

***27th April, 1939.***

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A meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Council Chamber, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Mr. N. L. Smith, C.M.G.) presiding.

**ALSO PRESENT:—**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. S. CAINE).

HON. MR. A. G. W. TICKLE (Director of Public Works, *Acting*).

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

HON. MR. S. H. DODWELL.

HON. MR. CHAU TSUN-NIN, C.B.E.

HON. MR. LO MAN-KAM.

HON. MR. LEO D'ALMADA e CASTRO, JNR.

HON. MR. A. L. SHIELDS.

HON. MR. T. E. PEARCE.

HON. MR. W. N. THOMAS TAM.

MR. B. C. K. HAWKINS (Deputy Clerk of Councils).

Votes totalling \$1,229,182, contained in Message No. 3 from His Excellency the Governor, were considered.

Item 43.—5, Charitable Services:—22, Relief of Refugees, \$250,000.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—As there are four thousand people in the Camp at Kam Tin, and as that Camp is so far from Hospital when cases of emergency arise, I hope that the Government will seriously consider the necessity for appointing a Resident Doctor to that Camp, instead of a Visiting Doctor as at present.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am sure the Hon. Member's suggestion will be carefully considered.

HON. MR. PEARCE.—Can you tell me details as to how this money will be expended, if they can be made available?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—Details can be furnished. Full details as to how the money is to be divided for the maintenance of refugees at each of the various camps can be given.

HON. MR. PEARCE.—Are these available without much trouble?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—They are available quite easily.

HON. MR. PEARCE.—I should like to see them.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I will see to it that full details are circulated to members of this Council. Item 44: .....

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—I think the vote has not yet been passed. I think Mr. Pearce's idea is not to pass this vote until the details are circulated.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—I think we have spent most of \$150,000.

HON. MR. PEARCE.—I am not opposing. I should just like to know the details.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The alternative will be to have the vote approved on the understanding that figures will be supplied. Is that suitable to you, Mr. Pearce?

HON. MR. PEARCE.—Yes.

Item 48.—6, Defence, C.—Air Raid Precautions:—Other Charges: Grant-in-aid of Women's Air Raid Precautions Union, \$2,500.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—How much of this \$2,500 is going towards clerical expenses?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—It is intended to employ a secretary at a salary not exceeding \$250 a month.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—What has the secretary to do—just steno-typist's work?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—Rather more than that.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—What else?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—General work, some organising work, etc.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—Male or female?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—Probably female.

THE CHAIRMAN.—According to a letter by the Air Raid Precautions Officer, what is needed is a general secretary to record the names of all volunteers and attend to all correspondence, etc.

HON. MR. DODWELL.—I rather thought \$250 is rather excessive.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—That is what I have in mind. Of course if she has to do all these things she may be worth all that. But I should think we could get someone for \$150.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—We want to do it as cheaply as possible, that is why \$250 is the maximum salary. This compares with the salary of an ordinary European lady stenographer starting at \$200.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—Government standard?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—Yes, but this employment does not carry with it all the advantages, such as pension, which a Government servant has.

HON. MR. D'ALMADA.—I am not opposing the vote. I only want information about it.

THE CHAIRMAN.—About a year ago it was thought necessary to have a full-time lady stenographer and a Chinese assistant.

HON. MR. DODWELL.—Will it be at the discretion at the Women's Air Raid Precautions Union?

THE CHAIRMAN.—Yes, it is really a grant to that, including the salary. There are other incidental expenses and it is estimated they might all come to \$2,500 a year.

Item 50.—6, Defence, C.—Air Raid Precautions:—11, Publications, \$1,500.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—Can anyone buy A.R.P. handbooks? Are they for sale generally?

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am not certain about that, but I will make a note of it. I will have information about this circulated, but my own recollection is that these books are available.

Item 54.—17, Medical Department:—31, X-Ray Apparatus, Running Expenses and Maintenance, \$10,000.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—This seems to be a rather large estimate. I want to know if the cost of these things has gone up.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—I don't think that is suggested. It is very difficult to estimate when the expensive equipment has to be replaced each year. There has also been a large increase in the number of X-ray cases owing to the general increase in hospital work.

Item 68.—31, Public Works Extraordinary:—Buildings: Conversion of Public Works Department Garages into Offices, \$23,500.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—The old garage was erected more as a shed of light and temporary construction. We are revising the design and there may be an excess of this vote which I shall have to report.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Will that be this year?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—Yes.

Item 72.—31, Public Works Extraordinary:—General Works: 21, Roads, \$140,000.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—Can the Director of Public Works give us some details?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—I have a complete list of works waiting to be done. It totals roughly \$30,000 odd for Hong Kong, \$80,000 for Kowloon and the remainder for New Kowloon.

THE CHAIRMAN.—This is in connection with new services?

THE DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS.—Yes. Land has been sold and the owners are entitled to pavements, channels, etc. I have a complete list here.

Item 76.—31, Public Works Extraordinary:—Buildings: Kowloon Hospital. Site formation, \$100,000.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—Are the new Kowloon Hospital and the Infectious Diseases Hospital to be built in place of the present one?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—It is intended as an addition, adjoining the Kowloon Hospital.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—What is the total cost of the Infectious Diseases Hospital and the site formation?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—I am afraid I cannot give you that off-hand.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.—We cannot give a detailed estimate of the cost for the Infectious Diseases Hospital or the extension of the Kowloon Hospital because the plans are not yet in existence. Even the designs are not yet settled.

Item 81.—31, Public Works Extraordinary:—Prison Works, \$169,000.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—What exactly is meant by new detention camp?

THE CHAIRMAN.—It has not yet been decided where it is to be situated. It is intended to put short-term prisoners in the detention camp where it is hoped the upkeep will be cheaper and at the same time relieve the congestion in Stanley Gaol. They can be used on public works such as reclamation work, and the camp may be situated somewhere in the New Territories. This method will save an elaborate staff of warders, and only short-term prisoners are to be put in the camp.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK.—No site chosen yet?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—No.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Various alternative sites are being considered.

All the votes were approved.

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