

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THIRD SESSION

1956 - 1957

MINUTES of the Proceedings of a meeting of the Legislative Council of the Colony of British Guiana under the British Guiana (Constitution) (Temporary Provisions) Order in Council, 1953, held in the Chamber of the Legislature at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

AT 2.00 P.M.

on

THURSDAY, 16TH MAY, 1957.

PRESENT:

His Honour the Speaker, Sir Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C.

Ex-Officio Members.

The Honourable the Chief Secretary, Mr. M.S. Porcher (Ag.)
The Honourable the Attorney General, Mr. A.M.I. Austin.

Nominated Members of Executive Council.

The Honourable W.O.R. Kendall
(Member for Communications and Works).
The Honourable G.A.C. Farnum, O.B.E.
(Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and
Co-operative Development).
The Honourable R.C. Tello.

Nominated Unofficials.

Mr. C.A. Carter
Mr. H. Rahaman
Miss Gertie H. Collins
Mrs. Esther E. Dey
Dr. H.A. Fraser
Mr. Sugrim Singh.
Mr. W.T. Lord, I.S.O.

Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. I. Drum Ewing;
Assistant Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. E.V. Viapree;

Absent.

The Honourable the Financial Secretary, Mr. W.P. D'Andrade (Ag.)
- on leave.
The Honourable Sir Frank McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E. - on leave.
The Honourable P.A. Cummings - on leave.
The Honourable R.B. Gajraj - on leave.
Mr. J.I. Ramphal - on leave.
Mr. T. Lee - on leave.
Mr. W.A. Phang - on leave.
Mr. L.A. Lucknoo, Q.C. - on leave.
Mr. E.F. Correia - on leave.
Rev. D.C.J. Bobb - on leave.
Mr. R.B. Jailal - on leave.

The Speaker read prayers.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, the 8th of May, 1957, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTSLeave

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -

- (i) The Hon. Financial Secretary (Ag.) - from 9th to 16th May - out of the Colony on official business;
- (ii) The Hon. R.C. Tello - from 18th to 24th May to attend the Caribbean Trade Union Meeting in Trinidad;
- (iii) Mr. J.I. Ramphal - from that day's meeting;
- (iv) Mr. L.A. Luckhoo - on 16th and 17th May;
- (v) Rev. D.C.J. Bobb - from 15th to 31st May to attend a Church Conference in Puerto Rico;
- (vi) Mr. E.F. Correia - on 16th and 17th May.

PAPERS LAID

- (i) By the Chief Secretary:
Annual Report of the Georgetown and New Amsterdam Fire and Ambulance Services for the year 1956.
No. 42/4 II)(Circulated).
- (ii) By the Chief Secretary on behalf of the Financial Secretary:
 - (a) Minutes of Meetings of Finance Committee held on 14th February and 28th March, 1957.
 - (b) Schedules of Supplementary Estimates for the months of January and March, 1957.
FSG. 4/57)(Circulated).
 - (c) Schedules of Supplementary Estimates (Development) for the months of January and March, 1957.
(FSG. 4/57)(Circulated).
- (iii) By the Attorney General on behalf of the Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines:
Financial Statements of the Government Produce Depot for the year ended 31st December, 1955, together with the Director of Audit's certificate and report thereon.
(AGR. 2/120/2 III).

- (iv) By the Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development:

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Local Government for the year 1956.

(L.G. 30/1 V)(Circulated).

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Motions

The Chief Secretary, on behalf of the Financial Secretary, gave notice of the following motions:

- (a) BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates for the months of January and March, 1957, totalling \$52,447.63 and \$223,790.00, respectively, which have been laid on the table.

- (b) BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates (Development) for the months of January and March, 1957, totalling \$384,764.00 and \$371,526.00, respectively, which have been laid on the table.

OTHER NOTICES

Motion

Mr. Luckhoo gave notice of the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Honourable Council welcomes the announcement made in Sessional Paper No. 10 /1957 and requests that an expression of its commendation be conveyed to the representatives of the North West Guiana Mining Company, Limited.

ORAL ASKING AND ANSWERING OF QUESTIONS

Mr. Dey, on behalf of Rev. Bobb, asked the Chief Secretary the following question:

QUESTION: Is the Honourable Member for Education aware that a circular issued by the Director of Education forbids the admission of children who have attained the age of five years to primary schools (except those in riverain and remote areas) in which accommodation exceeds enrolment; and if so, will the Honourable Member inform this Honourable Council what is the Government's view on the circular?

../ The Chief Secretary

The Chief Secretary gave the following reply:

ANSWER: The Circular to which the Honourable Member refers was issued by the Director of Education with the approval of the Member for Education.

The Primary School population within the compulsory age group, which is from 6 years to 14 years, is increasing rapidly and many Primary Schools are already severely overcrowded. Overcrowding seriously impairs the efficiency of the teachers and the capacity of the children to learn. It has therefore been decided that until further notice no child under the compulsory age of 6 years shall be enrolled in a Primary School, except in those schools in which present accommodation exceeds enrolment, in order to ensure that children within the compulsory school age group are provided with as efficient educational facilities as possible. Children between the ages of 5 and 6 who have already been enrolled and have been attending schools will be allowed to continue in school.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The Chief Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bill:

MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1957.
(Bill No. 17/1957 published 11.5.57).

Receipt of letter re Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 1957.

The Speaker informed members that he had received a letter signed by several persons who were preparing to enter a protest against the amendments proposed to the Marriage Bill.

He expressed the view that as the proposed legislation affected a large number of persons, including Hindus and Muslims, every opportunity should be afforded them to submit representations.

He added that he would inform the signatories to the letter that representations in the matter should be made to the Honourable Chief Secretary who was the Member in charge of the Bill.

MONEYLENDERS BILL, 1957 - Bill No. 11/1956.

Before proceeding with the Order of the Day, the Speaker referred to the Moneylenders Bill (No. 11 of 1956) passed by Council on the 17th of April, 1957, and informed members that there were certain minor imperfections in the Bill which it was desirable should be corrected.

He therefore invited Council to approve of the following corrections in the Bill, copies of which had been circulated to members:-

Clause 6 - Sub-clause (1) - Paragraph (c):

The word "from" to be substituted for the word "for" in the last line.

Clause 8 - Sub-clause (1) - Paragraph (b):

The word "from" to be substituted for the word "for" in the fourth line.

Clause 10 - Sub-clause (2):

The word "from" to be substituted for the word "for" in the penultimate line.

Council approved of the corrections.

PUBLIC BUSINESS
ORDER OF THE DAY

BILL - First Reading.

Item 1 - MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1957 - Bill No. 17/1957.

The BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE MARRIAGE ORDINANCE was read a first time.

The Chief Secretary informed members that he did not propose to proceed with the above Bill with undue haste and that adequate opportunity would be given for representations to be made.

BILL - Second and Third Readings.

Item 2 - PUBLIC FREE LIBRARY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1957 - Bill No. 16/1957.

On a motion by the Chief Secretary seconded by the Attorney General the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PUBLIC FREE LIBRARY ORDINANCE was read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

BILL - Second Reading.

Item 3 - CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL, 1957 - Bill No. 13/1957.

On a motion by the Attorney General seconded by the Chief Secretary the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO ABOLISH PENAL SERVITUDE AND IMPRISONMENT WITH HARD LABOUR was read a second time and was thereafter taken through the Committee stage and passed with the undermentioned amendments:-

Clause 3 - New sub-clause (3):

The following was inserted as sub-clause (3):

"(3) Where any person is at the commencement of this Ordinance the holder of a licence granted under the Convicts' Licences Ordinance which has not been forfeited or revoked, he shall be treated as if his sentence had expired."

New Clause 5:

The following was inserted as Clause 5:

"Repeal of 5. The Convicts' Licences
Cap. 79. Ordinance is hereby repealed."

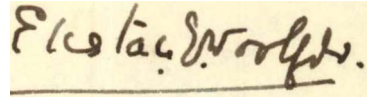
MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Secretary moved the adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.25 p.m. the Speaker adjourned Council sine die.

Confirmed,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a yellow rectangular background. The signature appears to be "F. C. Taylor" followed by a flourish.

Speaker.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
British Guiana.

23rd May, 1957.