

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 18th May, 1945.

The Council met at 10 a.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir GORDON LETHEM, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT:

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon James Lethem, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. M. B. Laing, C.M.G., O.B.E. (Acting)

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. O. Pretheroe, M.C., K.C.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. E. F. McDavid, C.B.E.

The Hon. E. G. Woolford O.B.E. K.C., (New Amsterdam)

The Hon. F. J. Seaford, C.B.E. (Georgetown North).

The Hon. J. A. Luckhoo, K.C. (Nominated).

The Hon. C. V. Wight, (Western Essequibo)

The Hon. J. I. de Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. H. N. Critchlow (Nominated).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E., (Western Berbice).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).

The Hon. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys, K.C. (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. C. R. Jacob (North-Western District).

The Hon. A. G. King (Demerara River).

The Hon. J. W. Jackson, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. A. M. Edun (Nominated).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. C. P. Ferreira (Berbice River).

The Clerk read prayers.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

END OF EUROPEAN WAR.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable Members of Council—We are met today to record a very proper and important act in pursuance in this Honourable Council of the celebrations of the end of war in Europe. These, if I may say it, have been most fittingly and admirably carried through in Guiana, both in city and in country. We do so today, following the good custom of this country, with some formality

and solemnity and in the beauty and dignity of this distinguished Council Chamber.

Our immediate business is to take two motions standing in the name of the hon. the Deputy President of this Council and Member for New Amsterdam, and I may say here that I know of no one so admirably fitted to discharge this duty. It is not my place to stand between you and the mover, and so I forthwith upon the hon. Deputy President to move the motions.

Mr. WOOLFORD: Sir, I beg to move, the following resolutions:—

Be it resolved:

That this Council respectfully invites His Excellency the Governor to convey to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on behalf of the inhabitants of this Colony the renewed expressions of their continuous loyalty and devotion to the Throne, and their profound admiration of the sincere interest and gracious sympathy shown by His Majesty the King and his consort in the welfare of their subjects in the prosecution of the war against the common enemy.

Be it further resolved:

That this Council places on record its deep sense of gratitude to the Armed Forces, including the Home Guard, Merchant Navy, Civil Defence Units, Red Cross and kindred organisations, and to all workers in munition and other factories of the United Nations for their gallant, heroic and devoted services in bringing about the defeat of Germany and in freeing the enemy-occupied territories from the tyranny and aggression of German rule, and hereby tenders its profound and heartfelt sympathy with the families and relatives of those members of the Forces who have died in action since the commencement of the War, with the peoples of Great Britain, and those of the liberated countries in the terrible distress and privation suffered by them during the last five and a half years and more of warfare.

With your permission, Sir, I do not propose to speak to the first resolution, but I should like to call the attention of Members and the assembled company to some of the remarks made by the Prime

Minister, the Rt. Honourable Winston Churchill, on the occasion of a motion similar to that which I have just read. In the course of his remarks he said:

"We are fortunate indeed that an office of such extraordinary significance should be held by one who combines with the intense love of our country and of all his people a thorough comprehension of our parliamentary and democratic constitution. Well may it be said, and well was it said, that the prerogatives of the Crown have become privileges of the people. Sincere affection, quite apart from constitutional respect, has come to King George VI from all parts of the Empire and Commonwealth."

It is with those feelings and those sentiments that I commend the resolution to the favourable consideration of the Council.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: At this stage I beg to second the resolution moved by the hon. the Deputy President of the Council.

The PRESIDENT: Does any Member wish to address the Council?

Mr. EDUN: Sir, may it please Your Excellency, at the time when I was nominated a Member of this Honourable Council by His Majesty the King, I took an Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty. At the same time, Sir, in my soul I had taken also an oath of unswerving loyalty and devotion to Guiana, the country of my birth. At a period like this, I do not think I should allow this opportunity to pass when I should state what is prompting in my heart. Were I to choose between my allegiance to His Majesty the King and my devotion and unswerving loyalty to Guiana, my duty would be clear indeed. Were I a citizen of the United Kingdom, certainly I should wed myself for better, for worse, with the destiny of my Sovereign. But as an Indian and a Guianese, I feel that it is not expected of me to strain my loyalty, or for that matter exercise an equanimity, when I find that the

policy of my Sovereign, the policy of my Crown, clashes against the policy of my country, Guiana. For instance, I was made just recently to suffer one of the most humiliating experiences when I had to beg for permission to enter into Hyde Park, an extra-territorial zone given to the United States of America, and I want to examine at this auspicious moment what this war was fought for. Was it that my country should grant extra-territorial rights to the United States or to any other Allied nation? I think at this juncture I should make it as clear as possible that within five and fifteen minutes it could be possible to reduce the city, of Georgetown into shambles from that quarter.

But that is not what is actuating my mind. I think on this occasion when I am reaffirming my loyalty and my unswerving devotion to His Majesty the King I should say in the same spirit in which the Prime Minister has said it — with your permission I will just read what he said:

“It is the victors who must search their hearts in their glowing hours and be worthy of the nobility of the immense forces which they wield.”

And I plead with the United States Government to reconsider whether the time would not be soon at hand to exercise the same generosity to my country, Guiana, and hand us back the territory which we had given during the war. That is the spirit which should actuate every heart within the British Empire and within the periphery of the United State of America. That is the feeling that is actuating my mind. Were I to go further, I want to point out to you, sir, what was said on this question of collaboration between the two great nations — Great Britain and the United States of America—at one period. They said, within the

provisions of the Atlantic Charter their countries seek no aggrandisement, territorial or otherwise; they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned. That is what has been expressed within the provisions of the Atlantic Charter. Consequently a Guianese claiming unswerving devotion to my country, I feel at this moment to plead for more accord between these two great nations that has brought victory to the cause of freedom. I beg to support this motion with all my heart.

Mr. E. A. LUCKHOO: I should like to say a few words and I hope my remarks will touch the resolutions. I wish first of all to express my thanks to Almighty God for victory and our deliverance. His Majesty the King, by his shining example of loyalty and devotion to duty, has set before us, his subjects, in the discharge of his duty an example of utter unselfishness, and it is well that we in these parts should try to emulate it. It is fortunate that we live in a community where various native peoples live and work in harmony, and I wish to reaffirm my unswerving loyalty to the King, and I feel sure my countrymen in these parts would also wish me to say how pleased they are with the triumphant conclusion of the war in Europe. His Majesty the King has on all occasions shown his deep sympathy with all his loving subjects, and Her Majesty the Queen has also shown her sympathy with those who have been stricken in this war,—the widow and orphans and all those who have been wounded, and all those who need solace and comfort at this particular time.

As I understand it, Your Excellency, the resolution that has been moved by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam refer particularly to the

first part of the motion, and it is not my desire to prolong the sitting of this Council here today. But let me express the hope and prayer that His Majesty may long be spared in health to rule over an empire united not only by devoted and unswerving loyalty to the Throne but also by respectful esteem and affection for His Majesty's personality. His Majesty has by his wisdom and foresight maintained and deepened the loyalty and devotion and affection of all his subjects. I have very great pleasure in supporting the resolution.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: May I be permitted, Your Excellency, on behalf of the Nominated Members of this Legislature to say something on the first resolution that has been moved by the hon. the Deputy President of this Council. It is only 10 days ago that we saw evidence of the greatest loyalty that can be demonstrated by the people of this Colony when Your Excellency entered the precincts of this building and also when you left. It is clear that the loyalty so expressed on that occasion by the people of this community is second to none and, although removed by land and sea over 4,000 miles away from where His Majesty's home is, I feel sure, Sir, that that magnetic personality embodied in the King is the cause of this great loyalty which draws a whole empire to him in the hub of the universe. This loyalty to His Majesty is not something thrust upon him. It is something that has grown through the centuries and has taken deep root in all the races whom he is called upon to rule and govern, and it is because of his simple, Christianlike character that loyalty never before in the human race has grown so strong as it is at the present time. I feel, Sir, that on this occasion we can do nothing more than reaffirm that continued loyalty to him. His Majesty, if I may use the words of Shakespeare,

"is a beacon in that precious stone set in the silver sea."

The envy of less happier lands.

The blessed plot, the earth, the realm, that's England.

I have very great pleasure in supporting on behalf of the Nominated Members the resolution standing in the name of the hon. the Deputy President. (applause).

The PRESIDENT: I propose, with the agreement of Members, to proceed to ask the Deputy President to speak to the second part of the resolution.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I am, Sir, fully conscious of the responsibility that rests upon me, on behalf of the Members of this Council, and on behalf of the inhabitants of the Colony in general, in submitting this resolution to the Council. I am also very fully aware of my inability at the moment to describe in words something of the feelings and emotions that took possession of us when the announcement reached this Colony of the capitulation of the German forces. I wish I could do so, but whatever deficiencies there may be, or any omissions there may be in any remarks I may make today, I would ask you to be indulgent to me, for any failure on my part to give expression to what I know many of you, if you occupied the position I do today, would like to say to those who are present here.

No one present in this Council, Sir, no British subject in this Colony or in any part of His Majesty's Dominions, can help being grateful for the invaluable services rendered by the Armed Forces in the cause of humanity and of human freedom in the liberation from enslavement and bondage of millions of people in Germany, and the release from the most pitiless and merciless brutality, savagery, and butchery that this world

has ever witnessed. It is in recognition of those services, and as an act of gratitude, that it is incumbent on the inhabitants of this Colony, a civilized people, a component part of the British Empire, to place on record their appreciation of the self-sacrifice and the devotion to duty, of the heroism and bravery of those who, along with others in a common effort, have succeeded in bringing about so notable an accomplishment, so glorious a victory—perhaps the most momentous episode in the history of the British Empire.

This Colony, Sir, has witnessed with concern and anxiety the fortunes of the people in Great Britain. We knew how unprepared the British nation was for war in 1939. We admired the manner in which that nation was mobilized, and how as the result of the energy, the efficiency, and the enterprise of her people she sent across the Channel an Expeditionary Force with the intention of assisting those countries that had been attacked by Germany. We know that the effort failed, but we all recall the epic withdrawal from Dunkirk, the services rendered by the British Navy, and the effort made by that shattered force in rehabilitating itself and again making it possible for them to re-enter the Continent which they had been compelled to leave only a short time before.

There are lessons to be learnt from this war. Whatever may have been the fate of the British nation, whatever may have happened to other races if this war had not been won by the Allied Forces, there is no doubt in my mind of what would have been the fate of men of my persuasion, a descendant of the African race. I have no hesitation in saying that men like myself never would have been allowed the opportunity of addressing an audience like this, and I feel that at this moment it should appeal to that segment of

this population who comprise so large a proportion of the inhabitants of this Colony, to demonstrate their gratitude for this release by one effort, one effort only, and that is that they should with their capacity for work abandon their fanciful choice of occupation and place the endowment with which Nature has provided them—their physical strength—at the disposal of this community, and endeavour to assist in the maintenance and development of our principal industries on the coastlands and in the interior, and thus show their gratitude to the Armed Forces, and especially to Great Britain, by producing from our resources many of the products which Great Britain stands so much in need of today. I am speaking feelingly; I am speaking because it may be the last opportunity on which I can appeal to those of whom I speak. I would also like to think of the leaders of other races, especially the East Indian community, that it would be possible for them to make a similar appeal to their countrymen who, after all, are mostly natives of this Colony.

Sir, if, as I think, there are difficult times ahead, if, as I think, our struggle for existence is going to be dear, my own feeling is that whatever fortunes the future may have in store for this Colony, whatever vicissitudes may take place in the social, economic and ethnical development in the life of this community, whatever constitutional changes it may be our destiny to witness, let me express the hope that if a similar resolution to the one I am moving has to be submitted to a Legislative Assembly it would be one composed of men who are loyal and obedient to British rule, a synonym of liberty, freedom and justice to every citizen within its domain.

I have spoken, Sir, at too great length already, but before resuming

my seat I should like to take this opportunity to thank you, Sir, for the honour conferred on me of proposing this resolution, an honour which I know is shared and felt by every Member of this Council whose privilege it is to be present today. (applause).

Mr. SEAFORD: I rise to second the motion so ably moved by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam, and I do so with a knowledge of the responsibility which rests on us here as Members of this Council, and also with a full knowledge that what we say today comes from a sincere heart. We, Sir, are a very small unit in a very great Commonwealth of Nations, a Commonwealth of which we are indeed proud to be a member. That Commonwealth, I think, has been able to show the world how it is possible to live in the happiest of terms amongst themselves. May it be an example to the rest of the world in years to come.

We feel that we indeed owe a very great debt of gratitude to our Mother Country, to the Dominions, and to the Empire as a whole for they have done for this Colony years of stress. We owe a very great debt of gratitude to those nations which have fought alongside the Mother Country and the Dominions. We shall not easily forget the very great assistance rendered to us in our hour of need.

There are amongst us those who have had close relatives in the firing line. For those who have come back we can only thank Almighty God for his deliverance. To those others who have lost their nearest and dearest we may say most sincerely that they have our deepest sympathy. They have given of their best in this fight for freedom, and it will be recorded in years to come that they have given as much as anybody else. We can only express to them our very great thanks and very deep sympathy.

As I have said, Sir, we belong to this Commonwealth of Nations which has not for the first time in its history had to fight for its freedom. Our gratitude goes out to those fighting forces, the Army, Navy, Air Force, the munition workers and fire fighters—in fact to every individual who has lent a hand and brought the war to a successful conclusion.

We in this Colony have felt very little of the hardships that this war has brought to those very near the firing line. We indeed have been most fortunate here, and I think it is only fitting on that account that it should be brought home to the people of this Colony what has been done for them, and any word which is not altogether in line or in sympathy with that feeling that exists in this Colony should be rooted out, and should have no place in our annals or in any future history of this Colony. We are one and must remain as one—a member of that Commonwealth of Nations. We wish to remain there and we will remain there, and we will not tolerate for one moment in this Colony any disunity or anything else.

In conclusion, Sir, let me once again offer our most grateful thanks to all those who have done so much in bringing this war to a successful conclusion. (applause).

Mr. JACOB: Your Excellency, I should like to say a few words on this very historic occasion. We have met here today to pass two resolutions, one reaffirming our loyalty to His Majesty the King and his consort and the other recording our deep sense of gratitude to the Armed Forces, including the Home Guards, the Merchant Navy, the Civil Defence Units, the Red Cross and kindred organizations and all workers in munition and other factories of the United Nations for their gallant and heroic and devoted services in bring-

ing about the defeat of Germany. We have done that in this part of the world in a very laudable and excellent manner. As has been stated by the last speaker, some of our friends, some of our relatives, have laid down their lives for this victory. It is true we have gained victory over one section of the enemy, but another is there and we have to do all we can to gain victory over that section. Naturally our sympathies go out to all those who lost their loved ones in this fight, and they have our heartfelt sympathy. But there are others who have gone there and are still there and who will come back to this Colony to help in rebuilding what we have not done for quite a long time.

The hon. mover of the motion, who is the Deputy President of this Council and Elected Member for New Amsterdam, referred to the work that has to be done in the rebuilding and the improvement of this Colony. Naturally when our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, return to this country they will look forward to the same opportunity as they have had in fighting alongside their brothers of all races in the far-off places of Europe and other continents of the world. We hope that when these sailors, soldiers and airmen return to British Guiana they will find it a place worthy of all of us to live in.

I cannot help referring to the broadcast speech made by the Prime Minister on Sunday last when he made the following statement:

“We seek nothing for ourselves.”

Naturally the British Empire sought nothing for herself. The Prime Minister went on to say:

“We must labour that the world organization which the United Nations are creating at San Francisco does not become an idle name and does not

become a shield for the strong and mockery for the weak.”

Those are very great sentiments; expressed by one of the greatest men the world has seen for quite a long time. It is true that President Roosevelt is not among the living. He, too, was one of the greatest men in our day. These two men have led hundreds of millions of people and have promised them various things. The United States of America has promised four freedoms—freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. We hope, Sir, that we all—every sailor, soldier and airman—will enjoy these privileges in the days to come.

We have among the United Nations another gallant man—Marshal Stalin. He is still there. It is true there is not, to my mind, that same allegiance to Russia as we have in these parts to the United States of America, but it is to be hoped in the near future that the allegiance we here have with the United States of America will be equally strong with Russia. And so I say with these three partners working together the world in the future will be much better, safer and have equality for all peoples of the world. I must conclude by saying that we have to tender our profound and heartfelt sympathy with the relatives of those members of the Armed Forces who have died in action. Having fought side by side with all the nations of the world, we hope we shall be equal partners with the rest of the world in time of peace.

Mr. JACKSON: I should like to be intimately associated with the resolutions before this Council today. I have not the slightest desire to detract from the able address delivered by the hon. the Deputy President of this Council. He speak at all times with grace and dignity, and his addresses have always been forceful in this

Council. Today he spoke for the inhabitants of this Colony, and it is in this respect that I desire to be heard. We here, Sir, have abundant reasons for gratitude to those who have given their lives in this noble cause, to those who have paid the supreme sacrifice on our behalf, and certainly our sympathy must go out towards the relatives of those who have died in the struggle. But, Sir, I have a strong desire to make an appeal for greater sympathy towards the numbers of children who have been made orphans, who have been rendered homeless, and the numbers who have had to be evacuated in order to get away from the destructive bombs that destroyed so many homes and brought destruction all around—the children who have had to leave their homeland to go to Canada and elsewhere and have sponsors whom they knew not before. Perhaps those children will grow up without an intimate knowledge of the country from which they have gone. I think, Sir, that the children in this Colony of ours have been happy indeed even in these times of stress and strain. We have been amply looked after in this Colony, and the distress or difficulties that we have had to endure are only dots in the great ocean of difficulties endured by those who have been in the line of fire, and I do desire to state that our gratitude should be unbounded, our sympathy should be unlimited. While I do not wish us to think much of the horrors of the past and, perhaps, the horrors that may still come in the fight with Japan, I would like us to think of those dear children who have been taken from their homeland and surroundings and to pray God that in due course when the war is ended some of them at least may return to their homes and, perhaps, find some of their parents alive.

The resolution is a full one and bespeaks the feelings of the inhabitants of this Colony, and while we in

this Council think of our own sympathy and gratitude we know we speak with authority for the entire Colony. I do give my hearty support to the resolution before us, feeling sure that God in His wisdom and grace may make it smooth for those children who have been bereft of, or taken away from, their homes and that in due course they will receive His blessing, and His kindness and His support.

Mr. FERREIRA: Your Excellency, I would be lacking in my duty if I did not rise to add my quota of support to this motion that has been so ably moved by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam, the Deputy President of this Council. I would like to say, Sir, that in rising to speak my mind goes back to the days of 1939, to that particular day on which war broke out, a day when the Empire certainly did not want to fight but when we could no longer tolerate abuse, when we could no longer tolerate the brutality of the Totalitarian States. As a Guianese I speak with pride on the prompt response by the people of this Colony, the young men of this Colony who rushed to the recruiting centres to join the Armed Forces. As a Guianese I say they needed no fanfare to call them. They knew their duty and came forward. They came forward not to serve within the confines of this Colony—I speak with authority—but it was their desire to go overseas to fight for their King and country to whom they have been and will always be unswervingly loyal. One may have thought it enthusiasm, but when the dark days came, the dark days of 1940, when we were left alone and had only as our guiding light that bright spirit, the Prime Minister, to hold us up, still our men came forward. Some left this Colony on their own account and at their own expense. We are proud to think they have played their part. To those who have lost their dear and cherished

ones the sympathy of this Council goes out. They, as Guianese, have played their part and Guiana is proud of them.

I would like to pay tribute to our honoured neighbour and allied friends, the American Nation, for the great help that they gave in helping out this Colony, in rendering assistance and, I say without fear, in keeping us from starvation. We have granted them certain concessions, but they have given us a lot more. I have only one hope, one wish, one desire, and that is that the deep friendship and harmony in which we worked in the day of adversity will continue in the day to come.

Mr. F. A. LUCKHOO: I would like to add just a few words to what has been said by the previous speakers in support of this resolution. It is a source of pride and satisfaction that members of so many different races live in such close relationship and harmony, and that we all enjoy equal rights and privilege. It is well to observe that the peoples of this unconquerable Empire are not held but stand spontaneously together under the benign shade of that most wonderful emblem, the Union Jack.

I wish also to join in the expression of sympathy to those who have suffered loss, particularly those in this Colony. Their names, I feel sure, will be tenderly cherished by generations yet unborn. They have fought the fight of the United Nations, and also all those who have taken part so that we may live. They died so that we may live. I do feel sure that expression of opinion will find wholehearted support among all people and among all races. We are not unmindful of the fact of the generous gifts made from time to time by the Imperial Government in order to help us in our difficulties, and I wish at this stage to gracefully acknowledge that help given to this Colony. The young men of this Colony have all

answered the call of duty. A good many have left these shores in order to give their help in the cause of freedom and justice. They have made some contribution to the successful war effort, and I feel sure that we are all pleased with the historic stand they have taken in the different theatres of the war. Those who have perished in this war should be remembered by this community.

We have to be grateful to President Roosevelt of revered memory, who did his best in bringing about this tremendous and glorious achievement, and I feel sure that we all revere the memory of such a notable statesman. But what about our statesman, Mr. Churchill? He, too, has done his best. He is a good and great man and has made good contribution towards the war effort. But I think, Sir, that we in this Colony might assist those who are deserving of our sympathy and support in some tangible manner. There are several charitable institutions which will need our help, those who have been bereaved, those who have been made homeless, those who we now say are deserving of sympathy. To them all we must contribute in some tangible manner. We feel, Sir, the people of this Colony will not be lacking in any effort to bring about that result.

May I just close with a few lines from a famous poem by Laurence Binyon on those who have fallen:

"They shall not grow old,
As we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
Nor years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning
We will remember them."

The PRESIDENT: I propose to put both parts of the Resolution together, and in putting the question I should

just like to associate myself, in the most complete manner, with the words of the two resolutions, and with the sentiments expressed so admirably by Members of the Council. I did not propose to take a major personal part in these proceedings today, and I have thought it peculiarly fitting that, in view of the position which I myself occupy as the personal representative of His Majesty, the initiative and action should lie with the Unofficial Members of Council who are the representatives of the people of this Colony and speak in their name. I know no one more fitted to do so on an occasion such as the present, than the hon. the Deputy President.

I have spoken of the position of the Governor as the personal representative of His Majesty, and I have observed particularly the terms of the first Resolution addressed to His Majesty himself, and to the Queen. In paying that tribute we do so not to an empty formula but to the King's Grace, which is the living symbol not only of our unity in the commonwealth of differing peoples who acknowledge him, but also of that purpose of mind which looks forward to united effort in the future in the common interest of the world.

It is a special recompense to those who have filled the post of Governor in one of our Colonies, that he may remember in later years the real and personal link between the Sovereign and the Governor. I look back myself, and shall always look back with a very special sentiment to my first appointment to this position as Governor of a very unimportant Colony, now over eleven years ago, when I received a summons to attend His Majesty King George the Fifth at his country house at Sandringham, and there be Their Majesties' guest for two days. I remember also in the course of conversation, when answering certain questions of interest to His Majesty, and I referred to Colonial Office policy on some matter, that the King brusquely brushed aside my objections saying:

"Oh, I know they don't like it, but we won't worry about that," giving me a sense of direct dependence on the King, quite different from the ordinary sense of Whitehall channels of responsibility.

It is, however, of His Majesty King George the Sixth that we are speaking today, and I would record but this. I was summoned to an interview with His Majesty at Buckingham Palace in the great blitz year during the London conference on these U.S.A. bases in the Caribbean area, of which we have one here, and again in the same year when surrendering the office of Governor of the Leeward Islands to assume that of Guiana. On one of those occasions our conversation turned on the bombing of the Palace, in which, as His Majesty said, there were at that time few glass windows left intact, and from that to the residence of the Royal Family at that date at Windsor Castle, whence the King came daily to London. When I asked of conditions there His Majesty said: "Well, they have dropped about 900 bombs in Windsor Park," and looking at me with a whimsical smile, he said: "I wonder what they are aiming at?" It is that quiet courage that has maintained the Royal Family in the respect and affection of their people, and has also beyond all question done no little to buoy and support the the spirit of those throughout Britain who have had to stand up to those wearying years of personal danger.

Very many of those who have spoken or written in these days since the first announcement of Germany's surrender was made, have referred to the immense relief of heart which all have experienced. It is a relief which it is impossible to exaggerate; it is almost impossible to realize. I think no one who has lived through these ten years, and who has been at some time or other in a position to see anything of the trend of world events, will be able to forget that other aspect of things before the war as he runs over in his mind the march of events down-

ward, to the fearful abyss of these last five years.

If I may speak personally, since V-Day scene after scene has been passing before my mind's eye, and perhaps now today more clearly than ever in their relevance to the whole picture than they were at the time. There has been one name much in the news in these days. But I remember it almost as yesterday, when in the islands of the Indian Ocean ten years ago, getting a signal that a large German warship was arriving in a few days. The next day I received a signal that a British sloop from the China squadron would arrive the same day. Three times the dates were altered, first by the German, to be followed by a new signal from the British Admiral Commander-in-Chief, nor could I but guess at this game of hide and seek. The German ship came in carrying upwards of 1,000 men. The German Captain called on me and I had to put the delicate question to him that the British sloop would be with us in a few hours and would fire him a salute—would he return the compliment? He would.

Next morning at dawn in came the White Ensign on a tiny sloop of scarcely 1,000 tons, farther and farther into the bay, passing the much larger German warship, coming right in to the inside position and anchoring within a stone's throw of the end of our pier. As she swung to anchor off went the guns. In reply the much heavier metal of the German warship roared forth, and I thought of some of the famous two-ship fights of history.—the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*, shall we say, or here in Guiana of the *Hornet* and the *Peacock* off Mahaica, 130 years ago. I wonder how many of my hearers remember that episode in Guiana history. A curious commentary was that my daughter was then at school in a convent of French Nuns who, on hearing the cannons roar, fluttered up and down the convent galleries crying that "the war has

begun." Certainly the romantic scene might have deceived even more knowledgeable observers.

Two days later, the honour of the White Ensign satisfied, the British sloop left us, but the German warship stayed a fortnight. Great numbers of young cadets came ashore exploring the islands day after day with cameras and notebooks. One looks back on all that now with some astonishment. That Colony seemed of the most trivial importance in world affairs, yet it was once known as "the Malta" of the Indian Ocean." I can well imagine that the naval intelligence picked up in that fortnight was not acquired without serious purpose. The name of that Captain who was my guest is now well known to you in these last few days. It was Karl Doenitz. I can see his fanatic eye across my dining table even now.

A few months later I was standing on the bridge of a ship going into Aden late in the evening. As far as we could see there were some thirty or forty British warships gathered there. And doing what? Lying there in impotence while the criminal rape of Abyssinia went on on the other side of the Red Sea. International jealousies and international paralysis, perhaps still more important, inadequate supplies of ammunition, tied the hands of a police force that should have been permitted and have had the power to step in and prevent such crimes. We steamed up the Red Sea and through the Suez Canal watching the Italian transports come through freely, openly scorning the empty threats of Britain and the League of Nations. We landed at Genoa after being told to expect a hostile reception when we stepped ashore, which did not come; but looking back those ten years it is quite impossible to erase the humiliation that we had to stomach in that year.

I left Europe for the blessed and peaceful isles of the West Indies, free of those alarms and excursions, but was back in London

for the further humiliation of Munich week. I shall not easily forget, after the week's excitement and running around to get gas masks for my wife and myself, listening to every alarmist gossip, seeing the seemingly futile trenches being dug in the London parks, and the proposed evacuation of hospitals, then walking into a London club one afternoon to hear of Chamberlain's return and that pitiful and hysterical exhibition by Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament at Croydon and at Westminster. I felt it to be pitiful hysteria at that time strongly enough. Yet, as I read now the glib and easy censure of the Baldwins and the Chamberlains, I think again how unfair and stupid that in turn is. For who were the guilty people? Not the Baldwins and the Chamberlains, honest men, but 99.9 per cent. of the electorate and people of Britain, myself and you gentlemen here, had you been in England then. We were to blame, the whole mass of us, for those—as we see it now—weak-kneed and shameful policies which have so nearly brought us down. I said 99.9 per cent. There is one man excepted, and that is to his everlasting glory—Winston Churchill.

I have spoken of the scenes that come across one's mind looking back these ten years, and I could go on all day—the feverish months of 1939 in various Colonial Governors' offices, preparing the masses of papers which, in the form of Defence Regulations and so forth, have been ruling our lives so much. In this area the measures taken as to the U.S. Bases, the immense improvement of our own military forces, which I have been so glad to hear raised today, my own two months in Britain over the Bases Conference in the time of the blitz, the personal anxieties over one's own threatened home, the knowledge of the orders that existed for action should the Germans occupy our towns, the quite real anticipation in 1940 that Britain might have to continue the fight from other shores and carry on

the war from the Western Hemisphere, even the Caribbean.

There is one almighty thought that to me dominates all this—that never in our thoughts (I can speak of my own and the thoughts of many of those who have been my intimates in the Colonies or in Britain itself) has there been any iota of belief that there could be ultimate defeat. Rather, the knowledge that, however hard the blows, we could outlive them, and that we should win through some time or other by God's good grace. The memory of that long and lonely year of 1940-1941 cannot pass from the mind of any sensitive subject of King George. From the immense change which has come over this scene in these subsequent three years the final united action by so many great nations, the one grand and great thing emerges. There has been created the grandest opportunity that has faced mankind to hold in leash forever the brute beast of the bloody terror which mankind has created for himself, with modern armaments in the hands of madmen such as we have, but now seen at last put under.

Is this grand, and great chance to be thrown away? We have two years perhaps yet to decide. I am one of those who believe the thing can be done. Surely the nations, individually and collectively, have learnt their lesson. But it will demand every quality of reason and determined good will in the common interest of mankind that we can summon up, in no less degree than the effort of war itself has required. May it be God's will to grant all men such mind and heart and will.

Gentlemen, I proceed to put the Resolution in two parts standing in the name of the Deputy President. Will Members please stand while I read the Resolution.

The Resolution was carried unanimously, the Members standing.

The Council was thereafter adjourned *sine die*.