

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 22nd January, 1936.

The Council met, His Excellency the Governor, SIR GEOFFRY A. S. NORTHCOTE, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

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

The Hon. the Attorney-General, (Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C.).

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

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, C.B.E., Director of Education.

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

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo (Eastern Berbice).

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

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

The Hon. J. Mullin, O.B.E. Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Georgetown North).

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

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

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

The Hon. J. A. Henderson, Surgeon-General.

The Hon. M. B. Laing, District Commissioner, East Coast Demerara District.

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. E. M. Walcott (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

The Hon. A. R. Crum Ewing (Essequibo River).

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

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

The Hon. J. W. Jackson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. A. Mackey (Nominated Unofficial Member).

DEATH OF KING GEORGE V.

BRITISH GUIANA'S GRIEF.

THE PRESIDENT addressed the Council as follows:—

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council, following the time-honoured practice of the Combined Court in the past, I have summoned the Legislature of the Colony at this time in order to enable its Members to give expression to their grief at the death of the Sovereign, to their sympathy with the Queen Mother and her Family and to their loyalty to his Successor, whose accession to the Throne has just been proclaimed.

I will not hold you long to-day with praises of our late deeply-loved King, fully worthy though that theme is. It is not much more than the space of half a year since in this Council, as in every such body throughout the British Empire, those praises were spoken in every accent of love and loyalty, gratitude and joy. They are still fresh in our minds: for me to repeat them at length to-day would serve but little purpose. But this I will say: in whatever aspect we may recall that Gracious King, King George the Fifth, whether as a monarch or as a man,

whether in his public or his private life, we see one who set before himself a high ideal and who strove, and strove successfully, to attain to it. As King he sought not merely to keep faithfully within the terms and the spirit of the Constitution but also to help mould that Constitution so as to meet the needs of the Empire that was developing so fast beneath his rule. As Head of a Nation at War, and of a Nation struggling for life in a Peace almost as dire as War, the late King shewed a steadfastness and a leadership to which his people largely owe their salvation. In every walk of life he taught his people the great lesson of Service, the thought, indeed, which inspired his every act.

I will not dilate upon the remainder of the motion that will come before you. The overwhelming loss which has befallen that noble hearted lady, Queen Mary, and the Royal Family, is a matter almost too sacred for public speech; is a sorrow best assuaged by awareness of the silent sympathy which is flowing towards them from every heart in the Empire. Nor is there need of words to make known the fullness and the constancy of our loyalty to His Majesty King Edward VIII. and to his Throne.

Honourable Members I commend to you the motion which the Honourable Gentleman, the Colonial Secretary, is about to move.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Waddington)—Sir, I have the honour to move:—

THAT we, the Members of this Council in Special Session assembled, record our profound grief at the loss sustained by the British Empire in the death of the late King, His Majesty's Father: furthermore that we, submitting our humble duty to His Majesty King Edward the Eighth, beg leave to proffer to Him, the Queen Mother and to all the Members of the Royal Family our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement: and finally that we respectfully tender a full assurance of our constant allegiance and loyal devotion to His Majesty.

We, in this Colony, share to-day with our fellow citizens throughout the Empire a profound sorrow at the loss of a King who by his life, his words and his deeds had endeared himself to all his people. We look back at the twenty-six years of his reign and we find a period unparalleled in modern history: a time when the whole

world was in commotion, when the wisdom, courage and physical strength of those who guided the Empire had been taxed to the utmost. Many statesmen have played their part for a time: King George alone bore the burden throughout his long reign and, as we look back, we marvel at the devotion to duty and the abundant vitality which enabled him to persevere and in so doing to preserve our glorious heritage.

We all know the diligence and devotion with which he carried out his duties as a Constitutional Monarch, and we know also that within the sphere of those duties, he gave the Nation the benefit of his great wisdom and experience; truthfully can we say that in many a crisis he shaped our destiny aright. In some indefinable way his personality was revealed to all his people and we became conscious, as if from some personal knowledge, of the warmth of the ties which bound his family circle, of his unflinching kindness and his abiding concern for the welfare of all his subjects.

We were deeply touched when we heard from the Prime Minister's speech last night that some of King George's last words were to inquire whether all was well with the Empire. No Sovereign has gained a greater personal devotion from all his people than the King whom we mourn to-day.

In this hour of their grief our thoughts go out to His Majesty and to all members of the Royal House, and most of all we think of the Queen Mother and tender to her our warm and deep sympathy. Finally, we offer to His Majesty the full measure of our loyalty on the occasion of his Accession and pray that he may be spared long to reign over us in peace and prosperity.

Mr. DIAS: Sir, the duty has fallen on me to second this motion, which I do with a measure of grief which is beyond me to explain. Perhaps I am right in stating that of the Unofficial Members of this Council I am the only one who had the honour of being received by His Majesty on the occasion of the visit to England of the first West Indian Conference. We had scarcely arrived in England when by Royal Command we had to attend at Buckingham Palace where we were presented to and received by His Majesty.

I have a most vivid recollection of the warmth of the greeting he extended to us and his enquiries about this Colony and of its people. He reminded us of his visit many years previously and of his recollections of what he had seen, and when informed in answer to a question of his that the Colony was not at that period of time in a state of prosperity, he expressed great regret and commanded us to deliver a message on our return here that he wished and he hoped for the prosperity of the Colony and the happiness of its people.

Sir, records show, and it is abundantly proved throughout the world, that King George V. was a devoted husband and a loving father, as well as a true friend of his people about whose welfare and happiness he was always deeply concerned. It was for all these sterling qualities that His Majesty was beloved by his subjects, who in further recognition of them now and always will mourn his loss to the Empire. The people of this Colony have given evidence of the grief they have felt and are still experiencing as the result of this terrible calamity. The gloom which fell over this city yesterday will not be easily forgotten and we will always cherish for the late King memories of his unselfish service and devotion to the Empire.

I join also in the motion to extend to our new King the loyalty of the inhabitants of this Colony. His Majesty is no stranger to this place, for in this very hall in the year 1920 he received representatives of the people of this Colony and subsequently mixed and moved about them with that friendship and with the kindness which he undoubtedly inherited from his father. No place in the Empire will be found to be more loyal to the Throne than British Guiana, and one thing Your Excellency may be certain of during your regime and the regime of your successors, the people of this Colony will always show that loyalty."

Mr. LUCKHOO: Sir, the Elected Members of this Council join in the

expression of sympathy and deeply deplore the death of His Majesty, the late King of revered memory, and they beg to tender to the new King, the Queen Mother and the other members of the Royal Family their sincerest sympathy.

The news of the death of the King came as a shock to the community, and on all sides one noted expressions of deep sympathy. There were some very touching scenes. The people have been very much devoted to His Majesty and there were outward expressions of their sympathy and loyalty. His Majesty the King has set before us, his subjects, a shining example of devotion to duty and of utter unselfishness in its discharge. His Majesty has always governed us constitutionally. Were we not fortunate in the personality of His Majesty King Edward VII. and of the members of the Royal Family? What was the secret of their success? It was that they were not only royal but also so human, and by their sterling qualities endeared themselves to their subjects, from the highest to the lowest in the land.

To-day men of all classes, of all races, of all professions, support the British Empire, which stands immovable on the twin bases of justice and liberty. Our present King is the worthy son of a worthy father. God bless him in his reign. We hope that His Majesty's reign may be long, happy and glorious, and that his efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of his subjects. The Electives therefore wish to express their profound grief of this great loss; and may I respectfully request Your Excellency to forward the Resolution to the proper quarter to show that in these distant parts of the Empire we are still true to the Throne and we have a proper sense of duty and loyalty to the King.

Motion put, and agreed to, all Members standing.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.