

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(Constituted under the British Guiana
(Constitution) (Temporary Provisions)
Order in Council, 1953.)

FRIDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 1956.

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT

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

Ex-Officio Members

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,
Mr. F. D. Jakeway, C.M.G., O.B.E.

The Hon. the Attorney General,
Mr. G. M. Farnum (Ag.)

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,
Mr. F. W. Essex.

Nominated Members of Executive Council

The Hon. Sir Frank McDavid,
C.M.G., C.B.E., (Member for Agriculture,
Forests, Lands and Mines).

The Hon. P. A. Cummings, (Member
for Labour, Health and Housing).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E.,
(Member for Local Government, Social
Welfare and Co-operative Development).

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj.

Nominated Official

Mr. J. I. Ramphal

Nominated Unofficials

Mr. W. A. Phang

Mr. C. A. Carter

Mr. E. F. Correia

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb

Mr. H. Rahaman

Miss Gertie H. Collins

Mrs. Esther E. Dey

Dr. H. A. Fraser

Mr. R. B. Jallal

Mr. Sugrim Singh

Mr. W. T. Lord, I.S.O.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. B. M. Viapree (Ag.)

Absent

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Member
for Communications and Works)
on leave.

The Hon. R. C. Tello—on leave.

Mr. T. Lee.—on leave.

The Hon. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.—
—on leave.

The Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the
Council held on Friday, the 30th of No-
vember, 1956, as printed and circulated,
were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

The Chief Secretary: On behalf of the Member for Communications and Works (Mr. Kendall), I beg to lay on the table:

Annual Report of the Public Works Department for the year 1954.

Official Inland Correspondence (Amendment) Regulations, 1956.

Mr. Farnum (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development): I beg to lay on the table:

Annual Report of the Essequibo Boys' School for the year 1955.

Annual Report of the Prisons Department for the year 1955.

Annual Report of the Social Assistance Department for the year 1955.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The Chief Secretary: I beg to give notice of the introduction of the Civil List (Amendment No. 3) Bill, 1956.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to give notice of the introduction of the Public Loan Bill, 1956.

Mr. Farnum: I beg to give notice of the introduction of the following Bills:—

Local Government (Amendment No. 3) Bill, 1956.

Local Government (Amendment No. 4) Bill, 1956.

Local Government (Local Authorities Guarantee Fund) Bill, 1956.

ORDER OF THE DAY

BILLS—FIRST READING

The following Bills were read the first time:—

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Civil List Ordinance by in-

creasing the amount which shall be payable to Her Majesty for defraying the expenses of certain services."

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to confer power to raise by loan or loans a sum not exceeding forty-two million dollars, and for matters connected therewith."

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Local Government Ordinance."

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Local Government Ordinance."

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to establish a fund for the provision of security for the faithful performance of their duties by persons employed by Local Authorities."

REVISED DUTIES ON UNDERWEAR

ORDER IN COUNCIL NO. 75 OF 1956

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move the motion standing in my name at item 2 on the Order Paper:

"Be it resolved:

That this Council in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirms Order in Council No. 75 of 1956 which was made on the 21st day of November, 1956, and published in the Gazette on 24th November, 1956."

It is proposed to amend Order in Council No. 75 of 1956 by deleting the following—

Item 841.02.3: Other underwear and night wear for men and boys: No. 01, 18%—20%

Item 841.02.4: Other underwear for women and girls (e.g. petticoats, panties, etc.): No. 01, 18%—20%

and substituting the following therefor—

Item 841.02.3: Other underwear and night wear for men and boys: No. 01, 18% (other than night wear)—20% (other than nightwear); No. 01, 18% (nightwear)—33% (nightwear).

Item 841.02.4: Other underwear and nightwear for women and girls (e.g. petti-

coats, panties, etc.): No. 01, 18% (other than nightwear)—20% (other than nightwear); No. 01, 18% (nightwear)—33% (nightwear).

The purposes of this Order are really twofold. The first is a technical one which is connected with the 841.02 items. Hon. Members will see that these mainly cover undergarments made of knitted material. The other item which is being changed for technical reasons is rubber footwear. The purpose of this group of amendments is to rectify a breach of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade by the amendment of the Tariff which was approved by the Council in June, 1955. The rate of duty was then raised from 5 per cent. Preferential and 7 per cent. General Tariff, to 18 per cent. and 33 per cent. respectively. Members will see that this has widened the margin of preference by 2 per cent. What this Council did, therefore, was to widen the margin of preference which had been in existence on the 10th April, 1947, which was contrary to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, to which we are a subscriber. The proposal now is that the General rate of 33 per cent., should be reduced to 20 per cent., which would restore the margin of preference to 2 per cent., which it was before.

As regards rubber footwear, the duty before June, 1955 was 5 per cent., whether Preferential or obtained from other sources. In June, 1955, the Council raised the General rate of duty to 9 per cent., thereby establishing a new preference of 4 per cent., which did not exist before, again contravening the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. We now propose to reduce the General rate back to 5 per cent.

I invite attention to the proposed amendments to the Order in Council, copies of which have been circulated to hon. Members. The formula of 1955 fixed the rate of duty on un-

derwear at 20% and 33%, but quite unwittingly it was reduced and nightwear became absorbed in the other items of the group when the rates were fixed at 18% and 20%. This fact was overlooked and the amendment is to remove nightwear from the 18% and 29% group and place it into the 18% and 33% group where it belongs, and had been for a number of years.

The amendment is also designed to correct an anomaly whereby the import duty on knitted underwear is 5% and 7%, whereas the duty on the materials from which those articles are made is 20% and 30%. This naturally operates to the disadvantage of the fairly recently established Garment Manufacturing industry, in having to pay a higher import duty on the materials they use than the duty on the finished article. It does appear that the rates of duty on articles made of materials like Nylon are much too low as compared with that on knitted underwear, which at the moment are 18% and 33%, but when this Resolution is passed will become 18% and 20%, and also compared with the rates of duty on garments which are usually 18% and 33%.

The effect of the Order, therefore, has been to make the rates of duty 18% and 20% for all underwear— to standardize them— except in the case of nightwear and pyjamas and cotten underwear for women and girls on which the rates are 5% and 7%. It is rather complicated but I think the Order is understood.

Mr. Correia: I hope the Chamber of Commerce was consulted when these amendments were prepared.

The Financial Secretary: The Chamber of Commerce was not consulted. It would be quite impossible

[The Financial Secretary]

when you have these differences to consult anyone. There is an agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the Chamber of Commerce cannot alter that obligation. The other reason is, it seeks to help a local industry and, I do not think, the views of the Chamber of Commerce on that would have influenced the decision.

Mr. Speaker: Under the Customs Law it is absolutely essential that any change in Customs Duties be published at least four days before it is passed by this Council.

The Financial Secretary: This Order was published in the *Gazette* on the 24th November, and no complaints were received. The amendments were not published.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion unanimously adopted.

CONCESSIONS TO LIGHT AIRCRAFT CLUBS

ORDER IN COUNCIL NO. 76 OF 1956

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move the following motion—

Be it resolved: That this Council in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirms Order in Council No. 76 of 1956 which was made on the 16th day of November, 1956, and published in the *Gazette* on 24th November, 1956."

The purpose of this Order is to give concession to Light Aircraft Clubs. At the moment aircraft parts and accessories which are imported for agricultural and industrial purposes approved by the Governor in Council are exempted from customs duties. Government has been approached by one of the local aircraft

clubs that the concession of importing duty-free accessories for their aircrafts should be extended to them. Although the engines for their aircrafts are admissible at the very low rate of 3 per cent., they say that the other things they face to buy from time to time, which are very expensive, are admitted at a rate of duty of 20 or 36 per cent.

This Club has turned out 16 fully qualified pilots, and it says that this small concession will help it in its work. I think we would all agree that the formation of light aircraft clubs is very useful for the training of pilots in this Colony. Therefore, I think I can safely commend this motion to this Council.

Sir Frank McDavid: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion unanimously adopted.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR OCTOBER, 1956

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move the following motion—

"Be it resolved: That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates for the month of October, 1956, totalling \$1,419,463.81, which has been laid on the table."

This total is formidable, but when it is taken into account that \$900,000 of that amount is for the revision of Teachers' salaries and \$220,000 for the increase cost of maintenance of roads, it is not so formidable. I have covered the main points in the Schedule in the Budget Statement. As finance Committee has dealt with the Schedule in detail, I do not propose to tire the Council by going over the same ground

again. I therefore move that the Schedule of additional current expenditure be approved.

Sir Frank McDavid: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion unanimously adopted.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENT
ESTIMATES—OCTOBER, 1955

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move the following motion—

“Be It Resolved,

That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates (Development) for the month of October, 1956, totalling \$176,029.73, which have been laid on the table.”

I do not think I need say anything about this Schedule. It is a very straightforward one and has been passed in Finance Committee. I therefore recommend it to this Council.

Sir Frank McDavid: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion unanimously adopted.

The Chief Secretary: I beg to move that Council adjourns until a date to be notified by the Speaker.

The Attorney General: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Council was adjourned *sine die*.