

9th June, 1932.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT (HON. MR. W. T. SOUTHORN, C.M.G.)

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS (MAJOR-GENERAL J. W. SANDILANDS, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX, C.M.G., C.B.E.).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (HON. MR. C. G. ALABASTER, K.C., O.B.E.).

THE SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS (HON. MR. A. E. WOOD).

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (HON. MR. E. TAYLOR).

HON. MR. H. T. CREASY, C.B.E., (Director of Public Works).

HON. COMMANDER G. F. HOLE, R.N., (Retired) (Harbour Master).

HON. DR. A. R. WELLINGTON (Director of Medical and Sanitary Services).

HON. MR. T. H. KING, (Inspector General of Police).

HON. MR. W. E. L. SHENTON.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL, C.M.G., LL.D.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.

HON. MR. S. W. TS'O, O.B.E., LL.D.

HON. MR. J. J. PATERSON.

HON. MR. T. N. CHAU.

HON. MR. W. H. BELL.

MR. R. A. C. NORTH (Deputy Clerk of Councils).

ABSENT:—

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK, KT, K.C.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Council were confirmed.

PAPERS.

The Colonial Secretary, by command of H.E. The Officer Administering the Government, laid upon the table the following papers:—

Order under section 3A of the Public Revenue Protection Ordinance, 1927, authorising the Superintendent of Imports and Exports to refuse to allow the delivery of dutiable liquors and dutiable tobacco for local use etc.

Rescission of the Order of the 2nd February, 1932, published in the Gazette of the 5th February, 1932, as Government Notification No. 73, declaring Saigon to be an infected place.

Notification under section 210 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903.

Regulations made by the Governor in Council under section 3 of the Post Office Ordinance, 1926, on 28th May, 1932.

Rescission of the Order of the 17th May, 1932, published in the Gazette of the 20th May, 1932, as Government Notification No. 300 declaring Osaka to be an infected place.

Order made by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government under section 2 of the Public Revenue Protection Ordinance, 1927, on 2nd June, 1932.

Notice under Regulation No. 11 of the Regulations made under the provisions of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, 1923 to 1928.

Report on the Finance for the year 1931.

Report of the Superintendent of Imports and Exports for the year 1931.

Report of the Superintendent of Prisons for the year 1931.

Report of the Land Officer for the year 1931.

Report on the New Territories for the year 1931.

QUESTIONS.

HON. MR. W. E. L. SHENTON.—I rise, Sir, to ask the question standing in my name:—

"On behalf of the Unofficial members of this Council, I desire to know whether the Government has since the 27th May last received any reply from the Home Authorities, in reference to the commencement of the second section of the Shing Mun Water Scheme?"

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied.—A telegram has been received this morning in which the Secretary of State states that he hopes to let us have a reply very shortly regarding the Shing Mun Scheme.

CITY HALL RESUMPTION ORDINANCE, 1932.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance for the resumption of the City Hall Property." He said.—The history of the City Hall and the reasons which have compelled the Government to resume by ordinance instead of by exercising the powers conferred by the Crown Lease, are displayed in the memorandum attached to the Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a first time.

Objects and Reasons.

The "Objects and Reasons" for the Bill were stated as follows:—

1. The Buildings known as the City Hall are situate on Marine Lot No. 82.
2. By Indenture of Crown Lease the Lot was granted by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, subject to the payment of the nominal sum of five dollars and reserved rental of one dollar per annum for the term of 999 years from the 1st March, 1866, to three individuals as lessees—A. Turing, J. Macdonall and Phineas Rylie.
3. The usual lessee covenants in the Indenture (including a ten thousand dollar building covenant) were preceded by the following words:—

"And in order that the covenants hereinafter contained on the lessees' part may attach to and run with the said land and the tenancy thereof and be obligatory on the lessees their Executors Administrators and Assigns so long only as they shall be in actual possession of the premises but not further or otherwise the said lessees do jointly and severally for themselves their heirs executors administrators and assigns.....covenant promise and agree," etc.

4. The final covenant is varied, however, by the insertion of the following words:—

"And further that the said lessees their executors administrators and assigns or any other person or persons shall not nor will during the continuance of this demise use the said demised premises otherwise than as and for a City Hall."

5. The final clause in the lease is as follows:—

"And whereas the demise hereinbefore contained has been made by Her said Majesty in order that a fit and proper site may be had solely for the purpose of the said City Hall, and although the value of the said site is considerable, the said demise has been made (of Her said Majesty's favour) without pecuniary consideration but upon the condition next hereinafter expressed, that is to say, Provided lastly that the said demised premises shall not nor shall any part thereof be used for any other purpose than for a City Hall and that in case the said demised premises or any part thereof shall thereafter be used for any purpose other than for a City Hall, then in every or any such case the term estate and interest thereby demised in the said premises shall thereupon absolutely cease and determine and it shall and may be lawful for Her said Majesty, Her Heirs Successors and Assigns by the Governor of Hong Kong for the time being or other person duly authorised in that behalf into and upon the said demised premises or any part thereof in the name of the whole to re-enter and the same to have again retain repossess and enjoy as in Her or their first or former estate and as if these presents had not been made and the said lessees their executors administrators and assigns and all other occupiers of the said premises thereout and thence utterly to expel put out and amove, this Indenture or anything contained therein to the contrary notwithstanding."

6. It is believed that of the three lessees the last survivor was Phineas Ryrie, who in Suit No. 93 of 1890 unsuccessfully claimed an injunction against the Government from proceeding with the Praya reclamation opposite Marine Lot 82, and who died on the 21st February, 1892, devising to the trustees of his will, their heirs, executors and assigns, subject to the trusts and equities affecting the same, all estates vested in him as trustee. Letters of Administration with the will and codicils annexed were granted on the 14th April, 1892, to A. W. Walkinshaw, attorney for C. Carey Smith, one of the trustees of the will. The Letters of Administration were not registered against the title in the Land Office and since that date none of the representatives of the lessees seem to have concerned themselves with the property in any way.

7. The buildings appear to have been erected by public subscription, commencing in 1865, each individual, firm or

corporation subscribing \$100 received a so-called "ordinary share," and 216 of such "shares" of a total nominal value of \$21,600 were issued to 61 "shareholders." As the building proceeded it was found that the sum subscribed was insufficient and Sir Robert Jardine, whose firm held fifteen "ordinary shares" appears then to have subscribed \$50,000 and to have received 105 so-called "preference shares" of various denominations but totalling \$50,000.

8. If these "shareholders" are to be regarded as an association for the purpose of carrying on any business having for its object the acquisition of gain by its individual members it will be illegal under the Companies Ordinances of 1865 and 1911. No interest or return has ever been paid, however, to the holders of any of these shares, the whole income, supplemented by occasional government grants, having been devoted to the upkeep and improvement of the building, with the exception of a small reserve fund which now amounts to about \$4,000.

9. The buildings have been managed hitherto by a committee which appears to have been elected by the original subscribers with power to add to its number. None of those originally elected remain, the present members having been co-opted as occasion arose. The senior member in Hong Kong of the firm of Jardine, Matheson & Co. is chairman of the committee.

10. The buildings consist of a theatre on the western portion of the lot and of certain halls and rooms on two floors on the eastern portion. Those on the upper floor have been used for balls, receptions and meetings and those on the lower floor for a free library and museum, and latterly also as a Y.M.C.A. Club for the Naval, Military and Air Forces.

11. The buildings are old and the committee are now faced with the problem of having to spend a sum of money far in excess of any that they are in a position to command to modernise them and to put them into a proper state of repair and of safety against fire or into the state required by law for buildings to which the public have access. They have therefore closed the premises and it becomes necessary for the Government to intervene.

12. In all the circumstances of the case it is considered better for the Government to resume possession of the property by means of an *ad hoc* Ordinance rather than to proceed under the powers reserved by the Crown Lease.

13. It is not the intention of the Government to re-erect a City Hall on this site, part of which will be sold and part developed to accord with a general scheme of town planning; but as a part of that scheme it is the intention of the Government to make provision for public amenities of the kind hitherto provided by the Committee of the City Hall.

LIQUORS AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1932.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Liquors Ordinance, 1931." He said.—This Bill is already law by virtue of an order made under the Public Revenue Protection Ordinance published in last week's Gazette. Under the new definitions of spirituous liquors it will be possible to arrange the duties on a more scientific basis.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a first time.

Objects and Reasons.

The "Objects and Reasons" for the Bill were stated as follows:—

1. The Liquors Ordinance, No. 36 of 1931, like the Ordinances which it replaced, deals with many alcoholic liquors which, though intoxicating, are not usually so described and which are not included in the list of intoxicating liquors given in section 2 (16) of the Ordinance.

2. This Ordinance therefore substitutes "alcoholic," "dutiable" or other suitable expressions for the word "intoxicating" or similar expressions in several sections of the Ordinance where they are considered more appropriate.

3. Paragraph (e) of section 2 of the Ordinance sanctions the practice of imposing special conditions in addition to the general conditions contained in the forms in the Third Schedule to the principal Ordinance.

4. Paragraph (f) amends the definition of spirituous liquors in section 2 (7) so as to make it correspond in its spirit content to the definition of "Intoxicating liquors" in section 2 (16) of the principal Ordinance.

REGISTRATION OF UNITED KINGDOM PATENTS AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1932.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the law relating to the registration of United Kingdom Patents."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Council went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Bill had passed through the Committee without amendment and moved the third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE PENSIONS ORDINANCE, 1932.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to consolidate and amend the law regulating the granting of pensions, gratuities and other allowances in respect of public service." He said: There have been discussions on various clauses of this Bill and when this Council goes into committee after the second reading, I shall propose the amendments that I shall now read out.

In Clause 2 (*d*) delete "High Commissioner for Transport in Kenya and Uganda" and substitute "Board of Education for England and Wales, or the Crown Agents for the Colonies, or the Colonial Audit Department (Home Establishment) of the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbour Administration."

The whole of Clause 10 will be deleted and the following substituted under the marginal note of Compulsory Retirement:—

1. It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to require any officer other than a judge, whenever appointed, to retire from the public service of this Colony who (*a*) appears to the Governor to be unable to discharge efficiently the duties of his office; or (*b*) being a woman who has entered the public service after the commencement of this Ordinance is married.

2. The normal age of retirement for any public officer, other than a judge, shall be deemed to have been attained if he or she— (*a*) has attained the age of fifty-five years, or (*b*) being an Indian subordinate officer of the Prison Department, lady medical officer, lady serving in the Education Department, or a European attendant at a Government mental hospital, or a matron, nursing sister or nurse in a Government hospital, has attained the age of fifty years; and any such officer, who shall have attained the normal age of retirement, shall retire from the public service of the Colony unless the Governor in Council decides that his or her services shall be retained. In no case, however, except with the approval of the Secretary of State, shall the services of any such officer be retained for more than five years after he or she has attained the normal age of retirement.

With regard to this amendment, I would point out that under Clause 19 of this Bill, the rights of officers now in the Public Service, under the existing Pension Legislation are safeguarded.

Under the existing Pension Legislation, officers may be retired for incompetence by the Governor in Council or apart from any question of incompetence on attaining the age of 55 years, except that in the case of certain officers, the consent of the Secretary of State is necessary, so that this Bill does not materially alter the present position, but if it does so at all, it does not take away the rights of persons now in the service of the Colony.

At the end of Clause 16, it is proposed to add the following: Such gratuity, if granted to the legal personal representative, shall form part of the estate of distribution under any testamentary disposition made by him or under an intestacy, as the case may be; but, nevertheless, no estate duty shall be payable in respect thereof, and its addition to the principal value of the estate shall not be taken into consideration for the purpose of increasing the rate at which estate duty on the remainder of the estate may be payable.

With regard to the provision for death duty on gratuities, the gratuities will not be paid out with one hand and taken back in the form of Estate Duty with the other hand. It is the practice not to charge estate duties on death gratuities in England and in the Colonies.

In Clause 17, the words "or after," appearing in the marginal note will be deleted. These words are not wrong but perhaps confusing.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—It is not in criticism of the Bill before the Council that I ask Your Excellency's permission to address the Council. My remarks bear with special reference on the amended Section 10 of the Bill.

When this clause was under recent discussion, I enquired whether it was possible to obtain some information as to the approximate probable cost to the Colony in 1933 assuming that all public servants are compulsorily retired who have already attained or who will attain 55 years of age next year. I use the word "assume" advisedly, since I cannot imagine that the Government will choose to be deprived of the services of all good men in 1933 when they will have attained the age limit.

I am given to understand that the estimate of cost, which need only be approximate, is not available. I cannot imagine what difficulty there can exist for compiling the estimate for the benefit of this Council. Salaries, pensions, leave privileges and gratuities are so nearly correlated with the question of expenditure that, I make bold to assert, without knowing what it is going to cost the Colony, it should not be easy for members to form an unerring decision on the debateable question of compulsory retirement.

I do not know how far I am correct in believing that it will not be possible for Government to defer consideration of the second reading of the Bill until some near idea of the figures of cost can be made available. That being the case, I beg Your Excellency might be pleased to direct that, at some future date, not too long I hope, the Honourable the Colonial Treasurer, who may be willing to oblige, kindly furnish the illuminating figures for the information of the Colony's taxpayers.

I gather that the proposed new Section 10 is drawn up on the lines of the Warren Fisher Report, which has as one of its objects the alignment of pensions and retiring ages throughout the Crown Colonies. I have no means of ascertaining the recommendations of that report. I am, therefore, speaking from conjecture. While it may be true that in the higher branches of the Colonial Service conditions may be theoretically brought into line with one another, I doubt whether it can be said with equal truth that the Fisher recommendations can be made applicable to all the branches of Civil Service in the Colonies. Service conditions and other considerations vary.

For example, I have in mind the subordinate branches of the clerical departments of the Government in Hong Kong. I maintain that the salaries of locally recruited Government employees are not sufficient to enable them to provide for their old age. This is specially true of married men. Public servants on sterling salaries stand in a different category. The difference is even more greatly accentuated in the case of those men with families in the Colony who are not under the necessity of making remittances to England. Generally speaking, the latter are well paid and, ordinarily, should be in a position to save substantially for their old age. They can contemplate retirement with complacency and even in a happy frame of mind. This much cannot be said of the subordinate branches of the Service. Theirs is a hand-to-mouth wage. They earn just enough to make needs meet, and, in the case of a man with a more than the average size of family, the problem of adjusting the domestic budget must be a worrying and a perplexing one.

To compel retirement at age 55 of local men whose mental and physical condition has not suffered impairment in the least, will, to my mind, inflict hardship by depriving families of breadwinners who would fain continue in employment and whose retention in the Service cannot fail to be of benefit and economy to the taxpayers. It is for such and similar cases that I plead to Your Excellency for consideration that too literal an application of Section 10 of the proposed new law might not be drastically enforced. I am aware that the law is not inflexible. I beg that in its operation every care will be exercised to reduce to a minimum the possibility of hardship and injustice being unwittingly inflicted on well-deserving servants of the public to whom every

consideration should be extended and from whom the Colony has benefited by honest, conscientious and loyal services extending over a lifetime.

I would like to add a few words, in conclusion, for the ladies serving in the Education Department. Their retiring age is normally 50 years, subject to five years more in the exceptional cases obtaining the approval of the Secretary of State. From personal knowledge of the qualifications of some of the Hong Kong young ladies who are teaching in some of the Government schools I can say, without fear of contradiction, that no greater asset can be found at so little expense to the Colony than the local teachers of the girls' schools in Hong Kong. There is a tendency that cannot be too strongly deprecated that they should be considered "back numbers" on the attainment of 50 years, or, in the words of Section 10, having "entered the public service after the commencement of this Ordinance are married."

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL.—I support the Hon. Mr. Braga's plea on behalf of the local men. I recognise that the law can make no distinction, but as pointed out by my honourable friend, clause 10 is not inflexible, and I therefore express the earnest hope that, in its actual operation, the Government will give every consideration to locally recruited officers when their time for retirement falls due. A rigorous enforcement of the law in the case of the local men cannot but be costly to the taxpayers, and would inflict hardship on some of the men.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—With regard to the question of cost, a table could be prepared showing the total cost of pensions, if every officer of 55 years or over retired on 1st January, 1933. But this figure would entail considerable labour in preparation and would mean nothing when prepared. For while every such officer could so retire if he wished, in which case the proposed new clause 10 could not be said to cause any increase in the cost of government, it is obvious that the Government would not attempt to retire all officers of 55 or over on January 1st, 1933, nor can it be assumed either that all such officers will wish to retire on 1st January, 1933, or that all will wish to remain on beyond that date.

Moreover, supposing all such officers did retire on 1st January, 1933, an estimate of the cost to the Colony would involve the calculation of the cost of filling their posts, the salary of the successor being seldom if ever the same as the salary of the retiring officer.

There are so many hypothetical features about an estimate of the kind asked for by my honourable friend that I think it would be unfair to expect my honourable friend the Colonial Treasurer to prepare it. The most I feel justified in saying is that, in-as-much

as the Ordinance is intended to encourage earlier retirement, it will in course of years be likely to lead to some increase in the cost of pensions.

But my honourable friend must remember that the rights of existing officers are preserved by clause 19 of the Bill, and although in the matter of compulsory retirement these rights amount to no more than the right not to be compulsorily retired between 55 and 60 without the order of the Governor in Council and, in some cases, the approval of the Secretary of State, I submit that it is obvious that the introduction of the age of 55 as the normal age of retirement must be a gradual process. I would ask my honourable friend to remember that it is with a view to obtaining greater efficiency in the Government Service that the normal age of retirement is being fixed at 55, but it still remains possible to retain an officer's service beyond that age if the Governor in Council considers his services worth retaining, and this rule applies alike to the subordinate and to the higher branches of the service.

My honourable friend begs the question when he speaks of the compulsory retirement at the age of 55 of local men whose mental and physical condition has not suffered impairment in the least, and whose retention in the service cannot fail to be a benefit and economy to the taxpayers.

These are just the men whose retention the Governor in Council is likely to approve; but I confess I expect to find them the exception rather than the rule.

The honourable member's plea for considerate treatment, while it cannot be accepted as an argument for retaining officers beyond the period of their full usefulness, is unlikely to be overlooked when the Governor in Council is dealing with cases of special merit.

It may be of interest to honourable members to know that in the six years 1924-1929 there were only eleven officers, two of whom were Europeans, who appear to have remained in service till the age of 60, out of 91 retirements shown in the 1929 Blue Book.

In the 1930 Blue Book, it is shown that of 39 locally recruited officers, who retired during the five years 1926-1930, the average age was just under 51.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clause 2 (*d*):

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the deletion of the words "High Commissioner for Transport in Kenya and Uganda," and the substitution of "Board of Education for England and Wales, or the Crown agents for the Colonies, or the Colonial Audit Department (Home Establishment) or the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbour Administration."

Clause 10:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the deletion of the whole of the clause, and the substitution therefor, with the marginal note "Compulsory Retirement," the following:—

1. It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to require any officer other than a judge, whenever appointed, to retire from the public service of this Colony who (*a*) appears to the Governor to be unable to discharge efficiently the duties of his office; or (*b*) being a woman who has entered the public service after the commencement of this Ordinance, is married.

2. The normal age of retirement for any public officer, other than a judge, shall be deemed to have been attained if he or she (*a*) has attained the age of fifty-five years, or (*b*) being an Indian subordinate officer of the Prison Department, lady medical officer, lady serving in the Education Department, or a European attendant at a Government mental hospital, or a matron, nursing sister or nurse in a Government hospital, has attained the age of fifty years; and any such officer, who shall have attained the normal age of retirement, shall retire from the public service of the Colony unless the Governor in Council decides that his or her services shall be retained. In no case, however, except with the approval of the Secretary of State, shall the services of any such officer be retained for more than five years after he or she has attained the normal age of retirement.

Clause 16:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the addition of the following, at the end of the Clause:—

Such gratuity, if granted to the legal personal representative, shall form part of the estate of the officer for purposes of distribution under any testamentary disposition made by him or under an intestacy, as the case may be; but nevertheless, no estate duty shall be payable in respect thereof, and its addition to the principal value of the estate shall not be taken into consideration for the purposes of increasing the rate at which estate duty on the remainder of the estate may be payable.

Clause 17:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the words "or after" in the marginal note, be deleted.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—This Bill was amended in Clauses 2, 10 and 16, and in the marginal note of Clause 17. The amendments being material, I do not propose to move that it be read a third time to-day, but it will be published as amended by the Committee in tomorrow's Government Gazette and the third reading will be taken at some future meeting of this Council.

VAGRANCY AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1932.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the law relating to Vagrancy."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Council went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Bill had passed through Committee without amendment, and moved the third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

H.E. THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT.— Council stands adjourned to 16th June.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Council Chamber, the Colonial Secretary presiding.

Votes totalling \$58,623 contained in Message No. 7 from H.E. The Officer Administering the Government, were considered.

Item No. 34:—Public Works Extraordinary.—Kowloon Buildings, Venereal Diseases Clinic, \$12,500.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—Can you say if this new and temporary building is going to be on Crown Land?

THE CHAIRMAN.—Yes.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—Would it not be more economical, instead of a temporary building to put up a permanent one?

THE CHAIRMAN.—It is a temporary building of a nature that will last for years.

HON. MR. BRAGA.—We are more or less committed to this sum as total sum on the building. It would not be of such a character that it will have to be pulled down after a few years and put up again somewhere else?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—Yes. It is more or less permanent.

HON. MR. J. J. PATERSON.—Possibly now that the League of Nations is interested in this problem, His Majesty's Government hopes there will be no more venereal disease.

WATER PROBLEM.

THE CHAIRMAN.—At a previous meeting of this Committee you approved of the expenditure of \$25,000 for certain extra work, arising out of the water shortage, for the distribution of water. The \$25,000, on further examination, was found to be insufficient and I will ask the Director of Public Works to explain the position.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—The provisional amount originally approved by the Finance Committee for the installation of the new group street fountains was \$25,000. After this scheme was introduced it was realized that many additional extensions were necessary to provide a better distribution of fountains clear of the main lines of traffic. This involved additional lengths of piping more particularly in the Kowloon Peninsula. The value of stores (piping, taps and fittings) drawn from stocks at the Government Store was approximately \$43,000. In addition some \$6,000 was expended on local purchases, making a total of \$49,000. The revised estimate for the work (including labour, etc.) is now \$60,000.

It should however be understood that, after the water emergency period, stores (piping, etc.) to the value of at least \$40,000 will be returned to store, and will be available for issue on other works. Thus the total sum chargeable to the Water Emergency vote will ultimately be approximately \$20,000, which is well within the amount the Finance Committee was originally asked to approve.

THE CHAIRMAN.—You are asked to approve of this vote for \$60,000 inclusive of the original vote. The formal vote will be put before the Committee later.

All the votes were approved.