

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Thursday, 23rd March, 1933.*

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Governor, SIR EDWARD DENHAM, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., President, in the Chair.

## PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

The Hon. J. S. Dash, B.S.A., Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B. (Essequibo River).

Major the Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, Comptroller of Customs.

The Hon. Q. B. De Freitas, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

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

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North).

The Hon. A. V. Crane, LL.B. (Lond.) (Demerara River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

The Hon. A. E. Seeram (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. V. A. Pires (North Western District).

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

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. G. E. Anderson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

## MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd December, 1932, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

## MEMBERS SWORN.

The following Members took and subscribed to the Oath:—

Mr. F. Birkitt, Postmaster-General.

Mr. L. G. Crease, Director of Education (Acting).

Mr. W. S. Jones (Nominated Unofficial Member).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

### ALLOWANCES AND GRATUITIES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. C. Douglas-Jones): In the absence of the Colonial Treasurer through indisposition I am directed to communicate the following Message to the Council:—

### MESSAGE No. 9.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform the Council that the question of the existing provision for payment of compassionate annual allowances and gratuities to subordinate Government employees, not on the Fixed Establishment, under Resolution No. LXIII. of the 2nd of July, 1930, as amended by Resolution No. XXIII. of 10th February, 1931, and Resolution No. II. of 22nd October, 1930, respectively, has recently been engaging the attention of Government, as the application of the terms of the Resolutions discloses that in some cases employees become eligible for compassionate gratuities which are unduly high in relation to the rates of salary drawn, and in other cases retiring allowances exceeding wages on retirement may be claimed.

2. It is now recommended that the following provisions be made in place of those contained in the Resolutions referred to above:—

(1) Any person holding a non-pensionable office who retires in circumstances in which he might have been granted a pension if he had held a pensionable office may if he has not less than twenty years' continuous service in the Colony be granted an annual allowance not exceeding two-thirds of the pension that he might have been granted had he been employed in a pensionable office.

(2) Any person holding an office similar to the above who has completed ten years' continuous service may be granted on retirement a gratuity at the rate of two-thirds of one-twelfth (one-eighteenth) of a month's emoluments for each complete month of service ;

and that the existing provision whereby the Governor in Council may in his discretion grant to the next of kin of such officers such gratuity as he may think fit be retained.

3. These recommendations have received the approval of my Executive Council and I invite this Council to approve them accordingly.

EDWARD DENHAM,  
Governor.

3rd January, 1933.

#### CENTENARY EXHIBITIONS.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education) :  
I am the bearer of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor to the Council :—

#### MESSAGE No. 11.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform the Council that Government has had under consideration a proposal for the award by the Governor, as a fitting memorial, to commemorate the Centenary of the union of the Colony of Berbice with that of Demerara and Essequibo, of Centenary Exhibitions not to exceed three in number in each year commencing from 1932 to pupils who have shown special aptitude in particular subjects who have not succeeded in securing Government County Scholarships.

2. The Exhibitions will be tenable for a period of 5 years and will provide for free tuition at Queen's College or any educational institution providing secondary education to the satisfaction of the Director of Education, and which is prepared to afford to exhibitors, nominated by the Governor, free tuition during that period. They will terminate in all cases in the month of July of the year when the respective exhibitors cease by age to become eligible for the British Guiana Scholarships. In 1930 six boys reached scholarship standard for which no scholarships were available, and in some years the number has been even greater. No provision exists at present for the encouragement and assistance of such boys who have shown definite ability, and the awards from their number made annually will secure in some measure wider opportunity for the youth of the Colony to secure sound secondary education. Nominations will be made from boys specially deserving of recognition, and will not

be limited to those who have entered for County Scholarships. No additional expenditure will be involved as far as Government is concerned, as the exhibitors will be required to find all books, etc., necessary for their study and participation in the life of the school.

3. It is proposed that the awards should commence in respect of 1932 and I recommend, for your approval, the proposals contained above in which my Executive Council concurs.

EDWARD DENHAM,  
Governor.

22nd March, 1933.

#### PAPERS LAID.

The following documents were laid on the table :—

Report of Mr. A. S. Cooper, C.B., C.M.G., on the organisation and operation of the Transport and Harbours Department.

Despatch from the Secretary of State dated 20th December, 1932, regarding Resolution No. XXII. of the 6th of September, 1932, expressing the opinion of the Elected Members of the Council that a Commission be appointed to consider the amendment of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1928.

Despatch from the Secretary of State dated 3rd January, 1933, regarding Resolution No. XXV. of the 30th of September, 1932, on the subject of intercolonial trade between this Colony, the British West Indies and British Honduras.

Report of the Queen's College Curriculum and Scholarships Committee.

Report of the Georgetown Fire Brigade 1932.  
Annual Report of the British Guiana Militia, 1932.

Annual Report of the Imperial Forestry Institute, Oxford, 1930-31. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

Account of the administration of the Patour Fund for 1932.

Report on Friendly Societies for 1932.

Reports of the Registrar of Trade Unions (*The Attorney General*).

Divisional Reports, Department of Agriculture, for the year 1931 (*Professor Dash*).

#### GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

##### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council leave would be asked to introduce and have read the first time the following Bills :—

A Bill to make better provision for the maintenance and construction of Sea Defences (*The Colonial Secretary*).

A Bill to amend the Government Currency Notes Ordinance, Chapter 50, by amalgamating the Depreciation Fund with the Note Guarantee Fund, and to authorize the sale of certain securities and the payment of the proceeds into general revenue.

A Bill to appropriate the supplies granted in the last session of the Legislative Council.

A Bill to amend the Public Officers (Insurance) Ordinance, Chapter 201, by giving authority for the transfer of policies of Life Insurance or the payment of the proceeds thereof in certain cases to married officers who have retired on pension from the service of the Government.

A Bill to amend the Savings Bank Ordinance, Chapter 48, with respect to the amount that may be deposited in a financial year. (*The Colonial Secretary on behalf of Mr. Millard*).

A Bill to enable the Governor to issue Commissions of Enquiry with special powers.

A Bill to authorise the New Amsterdam Town Council to borrow money in order to redeem a loan and to amend the borrowing powers of the Council (*The Attorney-General*).

Notice was given that at a later stage it would be moved that Standing Order No. 11 (1) be suspended to enable the following Bill to be read the first time:—

A Bill further to amend the Tax Ordinance, Chapter 37 (*Mr. D'Andrade*).

#### ALLOWANCES AND GRATUITIES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (on behalf of Mr. MILLARD) gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to Governor's Message No. 9 of the 3rd of January, 1933, this Council approves of the following provisions for payment of compassionate allowances and gratuities to subordinate Government employees not on the Fixed Establishment:—

(1) Any person holding a non-pensionable office who retires in circumstances in which he might have been granted a pension if he had held a pensionable office may if he has not less than twenty years' continuous service in the Colony be granted an annual allowance not exceeding two-thirds of the pension that he might have been granted had he been employed in a pensionable office.

(2) Any person holding an office similar to the above who has completed ten years' and less than twenty years' continuous service may be granted on retirement a gratuity at the rate of two-thirds of one-twelfth (one-eighteenth) of a month's emoluments for each complete month of service.

(3) In case of the death of the employee the Governor in Council may in his discretion grant to the next-of-kin such gratuity as he may think fit.

THAT, Resolutions No. LXIII. of the 2nd of July, 1930, No. II. of the 22nd of October, 1930, and No. XXIII. of the 10th of February, 1931, are hereby rescinded.

#### CENTENARY EXHIBITIONS.

Mr. CREASE gave notice that at a later stage he would move the suspension of Standing Order No. 11 (1) to enable him to move the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to Governor's Message No. 11 of the 22nd of March, 1933, this Council

approves of the award by the Governor, as a fitting memorial to commemorate the Centenary of the union of the Colony of Barbice with that of Demerara and Essequibo, of Centenary Scholarships not to exceed three in number in each year commencing from 1932 to pupils who have shown special aptitude in particular subjects.

#### UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

##### PLEA FOR DEPENDENTS.

Mr. WOOLFORD gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS B. J. Murray served the Government of the Colony in different capacities at the Mental Hospital in the County of Barbice for a period of 26 years;

AND WHEREAS the said B. J. Murray became incapacitated during the course of his said employment and was given notice on the 6th January, 1932, that his said services would be terminated after a period of fourteen days therefrom;

AND WHEREAS the said B. J. Murray died on the 1st day of February, 1932, leaving a wife and three infant children entirely unprovided for;

AND WHEREAS the said dependents of the said B. J. Murray have not received from the Government either a gratuity or a compassionate allowance in return for the said services rendered by their said father:

*Be it Resolved*,—That this Council respectfully recommends that the Government make some provision for or contribution towards the dependents of the said B. J. Murray.

##### ADVERTISING THE COLONY.

Mr. DE AGUIAR gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT His Excellency the Governor be respectfully requested to have the sum of £500 provided on the Estimates for the current year, to be placed at the disposal of a Standing Committee composed of members of the Government, the Legislative Council, the Mayor and Town Council and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, to be appointed by the Governor, for the purpose of advertising in the most suitable manner the attractions of the Colony to tourists as well as to potential investors.

##### BARTICA-POTARO ROAD.

Mr. CANNON gave notice of the following questions:—

1. What sum has been spent to date on the construction of the Bartica-Potaro road?

2. From what source has this money been obtained? Is it a "dole," grant, loan or "loan-grant"?

3. What length of road has been completed and at what cost per mile?

4. When did the construction work begin?

5. When is it expected to end?

6. How many motor vehicles have been obtained for use on the road?

7. If they were a gift to the Colony, who was the donor? If not, from what source was the purchase money obtained?

8. Is it true that great difficulty has been experienced in keeping these vehicles in working order?

9. Is it true—

(a) That one (or more) has been out of commission for some time? If so, for how long?

(b) That one (or more) has been abandoned on the road, or left on the road or elsewhere in a state of disrepair?

10. What were the traffic receipts—

(a) From the opening of the road to December 31, 1932;

(b) From January 1, 1933, to date?

Specify passenger and freight receipts separately.

11. Has the erection of the steel bridge over the Potaro River presented any unforeseen difficulties?

12. Can the Government or the Director of Public Works guarantee that this bridge can be used with absolute safety by heavy traffic?

13. For what period was maintenance work required in 1932? What sum was spent under this head?

14. What is the estimate of expenditure on maintenance this year?

15. Is this estimate considered sufficient in the light of experience gained recently?

16. Is it true that a search party may be required to find the working party and to re-open the road for their ultimate return to Bartica?

#### PETITION.

Mr. CANNON laid on the table a petition from Charles R. Rodney, late Supernumerary Constable, Board of Agriculture, praying for assistance.

#### BILLS.

Standing Order No. 11 (1) having been suspended for that purpose, the following Bills were read the first time :—

A Bill to make better provision for the maintenance and construction of Sea Defences (*The Colonial Secretary*).

A Bill to enable the Governor to issue Commissions of Enquiry with special powers.

A Bill to authorise the New Amsterdam Town Council to borrow money in order to redeem a loan and to amend the borrowing powers of the Council (*The Attorney-General*).

A Bill to amend the Government Currency Notes Ordinance, Chapter 50, by amalgamating the Depreciation Fund with the Note Guarantee Fund and to authorize the sale of certain securities and the payment of the proceeds into general revenue.

A Bill to appropriate the supplies granted in the last session of the Legislative Council.

A Bill to amend the Public Officers (Insurance) Ordinance, Chapter 201, by giving

authority for the transfer of policies of Life Insurance or the payment of the proceeds thereof in certain cases to married officers who have retired on pension from the service of the Government.

A Bill to amend the Savings Bank Ordinance, Chapter 48, with respect to the amount that may be deposited in a financial year (*The Colonial Secretary on behalf of Mr. Millard*).

A Bill further to amend the Tax Ordinance, Chapter 37 (*Mr. D'Andrade*).

Notice was given that at the next or a subsequent meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bills be read the second time.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY.

##### VARIATION OF PROCEDURE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: With Your Excellency's permission I wish to make a statement with regard to a slight variation in the form in which the Order of the Day will be presented to the Council in future. Considerable inconvenience was caused at the last session by meeting here and finding that owing to the absence of hon. Members and other causes it was not possible to proceed with the business. The Council therefore met for only a few minutes and a great deal of inconvenience was caused to Members who had at some inconvenience to themselves attended the meetings. Hon. Members also know that Wednesday is Private Members' Day and that all business of which notice has been given by Unofficial Members is taken on that day. It is proposed that in future when notices are given hon. Members should select a day on which they are prepared to take their motions. The date would then be noted on the minute paper and on the Order of the Day will be seen the day on which the motion is set down to be taken, and if possible it will be taken on that day. Hon. Members will then have some idea when certain business is coming up and make arrangements accordingly. It is necessary that Government should regulate the business of the Council for each day, but as far as possible the actual order in which notice is given of the various business to be brought before the Council will be adhered to, so that hon. Members will have some indication of the day on which they desire to be present if they want to be in their seat during a certain debate or when a certain

matter is before the Council. The idea is to meet the convenience of hon. Members and avoid waste of time in meeting when there is no business to be done.

Mr. CANNON : As far as I am concerned it does not matter to me what is done, but I know of instances where the Order of the Day has reached me either a few minutes before my arrival or on my arrival here. That is the only difficulty I see with regard to what the Colonial Secretary has said.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I do not think any difficulty will arise. The Order of the Day is sent to each Member as soon as it is printed and is published in the Press before the meeting. We endeavour as far as possible to do that and the business is given to Members the day

before. There will be ample opportunity for Members to see the actual date given by another Member for the taking of his motion.

Mr. CANNON : I thank the Colonial Secretary for his statement but wish to tell him that the Order of the Day has reached me very frequently only a few minutes before my arrival here and does not go to the Press.

THE PRESIDENT : The object is to give further notice as far as possible, and if notice is given of any business by putting it on the Order Paper on the first day Members will then see what business is coming up later.

The Council adjourned until the following day at 11 o'clock.