

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the Fourth Legislative
Council of the Colony of British Guiana at its
Fourth Session, 1951, held at the Public Buildings,
Georgetown, Demerara, on

THURSDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 1951,

AT 2 P.M.

PRESENT:

The Deputy President, the Honourable C.V. Wight, C.B.E.
in the Chair)
The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Mr. J. Gutch, O.B.E.
The Honourable the Acting Attorney General, Mr. A.C. Brazao
The Honourable the Acting Financial Secretary and
Treasurer, Mr. W. O. Fraser
The Honourable Dr. J.B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo)
" " Dr. J.A. Nicholson (Georgetown North)
" " T. Lee (Essequibo River)
" " V. Roth, O.B.E. (Nominated)
" " C.P. Ferreira (Berbice River)
" " T.T. Thompson (Nominated)
" " J.P. Coghlan (Demerara River)
" " D.P. Debidin (Eastern Demerara)
" " J. Fernandes (Georgetown Central)
" " Dr. G.M. Gonsalves (Eastern Berbice)
" " W.O.R. Kendall (New Amsterdam)
" " W.A. Phang (North Western District)
" " J. Carter (Georgetown South)
" " L.A. Luckhoo (Nominated)
" " R.B. Gajraj (Nominated)
" " W.H. Macnie, M.G., O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings held on Wednesday, the
18th of July, and Friday, the 19th of October, 1951,
were taken as read and confirmed.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Colonial Secretary laid on the table the following
documents:-

- ✓ (a) The Report on the Forest Department for the
year 1950.
(M.P. 46/4 IV).
- ✓ (b) The Report on the Mahaicony/Abary Rice Develop-
ment Scheme for the year 1949.
(M.P. 259/1/2/4/5/2/1 IV).
- ✓ (c) The Report of the Central Housing and Planning
Authority for the year 1950.
(M.P. 342/4).
- (d) The Report on the Medical Department for the
year 1950.
(M.P. 71/4 VIII).

- ✓ (e) The Report on the Customs Department for the year 1950.
(M.P. 27/4 VI).
- ✓ (f) The Report of the Rum Curing and Bottling Committee.
(M.P. C. 27/22/2).
- ✓ (g) The Report of the Registrar General for the year 1950.
(M.P. 11/4 IV).
- ✓ (h) The Report of the Controller of Civil Aviation for the year 1950.
(M.P. 9/30/18/10).
- ✓ (i) Memorandum on the Comprehensive Water Control Schemes envisaged by Mr. F.H. Hutchinson, C.I.E., M.I.C.E., Consulting Engineer.
(M.P. C. 33/55).
- ✓ (j) The First Annual Report of the British Guiana Society for the Blind
(M.P. 41/22).
- (k) The Report on the British Guiana Boy Scouts Association for the year ended 30th June, 1951.
(M.P. 41/22).
- (l) The Report of the British Guiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (m) The Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the British Guiana Legion for the year ended 30th September, 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (n) The Report of the Young Men's Christian Association of Georgetown for the year 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (o) The Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Young Women's Christian Association of Georgetown for the year 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (p) The Report on the Belfiel Girls' School, Cove and John for the year 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (q) The Report on the British Guiana Girl Guide Branch Association for the year ended 30th September, 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (r) The Annual Report on St. Ann's Orphanage for the the year 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- ✓ (s) The Annual Returns of Receipts and Expenditure of Plaisance Orphanage for the year ended 30th June, 1951.
(M.P. 41/22).

- ✓ (t) The Report of the Hindu Religious Society for the year ended 31st May, 1951.
(M.P. 41/22).
- (u) The Report on the African Development Association for 1950.
(M.P. 41/22).
- (v) The draft Crown Lands (Amendment) Regulations, 1951.
(M.P. 58/13/7).
- ✓ (w) The Governor in Council's decision on the petition tabled by the Honourable C.V. Wight, C.B.E., on behalf of Mr. Hercules George.
(M.P. 102/11/2/115).
- ✓ (x) The Report of the Directors of the New Widows' and Orphans' Fund for the year 1950.
(M.P. 134/1 II).
- ✓ (y) The Report of the Department of Lands and Mines for 1950.
(M.P. 58/4 V).

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer laid on the table the following document:-

- ✓ Minutes of the Meetings of Finance Committee of the Legislative Council held on 26th July, 23rd August and 27th September, 1951.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

✓ The Colonial Secretary gave notice of the following motion:-

That, this Council approves the draft Crown Lands (Amendment) Regulations, 1951, which have been laid.
(M.P. 58/13/7).

The Attorney General gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bills; and of his intention to move the suspension of Standing Rules and Orders at the next or a subsequent meeting of Council to proceed with the Bills at (i) and (ii):-

- (i) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE CUSTOMS DUTIES ORDINANCE, 1935.
(M.P. 27/15/10 II).
- (ii) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL OF MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTY BY ALIENS.
(M.P. S. 82/5 II).
- (iii) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN WORKERS.
(M.P. 56/53 II).
- (iv) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE TEACHERS PENSIONS ORDINANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE RATE OF PENSION AND THE TEACHERS PENSION REGISTER.
(M.P. 35/14/24/1 III).

- (v) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE CONSTABULARY ORDINANCE.
(M.P. 186/6 II).
- (vi) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE IMPORTATION, STORAGE, DISTRIBUTION, SALE AND USE OF ANTIBIOTIC .
(M.P. 71/3/10).
- (vii) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) ORDINANCE.
(M.P. 85/5).
- (viii) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE DOGS ORDINANCE, 1950.
(M.P. 60/3/3 III).

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES

✓ Mr. Lee gave notice of the following motion:-

WHEREAS Plantation Ridge, Wakenaam, was declared a Sea Defence area and the owners were compelled under the Sea Defences Ordinance, Chapter 118, to pay sea defence rates and did pay such rates for several years;

AND WHEREAS the said Defence rates were declared a Colonial question and the construction, repairs and maintenance of sea defence areas were made chargeable to general revenue;

AND WHEREAS the said Plantation Ridge, Wakenaam, is being inundated by the tides through the non-repairs of the koker which is part and parcel of the Sea Defences;

AND WHEREAS the said koker is further part and parcel of the public road of the island and as such Government is liable to maintain the said public road;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Honourable Council recommend to Government the immediate repairs of the said koker and sea defence of the said frontal area of said Plantation Ridge, Wakenaam, in order to protect the owners and tenants of the said lands.

Mr. Debidin gave notice of the following motions:-

- (a) WHEREAS the Mahaicony District is one of the largest, and most important rural districts in the Colony embracing as it does the Mahaicony Abary Rice Expansion Scheme, the large rice growing and cattle areas on both banks of the Mahaicony Creek with a population spreading out to a distance of about thirty miles on both banks of the Mahaicony River, also containing the three local authorities of Eastern Mahaicony which extends from Plantation Park to the Abary River, the Central Mahaicony Local Authority, and Perth Village, and also embracing populated areas up to as far west as Plantations DeKenderen and Fairfield;

AND WHEREAS Mahaicony is approximately midway between Georgetown and New Amsterdam, that is, approximately forty miles from the nearest public hospital;

AND WHEREAS there is a Government Medical Officer stationed at Central Mahaicony, but in very urgent cases most often necessitating an operation persons injured seriously in accidents, or taken seriously ill otherwise will have to be sent to Georgetown for an operation, whereas immediate attention and facilities for hospitalising such cases for a few days might save many a life;

AND WHEREAS also there is no mortuary in this district;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council recommend to Government -

- (a) the establishment of a cottage hospital at Central Mahaicony; and
- (b) the erection of a mortuary at Central Mahaicony.

- (b) WHEREAS it is desirable that a contributory pension scheme be established for the whole Colony with universal application wherever there is the relationship of employer and employee;

AND WHEREAS the Colony is in need of money to finance certain development schemes which would result in a greater measure of prosperity to the Colony generally, e.g., making available through Loan Banks or otherwise more money to more peasant farmers for more production of rice, cattle, milk, provision, etc., and for erection of houses;

AND WHEREAS if the aforesaid Colony-wide pension scheme be made a Government controlled undertaking, there would be a considerable revolving sum in the hands of Government which can be used as aforesaid;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council, accepting the principle of the establishment of a colony-wide pension scheme, recommend to Government the appointment of a select committee of this Council to consider and report on -

- (a) the establishment and application of a colony-wide pension scheme;
- (b) the expediency and manner of Government controlling the same; and
- (c) the purpose or purposes to which funds in hand of the Government may be devoted in the ~~inter~~est of the development of the Colony.

(c) WHEREAS in this Colony there is no law and procedure laid down for the adoption of children and many instances have arisen and will always arise where a person may wish to adopt a child;

AND WHEREAS such a person adopting a child today would merely be putting himself or herself in loco parentis towards such child with all legal rights, liabilities and duties of parent towards the child still vested in the true parent;

AND WHEREAS such questions as an adopted child inheriting as of right under the Estate of an adopted parent and so forth can only be provided for by legislation such as obtains in England;

AND WHEREAS similar legislation as exists in England for the adoption of children in this Colony is overdue;

✓ BE IT RESOLVED that this Council request Government to enact an Ordinance to contain similar provisions as the Adoption of Children Act, 1926, (16 and 17 George V Chapter 29) and that a Select Committee be appointed for the purpose of settling the provisions of the said Act or otherwise which should be contained in such Ordinance.

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(d) WHEREAS the Village of Mahaica-Helena-Supply has always been and is still one of the Colony's largest villages, and is central to a very large number of other populated areas namely La Bonne Mere, Cane Grove, Mahaica Creek, Chelsea Village, Vygeval, DeHoop, Manilla, Strangroen, Content, Columbia, Glazier's Lust, Rebecca's Rust, Broek-en-water-Land, Lancaster, Unity, etc., etc.;

AND WHEREAS since the closing down of the Sugar Estates at Plantation Cane Grove the hospital at Cane Grove has been closed;

AND WHEREAS there is no mortuary in the aforesaid districts, and the nearest mortuary used in respect of any cases from the aforesaid districts is at Plantation Enmore, East Coast, Demerara;

AND WHEREAS this results in the greatest hardship and inconvenience to those in the aforesaid districts;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council recommend to Government that steps be taken immediately for the erection of a proper mortuary at some convenient place at Mahaica, East Coast, Demerara.

(e) WHEREAS the Village of Mahaica-Helena-Supply has always been and is still one of the Colony's largest villages, and is central to a very large number of other populated areas namely La Bonne Mere, Cane Grove, Mahaica Creek, Chelsea Village, Vygeval, DeHoop, Manilla, Strangroen, Content, Columbia, Glazier's Lust, Rebecca's Rust, Brooken-Water-Land, Lancaster, Unity, etc., etc.;

AND WHEREAS these districts have been served before, when the population had not been as great, by a medical officer residing at Mahaica;

AND WHEREAS since the closing down of the sugar estate at Plantation Cane Grove the hospital at Cane Grove has been closed;

AND WHEREAS the above districts are served by a Government Medical Officer residing at Belfield, East Coast, Demerara, about ten miles distant from Mahaica, and in the case of some of the abovementioned districts about twenty miles distant;

AND WHEREAS the sick, injured, maternity cases, etc., suffer the greatest inconvenience one can imagine to obtain quick and adequate medical attention, relief and treatment, and having regard to the growing importance of the growing population of the area covered by the above districts -

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council recommend that Government take steps -

- (a) to establish a cottage hospital in the Mahaica Village aforesaid;
- (b) provide for a Government Medical Officer to be resident at Mahaica; and
- (c) that pending the establishment of the Cottage Hospital aforesaid a Government dispensary with full first-aid facilities, and a whole-time Sick Nurse and Dispenser be established immediately at Mahaica.

(f) WHEREAS the rural districts of the Colony, and particularly the river districts and other remote areas are very inadequately served by qualified midwives;

AND WHEREAS in a good many of these areas the residents have to depend upon unqualified persons for midwifery attention;

AND WHEREAS in order to keep down the Colony's expenditure, and at the same time provide a more adequate service throughout the Colony, it is very desirable that a scheme be immediately inaugurated whereby young women with permanent residence in the very areas to be served may be given a course of training in midwifery, and be registered as midwives;

AND WHEREAS this could be arranged at no great expenditure by the Medical Department of the Colony;

BE IT RESOLVED that his Honourable Council recommend to Government the very early establishment of facilities for the training of a sufficient number of women drawn from the rural areas of the Colony, particularly of the remote districts, a course of midwifery, practical and theoretical with a view to their being registered as midwives;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council recommend the appointment of a Select Committee to consider all the details involved by the aforesaid recommendation, and report thereon to this Honourable Council as early as possible.

- (g) WHEREAS farmers throughout the Colony have been suffering severe set-backs from time to time from droughts, floods, and to a smaller degree from pests and other causes;

AND WHEREAS with the high cost of living and the very small scope for employment of the increasing population, the population in the main will have to depend more and more upon the land for a living;

AND WHEREAS recent floodings have shown how seriously the population can be affected;

BE IT RESOLVED that his Honourable Council recommend to Government the establishment of a Government controlled insurance for farmers in the Colony against loss of cattle and crops from floods, droughts and other causes and that a Committee be appointed by His Excellency the Governor to go into the matter and report thereon.

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- (h) WHEREAS the East Demerara Water Conservancy of an area of 221 square miles releases its water in the wet seasons through four sluices and sometimes through cuts made in the dams exclusively into the Mahaica River, and this volume of thousands of millions of cubic feet of water released per day is far in excess of what the river can discharge per day, and would inevitably cause abnormal floodings of the lands not only on either bank of the Mahaica River, but also of lands in the Mahaicony River districts;

AND WHEREAS there has been a most disastrous flooding in the early part of the year 1950, affecting the above areas which was aggravated by the water from the East Demerara Water Conservancy in so far as these areas are concerned resulting in serious destruction of crops and other losses;

AND WHEREAS more water is being conserved in the Conservancy with a greater threat to the conservancy

dams during rainy weather, and there is more frequent floodings of the above areas experienced as a result of the necessity for letting out the excess water into the Mahica River;

AND WHEREAS it is now beyond the point of exasperation on the part of the residents in their recurrent sufferings;

AND WHEREAS the Consulting Engineer of the Colony has expressed the opinion that it is not an engineering impossibility to drain all excess water from the Conservancy in wet seasons through the Demerara River, and he feels it is work to be done whether now or in the future;

AND WHEREAS this work is an urgent and immediate necessity;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Legislative Council recommend to Government that steps be taken very soon to build the necessary outlet to the Demerara River in order to drain all excess water from the East Demerara Water Conservancy in wet seasons through the Demerara River instead of through the Mahica River.

✓ Mr. Fernandes gave notice of the following motion:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this Council recommend to Government that a subsidy be granted to the St. Stanislaus College.

✓ NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. Debidin gave notice of the following questions:-

1. What is the total quantity of (a) crude coconut oil (b) refined oil exported from the Colony during the year 1950?
2. To what countries were the aforesaid oils so exported, giving the quantity to each country, and the prices paid for each kind of oil by each country?
3. Who were the consignors and/or owners of the aforesaid oils referred to in question No. 1?
4. What quantities of (a) crude coconut oil (b) refined oil each consignor and/or owner shipped from the Colony in the aforesaid year 1950?
5. What amounts each owner of the aforesaid oils received in respect of such shipments?
6. What revenue was gained by the Colony from the exportation of the aforesaid oils?

7. Who or what authority was responsible for, or gave the sanction for such exportations of crude coconut oil and refined oil in 1950?
8. What was the total annual production of coconuts in the Colony for the last five years?
9. What was the total annual production of (a) crude coconut oil (b) refined oil over the said period of five years?
10. What was the total number of drums which were available for the storage of coconut oil (crude and refined) for each of the years between 1945 to 1950, and at the present time?
11. Has Government made any effort to increase the number of drums for such storage during the year 1950, and during this year? If so, what is the nature of the effort?
12. What is the personnel of the Committee presently appointed to report on the coconut oil industry of which the Director of Agriculture is Chairman?
13. What is the qualification and/or connection with the coconut industry of each member of such Committee?
14. What is the quantity of copra meal produced in each of the last five years?
15. To whom was copra meal sold and distributed in any of the past five years for which this information may be obtained from a Government Department?
16. Those who received in any one year less than one ton may be grouped under Miscellaneous. In particular what quantities of copra meal were sold to -
 - (a) Booker Bros. M Connell & Co. Ltd.
 - (b) Gladys Hicken & Co. Ltd.
 - (c) Sugar Estates
 - (d) Other concerns

during the last five years and up to the present time?

FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

Referring to his recent visit to the United Kingdom as one of the Colony's delegates to the Festival of Britain, Mr. Kendall thanked Members of Council for having selected him and requested that an expression of his appreciation and thanks should be conveyed to His Majesty's Government for the facilities afforded him during his stay in the United Kingdom and also to the British Council for arranging a visit to tanneries and leather factories in Northampton.

Mr. Thompson associated himself with Mr. Kendall's remarks.

ADJOURNMENT Deputy

The resident adjourned Council to 2 p.m.
on the following day, Friday, the 26th of October,
1951.

Confidential,

C. C. Hoare
President.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
Public Buildings,
British Guiana.
26th October, 1951.