Mr. James McCrae for the purpose of assisting him to develop a new process for the softening of sisal fibre.

2. It appears that, since the Committee's letter (C.D.A.C. 2153) of the 1st of April, a further letter has been received from Mr. McCrae pointing out that the total sum necessary to discharge his existing commitments is now £617. 10. 2d. In all the circumstances the Committee recommend that this sum of £617. 10. 2d. should be issued to Mr. McCrae to enable

him

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,

COLONIAL OFFICE.

Copy to Mr. Gore
Copy to Mr. McCrae
31/5/37 (18)
11.

15.
63

LASIS
(REGISTERED)
FIBRE PRODUCTS

JAMES McCRAE, WELLINGTON FOUNDRY, LEEDS 1.

21st April 1937.

HC

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London. S.W.1.

Sir,

Reference 38159/1/37.

I am in receipt of your letter of 19th Instant, for which I thank you, and note that approval is being sought for the payment of £617.10.2. from the Colonial Development Fund, subject to the approval of the Treasury.

I have also to express my thanks for the proposed re-arrangement for repayment. This facility should provide ample time for the complete development of my process, if it proves to be the success which experiments indicate.

It is also noted that no final decision has been reached regarding the total amount of the repayment figure. When this has been decided, I will be able to proceed with the forming of my Development Company.

The next step in the development of my process requires a machine to operate under normal plantation conditions. This is the only real test. Recent experiments confirm its possibilities. A new machine is therefore being constructed and will be shipped to Kenya when ready. This will be financed by the proposed Development Company.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

James McCrae

44 Aug 1937

him to make the further payments to which he is committed, and that thereafter no further payments should be made from the Colonial Development Fund. The total advances repayable by Mr. McCrae will now amount to £6,746. 10. 2d., which, the Committee recommend, should be repaid on the terms indicated in their letter of the 1st of April.

3. A similar letter is being sent to the Treasury.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

L. Smith

Assistant Secretary to the Committee.

22
14
C.D.A.C. 2160.

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Kenya.

Process for softening sisal fibre.

With reference to C.D.A.C. 2141 and 2153, I circulate, for consideration, a Colonial Office note covering a further letter from Mr. McCrae in which he points out that, since his letter of the 27th of February, expenses in connection with his sisal softening process have continued, and that the total sum necessary to discharge his existing commitments is now £617. 10. 2.

The Committee are invited to agree to the increase of the further advance recommended from £400 to £500, bringing the final total advances repayable by Mr. McCrae to £6,746. 10. 2. In this connection, it should be pointed out that the sum of £6,129 has so far been issued, and not the round figure of £6,100 indicated in the Committee's letter of the 1st of April. (C.D.A.C. 2156).

S. CALNE

Secretary to the Committee.

Colonial Office,
14th April, 1937.

NOTE.

With reference to S.D.A.C. 2141 and to the Committee's letter of the 1st of April (C.D.A.C. 2153), a letter has just been received from Mr. McCrae, a copy of which is attached, in which he points out that, since his letter of the 27th of February, expenses in connection with his dental softening process have continued and that the total sum necessary to discharge his existing commitments is now £617.10s.2d. Since the Committee agreed to a sum of £400 being issued to Mr. McCrae upon the estimate contained in his letter to the Colonial Office of the 27th of February, it is hoped that the Committee will agree to the increase of that amount to £617. 10s. 2d. Mr. McCrae is being informed that no further expenditure must be incurred after the 30th of April in respect of the original loan of £10,500, and that no further payments will be made from the Colonial Development Fund beyond what the Committee may be pleased to recommend in this specification. If the Committee agree that the sum of £617 10s 2d. may be issued to Mr. McCrae, the total amount payable by him will amount to £6,746. 10s. 2d.

Colonial Office.

14th April, 1937.

LASIS
(Registered)
FIBRE PRODUCTS

James McCrae, Wellington Foundry, Leeds 1.

8th April 1937.

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London, S.W.1.

Sir,

Your reference No. 38159/37.

My letter of 27th February suggested that the machinery which I am developing had now reached a point when private finance was justified in carrying it to completion. I have discussed the matter with friends who are prepared to assist, and I now await your decision regarding the amount which you consider should be carried as a first charge. The proposal is to form a small development Company, and a decision on the matter of first charge is necessary to enable arrangements to be completed.

Pending the formation and finance of this proposed Company, funds are necessary to discharge existing debts. In February I estimated that £400 would discharge all debts then. Since that date expenses have continued, and I am to enclose an account from Messrs. Fairbairn Lawson & Co. Barbour Ltd., for £406.16.8d. In addition, there are amounts owing for management and travelling allowances for March and April, £280, bringing the total to £686.16.8. The balance of imprest payments in the bank is £69.6.6., so the sum required is £617.10.2.

I would therefore be most grateful to you for an early consideration of what sum should be carried as a

first

first charge by this proposed development Company, and also
an early payment of £617.10.2. to enable me to discharge
obligations incurred under this work.

I have, etc.

(Sgd.) JAS. McCRAE.

LABIS
(Registered)
FIBRE PRODUCTS

James McCrae, Wellington Foundry, Leeds 1.

8th April 1937.

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London, S.W.1.

Sir,

Your reference No. 38159/37.

My letter of 27th February suggested that the machinery which I am developing had now reached a point when private finance was justified in carrying it to completion. I have discussed the matter with friends who are prepared to assist, and I now await your decision regarding the amount which you consider should be carried as a first charge. The proposal is to form a small development Company, and a decision on the matter of first charge is necessary to enable arrangements to be completed.

Pending the formation and finance of this proposed Company, funds are necessary to discharge existing debts. In February I estimated that £400 would discharge all items then. Since that date expenses have continued, and I beg to enclose an account from Messrs. Fairbairn Lawson & Co. Barbour Ltd. for £406.16.8d. In addition, there are amounts owing for management and travelling allowances for March and April, £260, bringing the total to £686.16.8. The balance of imprest payments in the bank is £69.6.6., so the sum required is £617.10.2.

I would therefore be most grateful to you for an early consideration of what sum should be carried as a first

first charge by this proposed development Company, and also
an early payment of £617.10.2. to enable me to discharge
obligations incurred under this work.

I have, etc.

(Sgd.) JAS. McCRAE.

LEEDS 1.

31st March, 1937.

Messrs. Basis (Registered) Products,

(Per Mr. J. McCrae.)

LEEDS.

Dr. to

FAIRBAIRN LAWSON COMBE BARBOUR LTD.

Leeds & Belfast.

Associated with

Urquhart Lindsay & Robertson Orchar Ltd., Dundee.

Sisal Splitting Machine.

To shop wages and draughtsman's
time on account of above
machine from 1st January to
31st March, 1937.

204.15. 4.

To material supplied during
January, February and
March, 1937.

202. 1. 4.

£406.16. 8.

Net cash.

(ltd.) A. W. W.

Certified Correct

(Sgd.) JAS. McCRAE

8.4.37.

Ans. (16)

15

Mr. L. S. Smith.

*8th April, 1937 (11)
WJ Ruskone*

With reference to C.D.A.C. 2141 and to the Committee's letter of the 1st of April (C.D.A.C. 2153), a letter has just been received from Mr. McCrae, a copy of which is attached, in which he points out that, since his letter of the 27th of February, expenses in connection with his sisal softening process have continued and that the total sum necessary to discharge his existing commitments is now £617. 10s. 2d. Since the Committee agreed to a sum of £400 being issued to Mr. McCrae upon the estimate contained in his letter to the Colonial Office of the 27th of February, it is hoped that the Committee will now agree to the increase of that amount to £617. 10s. 2d.

Mr. McCrae is being informed that no further expenditure must be incurred after the 30th of April in respect of the original loan of £10,500, and that no further payments will be made from the Colonial Development Fund beyond what the Committee may be pleased to recommend on this application. If the Committee agree that the sum of £617. 10s. 2d. may be issued to Mr. McCrae, the total advances repayable by him will amount to £6,746. 10s. 2d.

J. E. W. Flood

G. O.

Mr. Greenwith.

Mr. Flood

Mr.

Sir C. Pashason

Sir G. Tomlinson

Sir G. Batomlev

Sir J. Shuckburgh

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

DRAFT.

JAMES McCRAE, ESQ.

Hand (15)

19 April 1937.

C.D.
14 APR
16

Sir,

I am etc. to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th of April, and to inform you that approval is now being sought for the payment to you of a sum of £617. 10s. 2d. from the Colonial Development Fund to enable you to discharge your existing commitments in connection with your sisal softening process.

1. The questions raised in your letter of the 27th of February were referred to the Colonial Development Advisory Committee at a meeting on the 24th of March, when it was recommended, subject to the approval of His Majesty's Treasury,

that

Handwritten notes: "H. G. Long - 17" and a circled number "17".

FURTHER ACTION.

that the sum of £400 which you estimated would be sufficient to provide for your existing commitments, should be issued.

In view of your letter under reply, it has been necessary to refer the matter again to the Committee.

3 I am to state that no further expenditure ^{may} must be incurred in respect of the loan of £10,500 from the Colonial Development Fund, and that no further sums will be advanced to you beyond the amount which the Treasury may decide in regard to your present application.

4 No final decision has yet been reached in regard to the repayment of the total advanced to you from the Colonial Development Fund. It is proposed, however, subject to approval, to allow you to defer repayment till the end of 1939, the loan then to bear interest at 4 per cent per annum and be repayable as from the 1st of January, 1940, at the rate of £1,000 a year, the first payment

C. O.

Mr.
Mr.
Mr.

Sir C. Parhinson.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

payment to be due on the 1st of
January, 1941.

J. E. W. Flood

Signed J. E. W. FLOOD

DRAFT.

FURTHER ACTION.

LASIS
(REGISTERED)

FIBRE PRODUCTS

JAMES McCRAE, WELLINGTON FOUNDRY, LEEDS 1.

8th. April 1937.

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London. S.W.1.



Sir,

Your reference No. 38159/37.

My letter of 27th February suggested that the machinery which I am developing had now reached a point when private finance was justified in carrying it to completion. I have discussed the matter with friends who are prepared to assist, and I now await your decision regarding the amount which you consider should be carried as a first charge. The proposal is to form a small development Company, and a decision on the matter of first charge is necessary to enable arrangements to be completed.

Pending the formation and finance of this proposed Company, funds are necessary to discharge existing debts. In February I estimated that £400 would discharge all items then. Since that date expenses have continued, and I beg to enclose an account from Messrs Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour Ltd, for £2406.16.8. In addition, there are amounts owing for management and travelling allowances for March and April, £280, bringing the total to £2686.16.8. The balance of imprest payments in the bank is £69.6.6., so the sum required is £617.10.2.

ansd. 12
(6)
By G. H. G. 57

* To C. H. G.
No

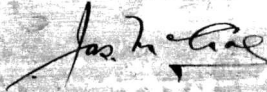
2.

I would therefore be most grateful to you for an early consideration of what sum should be carried as a first charge by this proposed development Company, and also an early payment of ~~£40~~ 10.2. to enable me to discharge obligations incurred under this work. (67)

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



9
14
7th April, 1937.

Dear Jones.

In our recent telephone conversation about the loan from the Colonial Development Fund to the Government of Kenya, which is being advanced to Mr. James McCrae for the purpose of assisting him to develop a process for softening sisal fibre, you pointed out that a sum of £6,129 has so far been issued, and not the round figure of £6,100 indicated in the Committee's letter of the 1st of April. The figure of £400, given as the ~~sum~~ required to enable Mr. McCrae to complete outstanding payments, is only an estimate, and, if the total loan is increased to £6,529, that should be sufficient to enable him to clear off these outstanding payments. In these circumstances, will you please regard the Committee's letter as recommending the issue of a further £400, thus bringing the total loan to £6,529.

I have spoken to the Department on the question of repayment, and they are prepared to agree to

H. R. JONES, Esq.

to the following terms:- that the repayment of the loan of £6,529 should be deferred till the end of 1939; that as from the 1st of January, 1940, the loan should bear interest at 4 per cent, and should be repaid by annual instalments of £1,000, covering both capital and interest, the first payment to be made on the 1st of January, 1941.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Colonial Office.

Yours sincerely,

hss.

Communications on this subject
should be addressed to—

THE SECRETARY

Telephone: WHITEHALL 9191.



COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COLONIAL OFFICE,

DOWNSING STREET,

S.W.1.

1st April, 1937.

C.D.A.C. 2153.

RECEIVED

- 2 APR 1937

C. O. REGY

Sir,

I am directed by the Colonial Development Advisory Committee to request you to inform Mr. Secretary Ormsby Gore that, at their 96th meeting on the 24th of March, they had before them a Colonial Office memorandum (C.D.A.C. 2141) regarding the loan from the Fund to the Government of Kenya which is being advanced to Mr. James McGrac for the purpose of assisting him to develop a new process for softening sisal fibre.

2. Owing to the increase in the price of sisal (which has been proportionately greater than the increase in the prices of fibres with which softened sisal might compete) it appears that Mr. McGrac's softening process would no longer be economical. In the course of his experiments, however, Mr McGrac has evolved a machine for the decortication of sisal which offers good prospects for commercial development.

the

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,
COLONIAL OFFICE.

*11/6/37
C. O. Regy*

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76

the sum of £10,500 originally recommended to be advanced through the Government of Kenya to Mr. James McCrae, £6,100 has so far been issued, and a sum of £400 is still required to enable him to complete payments to which he is committed. The Committee share the Secretary of State's opinion that it is reasonable to accept Mr. McCrae's conclusions and to regard the sisal softening process to have been definitely abandoned, and, in all the circumstances, they recommend that the further sum of £400 (bringing the total loan to £6,500) should be issued to Mr. McCrae to enable him to make the further payments to which he is committed. The Committee also recommend that the repayment of this loan of £6,500 should be deferred until the end of 1939; that thereafter the loan should bear interest at 4 per cent and be repaid at the rate of £1,000 per annum. The Government of Kenya will no doubt arrange accordingly with Mr. McCrae. It is understood that Mr. McCrae is contemplating the sale of his rights in respect of any process developed in connection with payments to a company, and if that is done it will be necessary to ensure that the liability for repayment is entirely assumed by such company.

3. A similar letter is being sent to the Treasury.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

L.S. Smith

ks. Secretary to the Committee.

J 8.3
McCrae 5

R. C. S. Smith

DRAFT MEMORANDUM TO THE C. D. A. C.

In their letter of the 2nd of August, 1935, No. C. D. A. C. 1847, the Colonial Development Advisory Committee recommended the loan of a sum of £10,500 to the Government of Kenya to be advanced to Mr. James McCrae for the purpose of assisting him to develop a new process for softening sisal fibre. As the Committee are aware the ^{loan} grant was ~~awarded~~ ^{approved} and Mr. McCrae began work on his experiments.

Recently, on Mr. McCrae's invitation, a visit was paid to Leeds by Dr. Tempany, the Assistant Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State, who reported that Mr. McCrae had devised a machine suitable for softening fibre, but was now concentrating on a machine for the decortication of sisal which had been evolved in the course of his work on machinery for splitting sisal fibre. In a letter dated the 2nd of February, 1937, Mr. McCrae reported that an experimental machine for decorticating had been constructed and that Messrs. Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour were prepared to assist in commercial trials for the new machine.

Upon receipt of this intelligence, a letter was addressed to Mr. McCrae pointing out that further advances from the approved grant could not be made until the nature of ~~Mr. McCrae's~~ work had been cleared up, since it would not be possible for funds provided for the purpose of financing his fibre softening experiments to be devoted to decorticating machinery. Mr. McCrae has now replied, explaining the situation, and has discussed the matter at the Colonial Office. Copies of the correspondence are appended.

(which has been
greater than the
increase in the
prices of softening
fibres & will
which softened
sisal might
complete)

It appears that, in any event,
Mr. McCrae's ~~proposed~~ ^{softening} process would no longer
be economical in view of the increase in the
price of sisal, ^{Mr. McCrae} and he accordingly proposes to
stop all work on that machinery. It will be
seen that a sum of £400 is still outstanding
to enable him to complete the payments to which
he is committed.

In Mr. Ormsby Gore's opinion it seems
reasonable to accept Mr. McCrae's conclusions,
and to regard the sisal softening process as
having definitely ~~failed~~ ^{been abandoned}. It will be observed
that Mr. McCrae proposes to repay the advance
which he has already received by instalments
from the expected profits on his new
decorticator, and Mr. Ormsby Gore would suggest
that this offer might be favourably received.
Indeed, it appears doubtful whether Mr. McCrae
could be properly invited to make any
repayment of the funds advanced for one process
out of the profits received from the
development of an entirely new machine.

COLONIAL OFFICE.

10th March, 1937.

Correspondence attached

- Letter of 2. Feb 1937 (No 3 on 38159)
- Letter to Mr McCrae 22 Feb (No 4 on 38159/1)
- " from " 23 Feb (No 5 on ")
- " " " 27 Feb (No 6 ")

Wellington Foundry,

RECEIVED

leads.

27th February 1937.

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London, S. W. 1.

Sir,

Your Reference 38159/1/37

With reference to my letter of 23rd instant, and following upon our conversations of 26th and 27th of this month, I beg to confirm the various points raised.

Decoratization As explained, the accident of research has evolved a decoratizer out of the machine which was designed for splitting Sisal fibre. It is appreciated that this development would entail a review of the position, should a continuance of assistance from the Colonial Development Fund be required. The new principle of this machine has reached a stage, however, where its value can be appreciated and private finance be justified for its further development.

I am at present endeavouring to arrange finance for this purpose, and when those arrangements are further advanced, I will submit them for your approval.

New Agreement The Crown Agents for the Colonies have submitted a new agreement which it is proposed to change for the existing one. In view of these private arrangements referred to, I would request that the matter of a new agreement be decided in order to avoid complicating the formation of the new agreement.

Finance The greater part of the amount already expended of the loan from the Colonial Development Fund has been on account of work connected with softening and splitting line fibre. Due to the fact that Sisal has advanced in value from £16 to £28 since the loan was granted, this process cannot be profitably employed. The technique of the process is, however, understood and is ready for application should markets sink to low levels again.

Loan funds will be a first charge upon the assets of the proposed Development Company, and there are some points requiring consideration.

One point is the period for repayment. It is estimated that two years will elapse before revenue will accrue from royalties, and I would suggest that repayment be deferred until the end of 1939 at the rate of £1000 per annum, and interest be charged as from that date.

Another point is the amount which the Development Company be asked to carry as its first charge. As its object is to develop a decorticator, it is suggested that loan money need not be applied to objects which are no longer profitable, which be discontinued. It is appreciated that this new principle of development is the outcome of research made possible by the loan, so the matter as to whether or not all of the loan should rightly be the subject for repayment is deferred to you with the request that it be given consideration.

Pending the formation of the proposed Development Company, funds are necessary to discharge existing commitments and to preserve continuity of the work. I estimate that £400 will be sufficient for this purpose, and will be grateful if you would kindly authorize the Crown Agents to pay this to me.

I have the Honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

James McGee

581

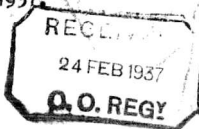
LASIS
(REGISTERED)

FIBRE PRODUCTS

JAMES McCRAE, WELLINGTON FOUNDRY, LEEDS, 1.

23rd. February 1937

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
London. S.W.1.



Sir,

Your reference 38159/1/3E.

4.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 22nd Instant with thanks.

During the course of my studies and the reports concerning it which I have submitted to you from time to time, I have become conscious that the somewhat complicated technicalities of the various problems which have arisen, might create a little confusion, particularly as my recent work has emphasized an improved method of extraction. This letter is to explain how extraction has arisen, coincident upon conversion, and is not in fact a distinct departure.

Conversion research has continued along the two lines as originally conceived, namely softening and then splitting. Financial assistance was granted after I had proved that Sisal could be converted mechanically. It was then arranged with Messrs The Hydraulic Engineering Co. Ltd., to evolve a machine to split the fibres, and for Messrs Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour Ltd., to make a machine to soften it. After prolonged experimental work Messrs The Hydraulic Engineering Co. Ltd., were unable to design a machine for splitting and so relinquished that work. This was duly reported to you. The softening machine designed by Messrs Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour Ltd has taken about a year of "trial and Error" development

before it would perform satisfactorily. Softening of tow by this extrusion method can now be done to any predetermined degree and various softnesses are at present being investigated in conjunction with manufacturers of yarn.

The splitting problem remained to be solved. I was fortunate in designing a machine incorporating entirely original features. It is this machine which has led me to incorporate extraction as I will explain.

It had been accepted by experts on such matters that to split fibres the requirement was to pierce the strand with a pointed pin and draw it along the length of fibre. My research disclosed the fact that such was not the case, but that an abrasive or rubbing action produced the result. Messrs Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour Ltd., rendered most valuable assistance in the building of an experimental machine on which this discovery was confirmed. Whilst experimenting with this splitting machine it was useful to see what effect it would have upon fibres just as they were extracted fresh from the leaf, and before the pulp residue became dry and hard, so a few leaves were brought from Africa.

When it is appreciated that it is the pulp residue which causes the fibre to be hard, it will be understood that if this pulp residue could be more effectively removed by the abrasive action of the splitting machine, that this machine might also do the work of softening performed in the other way by extrusion between the rolls of the machine which Messrs Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour Ltd., had made for me.

Experiments with leaves on the splitting machine proved that this new principle did have the desired effect of softening the fibre by removing more of the pulp residue than is possible by ordinary methods of decortication, and that a certain degree of splitting also took place. It then became obvious that as this process did remove pulp residue which clings intimately to the fibre, that it would more readily remove all the pulp of the leaf not in such close contact. Further experiments with leaf confirmed that this was so, and disclosed the evidence that this splitting machine was capable of performing the operation of extraction. I succeeded in producing a fibre somewhat softer and partly split, and without waste.

This description of how my work has developed will therefore indicate how the operation of splitting has naturally merged into that of extraction, the two operations being performed on the one machine and at the same time. There has therefore been no actual departure from the scheme as originally laid down; what has developed out of my work as a new issue is the co-incidence that this splitting process happens also to be a most efficient decorticator. This perhaps explains why a slight confusion has arisen.

It is difficult to estimate the full importance of these discoveries at present, but they are undoubtedly considerable, and when successfully developed will bring greater benefits to the industry than I had anticipated in my original conception of only conversion.

The successful operation of this machine demands freshly cut leaf. I find that leaves sent from Africa arrive dry wilted and leathery. A machine will therefore require to be sent to Africa to go through its "trial and error" phase of development, and be perfected before it is offered to the industry.

With regard to the extrusion method of softening, the interest of this is in its application to raw as distinct from lime fibre. The splitting machine described will not handle raw; the source of raw supply I have described in a previous letter to you, is from large sucker plants, short and damaged leaves. The extraction of fibre from such leaves will be by an entirely different process, and will be linked to the process of softening by extrusion. This raw production process is a matter for future development, and is not provided for out of the present loan funds.

I trust that this letter will serve to make more clear to you the complications of the various problems which I have set myself to solve. I thank you for your invitation to call and discuss the whole matter. I will be in London tomorrow and will telephone to ask when it will be convenient for you to receive me.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Jas. H. Taylor

C. O.

Mr. Cairns. 10.2.37.

Mr. Payne 15/2.

Mr. ~~Clarke~~ 15/2

Sir C. Parkinson.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Recd. (S)
E.O
R 18 FEB
D 19

Downing Street,

22 February, 1937.

Sir,

DRAFT.

J. McURAE, ESQ.

3 ~
38159/37

I am etc. to refer to your letter of the 2nd of February regarding the work you are conducting on sisal with assistance from the Colonial Development Fund. It is gathered from the report submitted in that letter that you have now suspended for the time being work on the lines originally contemplated for the softening of ^{sisal} fibre, and are now concentrating on experiments with a new method of new sisal or decorticating fibre. It will be appreciated that the assistance from the Colonial Development Fund was approved for the specific purpose of conducting experiments.

cc Downing machinery

FURTHER ACTION.

Action on plain file to be taken

Copy regd. M.F.

experiments in fibre softening as described
in the memorandum submitted to the Colonial
Development Advisory Committee, and if it is
now proposed to substitute experiments of a
different nature it is ^{necessary} desirable that the
matter should be submitted to the Committee
for their approval of the proposed change.

It is also noted that the work has extended
over a longer period than ^{and} originally
contemplated, so that the provision originally
made for salary and travelling expenses appears
to be already exhausted.

2. In these circumstances Mr.
Ormsby Gore feels that it ^{will not be} is impossible to
authorise further advances from the Fund until
the question of the nature of the activities
to be financed by such advances has been cleared
up. I am to suggest, therefore, that you
should arrange to call at this Office in
order to discuss the matter, so that if after
such discussion it is thought desirable to
obtain the approval of the Colonial Development

Advisory

G. O.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Sir C. Parkinson.

Sir G. Tomkinson.

Sir C. Bottemley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Partly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Advisory Committee to a formal
revision of the scheme; the necessary
submission can be made to them.

I am etc.

(Signed) J. E. W. FLOOD

DRAFT.

FURTHER ACTION.

Colonial Development Scheme No. 352

Original Estimate as amended

Expenditure

Notes

By T.L. S. 32889/022682 - 26.6.26 (3910/9/26)

at 1.27

(1) Treatment tanks 466
(Huntly, Lower Kowale, Portree etc)

(2) Softening machine 1,500

1,500

(3) Splitting machines 550
(Hydraulic Engineering Co)

550 - see m³ Pochin 15
m³ Murally - 21.7.26
[25/30/29/26]

(4) Combing and carding machinery 2,450

Originally part of £3,000 for Splitting Machines.

(5) Patent fees 583

210 ^{5/6}

(6) Registration fees abroad 427

165 - (London)

(7) Weighing machine, Portree 150

150 ^{9/4}

(8) 2 months factory expenses 1 month

(9) 6 months experimental work:
Salary £100 p.m. 600
Travelling etc £40 p.m. 240

1,740
680

(10) Further period of experimental work. 1,514

(11) Contingencies 565

10,500

919 -
424
6,113 ^{7/6} less
72 ^{9/6} Bank Interest
6,041 ^{10/9}
87 ^{7/6} Balance held by M/C

Further expenditure 13/10/20/27 6041 10.9
F. L. C. B. Ltd 406 16 8
Mc Carr 345 19 9
on account 2.14.0 308 5 9
6,752 10 2

Balance from C.A. 16.12.26 617 10 2
13/10/27 617 10 2 6,746 10 2

6,129 Total issued from C.A.