

9th November, 1936.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Council Chamber, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Mr. R. A. C. North, *Acting*) presiding.

ALSO PRESENT:—

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (HON. MR. E. TAYLOR, C.M.G.).

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (HON. MR. R. M. HENDERSON).

HON. MR. J. J. PATERSON.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA, O.B.E.

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

HON. MR. T. N. CHAU.

HON. MR. S. H. DODWELL.

HON. MR. M. T. JOHNSON.

HON. MR. A. W. HUGHES.

MR. D. M. MACDOUGALL (Deputy Clerk of Councils).

ABSENT:—

HON. MR. M. K. LO.

Votes totalling \$686,619, contained in Message No. 9 from H.E. the Governor, were considered.

Item 54.—34, Public Works Extraordinary:—New Kowloon, Miscellaneous. 69, Laying out new areas, Chinese Cemeteries, \$4,000.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—Regarding this vote, would it be too optimistic to hope that this is the first indication of the closing down of the Homuntin Cemetery for future burials?

THE CHAIRMAN.—Speaking from memory, I think this will be done, but I shall have to look the matter up.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—This vote is extremely satisfactory from many points of view, particularly with regard to the nuisance caused

by the heavy rain during the typhoon of August 17. I do not want to draw too lurid a picture of the conditions existing at the time, but I hope that whatever measures have been adopted in building up certain levels of the ground will obviate anything like what was disclosed at the last heavy rains. The next disagreeable thing is that Homuntin is becoming more and more a residential area in what I may call the upper levels of Kowloon. This cemetery with its objectionable features around it has really become a nuisance, to put it mildly. The Government should take it into consideration as it is not in the interests of public health and does not conduce to the development of the area.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.—Why do you say it is a nuisance?

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—It made disclosures that I do not think are suitable to discuss around this table.

HON. MR. A. W. HUGHES.—Were there dismembered bodies?

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—It would be literally true to say that the coffins were floating.

HON. MR. A. W. HUGHES.—That does not seem a very serious matter.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—I would be satisfied if the Government would abandon the cemetery. At the same time I can realise Government's position. I remember the day that Sir Murchison Fletcher looked over Kowloon for a cemetery site. We had no idea then that this particular area would develop to the extent it has done, so it cannot be said that the Government lacked vision, but there is no getting over the fact that the inhabitants have grown to such a large number that it is the least desirable place for a cemetery to be located.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.—Meanwhile, you approve of this particular item of expenditure?

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.—I welcome it.

All the votes were approved.
