

FOURTH
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIRST SESSION

1947-1948

MESSAGE No. 6

Honourable Members of Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform you that in replying to questions regarding the British Guiana Tuberculosis Society asked in the previous Council by the Honourable J.B. Singh, O.B.E., Government undertook to pursue the matter of providing for the Health Visitors employed by the Tuberculosis Society superannuation benefits to the same extent as similar employees of the Medical Department on the ground that the work of the Society is officially recognised as an adjunct to the Colony's public health machinery.

2. After investigation and with the advice of Executive Council a Committee was appointed in November, 1945, with the following terms of reference:-

"To consider the question of the organization
"and control of the Health Services at present pro-
"vided through the agency of the Society for the
"Prevention and Treatment of Tuberculosis and the
"Infant Welfare and Maternity League; and the status,
"qualifications, salaries and other conditions of
"service of the employees concerned".

3. The Committee reported in May, 1946, and its conclusions and recommendations are contained in paragraphs 30 and 31 of its report, a copy of which is attached as Sessional Paper No. 2/1948.

4. This report has been considered by me in Executive Council and the Council has advised approval in principle of the Committee's recommendations, with the exception of the recommendation that Government should consider initiating a contributory superannuation scheme for the benefit of subsidized midwives employed by the Infant Welfare and Maternity League - a proposal which was felt to be impracticable.

5. It will be noted that the Committee's proposals are designed to ensure some degree of uniformity in the qualifications, status and remuneration of health visitors engaged in the various branches of public health work; and that the Committee recommends that the best interests of the public health would be served if the health visitors at present in the employment of the Tuberculosis Society and the Infant Welfare and Maternity League were absorbed into Government Service and were then assigned duty with these bodies. It is proposed to take action to implement this recommendation by making the necessary provision for these new posts in the Estimates for the year 1949 with an appropriate consequential reduction in the annual subventions to the Society and the League.

6. With regard to salaries it is proposed that the salary revisions recommended by the Committee should become effective from the 1st of January, 1948, but that the employees concerned should be placed at the points in the new salary scales to which they would have attained on that date had these scales come into operation on the 1st of January, 1946. The immediate cost of implementing this proposal in respect of salaries and cost of living allowance is estimated at \$3,928 in the current year.

7. With regard to the provision of superannuation benefits for the employees concerned, consideration will be given, in consultation with the Georgetown Town Council, to the legislation and procedure necessary to implement the Committee's recommendations in this respect. The Town Council have, however, brought to the notice of Government three cases of Municipal Health Officers with previous service under the Infant Welfare and Maternity League who have recently retired, and the Town Council have requested that consideration be given to the grant by the Government of superannuation benefits in respect of their services under the League. It is accordingly proposed to make appropriate superannuation awards in these cases in advance of the enactment of the proposed enabling legislation.

8. I invite the Council to approve of the adoption of the Committee's recommendations subject to the reservation indicated in paragraph 4 above and of action being taken in accordance with the proposals as outlined in this Message.

C. C. WOOLLEY,

Governor.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

British Guiana.

11th March, 1948.