

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the Fourth Legislative
Council of the Colony of British Guiana at its
Fourth Session, 1951-1952, held at the Public
Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara, on

THURSDAY, 17TH JULY, 1952,

AT 2 P.M.

PRESENT:

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles
Campbell Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.
The Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary,
Mr. J.L. Fletcher, O.B.E., T.D.
" " the Attorney General, Mr. F.W. Holder, Q.C.
" " the Financial Secretary and Treasurer,
Mr. E.F. McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E.
" " C.V. Wicht, C.B.E. (Western Essequibo)
" " Dr. J.B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo)
" " Dr. J.A. Nicholson (Georgetown North)
" " T. Lee (Essequibo River)
" " W.J. Raatgever, C.B.E. (Nominated)
" " V. Roth, O.B.E. (Nominated)
" " T.T. Thompson (Nominated)
" " G.A.C. Farnum, O.B.E. (Nominated)
" " J.P. Coghlan (Demerara River)
" " J. Fernandes (Georgetown Central)
" " Dr. C. Jagan (Central Demerara)
" " W.O.R. Kendall (New Amsterdam)
" " A.T. Peters (Western Berbice)
" " W.A. Phang (North Western District)
" " G.H. Smellie (Nominated)
" " J. Carter (Georgetown South)
" " L.A. Luckhoo (Nominated)
" " F.E. Morrish (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE - Mr. F.E. Morrish

His Excellency administered the Oath of Allegiance to Mr. F.E. Morrish and welcomed him as a provisional Member of Council during the absence from the Colony of Mr. W.A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, the 3rd of July, 1952, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

✓ ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL BANK OF RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT -
VISIT OF SURVEY MISSION

His Excellency informed Members that he had received a letter from the Management of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development stating that they would send a full Survey Mission to the Colony towards the end of the year on receipt of an invitation from this Government; and that he had issued such an invitation. The Mission would comprise seven or eight experts including two general economists, an agricultural production expert, an agricultural economist, a forestry expert, a transportation expert and an engineer; but the actual date of the arrival of the Mission was still under consideration and Members would be informed as soon as the date was fixed.

GRATUITIES TO TEACHERS

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer communicated the following Message:-

MESSAGE No. 7

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

There is no provision in the Teachers' Pensions Ordinance for the payment of death gratuities, but by Resolution XIII of the 16th December, 1930, Council approved of the payment to the widow or other dependent of a deceased Certificated Teacher who had qualifying service for pension under the Teachers' Pensions Ordinance, of such gratuity as the Governor-in-Council may consider fit; and in 1942 the Governor-in-Council decided that the death gratuity payable under this Resolution should be on the same basis as that payable to the widow or dependent of a non-pensionable Government employee holding an "approved appointment" in the Public Service, i.e., 1/18 of a month's pay for each month of service after the age of 20 years, provided that the gratuity shall not exceed one year's pay and the deceased shall have served for not less than seven continuous years.

2. By Resolution LII of the 6th of July, 1951, Council approved, in the case of non-pensionable Government employees, of the payment of the death gratuity to the dependent or legal personal representative of the estate, instead of the widow or dependent of the deceased employees. It is therefore now proposed that the death gratuity in the case of a deceased Certificated Teacher should likewise be payable to the dependent or the legal personal representative of the estate.

3. In the case of the Uncertificated Teacher, Council had approved, by Resolution No. VI of 14th December, 1937, of the payment of a death gratuity equivalent to one month's salary to the legal personal representative of any Uncertificated Teacher who dies whilst in the Service after not less than one year's service. It is now proposed that the gratuity payable in the case of an Uncertificated Teacher should likewise be computed on the same basis as the gratuity payable in the case of a

Certificated Teacher, and should be payable to the dependent or the legal personal representative of the estate, thereby placing on a uniform basis the benefit accruing to the estate of any teacher who dies in service.

The benefit does not apply to a pupil teacher or to a person employed in a primary school to teach one or more specified subjects.

4. The Financial Secretary will give notice of a motion seeking the approval of Honourable Members to the adoption of the abovementioned proposals for the payment of death gratuities to teachers; and for the proposals to take effect in the case of Certificated Teachers as from 1st January, 1951.

C.C. WOOLLEY,

Governor.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
British Guiana.
10th July, 1952.
(M.P. 35/14/14 IV).

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Colonial Secretary laid on the table the following:-

- ✓ (a) The Annual Report of the Probation Service for the year 1951.
(M.P. 259/1/2/13/37).
- ✓ (b) The Annual Report of the Department of Local Government for the year 1951.
(M.P. 283/4 III).
- ✓ (c) Schedule of applications for gratuities of deceased teachers.
(M.P. 35/14/4).
- ✓ (d) The Report of the Transport and Harbours Department for 1951, together with the Financial Statements.
(M.P. 122/4 VII).

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

- ✓ Minutes of the Meeting of Finance Committee of the Legislative Council held on the 26th of June, 1952.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

The Attorney General gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bills:-

- (a) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE JUVENILE OFFENDERS ORDINANCE.
(M.P. 228/1/5).
- (b) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL ORDINANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERIOD OF DETENTION OF BOYS SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.
(M.P. 89).

(c) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SPECIAL PROVISION IN REGARD TO THE PENSIONABLE SERVICE OF CYRIL RUTHERFORD ROWNE.
(P.F. 1286/3).

(d) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE BLASTING OPERATIONS ORDINANCE, 1930, IN RESPECT OF THE REGULATION OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN BLASTING OPERATIONS.
(M.P. 58/3/2).

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer gave notice of the following motion:-

That, this Council approves of the payment of gratuities to teachers who die whilst in the service, on the basis and conditions set out in the Governor's Message No. 7 of the 10th of July, 1952, and undertakes to provide the necessary funds for this purpose; and further approves that this Resolution shall have effect as from 1st January, 1951, in the case of the Certificated Teacher.

(M.P. 35/14/14 IV).

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES

Dr. Jagan gave notice of the following motion:-

WHEREAS Jamaica-born British subjects Messrs. William Strachan and Ferdinand Smith were deemed by the British Guiana Government to be undesirable visitors, and as such were banned entry into British Guiana;

AND WHEREAS Government has refused to state reasons for deeming Messrs. William Strachan and Ferdinand Smith as undesirable;

AND WHEREAS this ban is contrary to the provisions as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the Human Rights Commission, of which the United Kingdom Government is a member;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Council recommends to Government that the ban placed on the entry of Messrs. William Strachan and Ferdinand Smith be lifted to permit their free entry into British Guiana.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. Lee gave notice of the following questions:-

- (a) 1. Will Government state whether the Local Government Board has its own Auditor to audit the Local Authorities' Books?
2. If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state whether it is possible to get the accounts of the Local Authorities audited by the Audit Department?

3. Will Government state how many Local and Village Authorities' accounts have been audited by the Audit Department, and if any adverse reports were made to the Local Government Board?
4. Name the Local and/or Village Authorities and lay the reports on the table, if any.

- (b) 1. Will Government state what sum of money is available from the grant of Her Majesty's Government for the Social Welfare Committee for the sugar workers up to December, 1951?
2. Will Government state separately how much of this amount has been spent on -
- (a) Housing,
 - (b) Administration, and
 - (c) other Welfare works?
3. Will Government state the policy of the Committee with respect to this fund? Is there going to be a Housing Scheme similar to that of the Essequibo Scheme?
4. If the answer is in the negative, will Government state what grants will be allocated to each family, and the time of repayment?

4 Dr. Jagan gave notice of the following questions:-

1. Will Government state by what authority and under what section of the Local Government Board Ordinance (a) books and (b) monies, property of the Buxton Village Council, were seized by the District Commissioner of East Coast Demerara?
2. Is Government aware of the fact that there has been for some time a meat shortage in the Colony?
3. If the answer to question (2) is in the affirmative, will Government state by what certain firm at Springlands was granted licence to export cattle?
4. Will Government state how many heads of cattle and sheep were exported by the firm from January, 1951, to present date?

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

Mr. Kendall tabled a petition on behalf of the hucksters trading in the Municipal Market, New Amsterdam, praying for a revision of the prices set out in the Control of Prices (Certain local Produce)(No. 2) Order, 1951.

Captain Coghlan tabled a petition on behalf of the Canals Farmers Association praying for assistance in the dredging of Canal No. 1 and the repairing of the Canal Road.

MARGARINE - SUSPENSION OF THE ISSUE OF IMPORT LICENCES

In drawing attention to the cessation of the issue of licences by the Controller of Supplies and Prices for the importation of margarine and compound lard from the United Kingdom, Mr. Roth stated that residents of the Colony would thereby be compelled to use margarine made in Barbados which was more expensive.

In reply, the Acting Colonial Secretary said that he had been advised by the Controller of Supplies and Prices that suspension of the issue of licences was to afford Government an opportunity of studying the Report of the recent Oils and Fats Conference held at Barbados.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION BY DR. JAGAN

Plaisance and Sparendam having been restored to village status, leave was granted Dr. Jagan to withdraw his motion on the subject which was tabled on the 3rd of April, 1952.

RICE SHORTAGE

Dr. Jagan referred to the present shortage of rice in the Colony and was assured by His Excellency that the Rice Marketing Board was doing everything possible to remedy the situation.

ORDER OF THE DAY

REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Mr. Roth asked the Colonial Secretary the following questions:-

1. What steps, if any, is Government taking to implement the motion passed by Legislative Council on 14th March, 1952, by a 17 - 4 majority, recommending the introduction of legislation prohibiting the entry of literature subversive or contrary to public interest?
2. If Government is preparing the said legislation when is it likely to come before Council for consideration?

With the consent of Council the following reply by the Colonial Secretary, which was printed and laid, was taken as read:-

A Bill has been drafted with a view to introduction in the legislative Council at an early date.

(I.P. S. 208 II).

Dr. Jagan asked the Colonial Secretary the following question:-

What is the total value of purchases made from various firms in New Amsterdam for the Corentyne Road Programme?

With the consent of Council, the following reply by the Colonial Secretary, which was printed and laid, was taken as read:-

The total value of purchases from January, 1950, to 28th June, 1952, is \$321,78.07.
(M.P. 140/232/1/2/3).

BILLS

✓ SUMMARY JURISDICTION (MAGISTRATES) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1952

On motions by the Attorney General seconded by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE FURTHER TO AMEND THE SUMMARY JURISDICTION (MAGISTRATES) ORDINANCE was read the second time and thereafter was taken through the remaining stages and passed as printed.

✓ OPTICIANS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1952

On motions by the Attorney General seconded by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE OPTICIANS ORDINANCE, 1933, was read the second time and thereafter was taken through the remaining stages and passed as printed.

* MOTION BY MR. PHANG RECOMMENDING THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE ECONOMIC AND HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THE NORTH WEST DISTRICT.

✓ Mr. Phang moved the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Roth:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council recommend to Government the immediate appointment of a Commission to investigate the causes of the depressed conditions in the North West District and to make recommendations for their amelioration.

After discussion, on the President's suggestion the motion was amended as under and adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Council recommend to Government the immediate consideration by the Legislative Council Advisory Committee for Communications and the Interior of the causes of the depressed conditions in the North West District and to make recommendations for their amelioration.

✓ MOTION BY MR. FERNANDES RECOMMENDING THAT PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES BE NOT CURTAILED AND THE INTRODUCTION OF AN EDUCATIONAL TAX

Mr. Fernandes moved the following motion:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this Council recommend to Government -

- (a) that Primary Educational facilities, at present existing, be not curtailed;
- (b) that a special educational tax be imposed to cover any increase cost in connection with Primary Education.

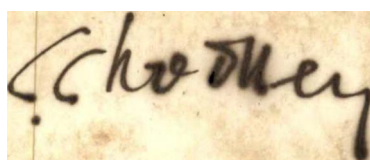
Mr. Luckhoo seconded the motion, reserving his to speak later.

Mr. Carter was speaking to the motion when the of adjournment was reached.

ADJOURNMENT

The President adjourned Council to 2 p.m. on the following day.

Confirmed,

A rectangular photograph of a handwritten signature in dark ink on aged, yellowish paper. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'C. Chodney'. There is a small dot to the right of the signature.

President.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
Public Buildings,
British Guiana.

18th July, 1952.