

*6th February, 1947.*

**PRESENT: —**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (SIR MARK AITCHISON YOUNG, G.C.M.G.).

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

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. D. M. MACDOUGALL, C. M. G.).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (HON. MR. J. B. GRIFFIN, K.C.).

THE SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS (HON. MR. R. R. TODD, *Acting*).

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. C. G. S. FOLLOWS, C.M.G., *Acting*).

HON. DR. P. S. SELWYN-CLARKE, C.M.G., M.C. (Director of Medical Services).

HON. MR. T. M. HAZLEPIGG, C.B.E., M.C.

HON. MR. T. MEGARRY.

HON. MR. V. KENNIFF (Director of Public Works).

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

HON. MR. LO MAN-KAM, C.B.E.

HON. MR. C. C. ROBERTS.

HON. MR. LEO D'ALMADA E CASTRO.

HON. MR. R. D. GILLESPIE.

HON. DR. CHAU SIK-NIN.

HON. MR. M. M. WATSON.

MR. D. R. HOLMES, M.B.E., M.C. (Deputy Clerk of Councils).

**MINUTES.**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th January, 1947, were confirmed.

**“SAI ON” DISASTER.**

H.E. THE GOVERNOR. —Honourable Members of the Legislative Council. A most deplorable tragedy occurred, as you are well aware, on the morning of the 4th February, when the ship "Sai On" caught fire while moored to a wharf in Connaught Road, a short time before she was due to leave for Canton. This resulted in the deaths of not less than 150 persons, residents both of Hong Kong and of Canton and other parts of China. It has been in added cause of pity and of sorrow to us all that the circumstances of this calamity were such that the relatives and friends of many of those who may have been involved in it have remained, and in some cases still remain, in anxiety and uncertainty as to the fate of those dear to them. I know that Honourable Members will wish expression to be given to our feelings on this lamentable catastrophe and I will ask you to rise to your feet and to assent in silence to the resolution which I will now put to the Council.

" It is resolved that this Council deplore the grievous loss of life which resulted from the outbreak of fire on the steamer "Sai On" on the 4th February, and expresses its profound sympathy with the relatives and friends, both here and in China, of those who died in this disaster."

The Resolution was adopted, members standing in silence.

**CONSULAR PRIVILEGES BILL, 1947.**

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to provide for the remission of taxes, duties and fees to which consuls and consular officials may be subjected when payment of such moneys is in conflict with the privileges of their office."

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

On the motion of the Attorney General, seconded by the Colonial Secretary, Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Consular Privileges Bill, 1947, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved that it be read a Third time and passed into law.

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

**PUBLIC HEALTH (SANITATION) AMENDMENT BILL, 1947.**

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Public Health (Sanitation) Ordinance, 1935.

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

On the motion of the Attorney General, seconded by the Colonial Secretary, Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Public Health (Sanitation) Amendment Bill, 1947, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved that it be read a Third time and passed into law.

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

**BETTING DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1947.**

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Betting Duty Ordinance, 1931.

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

On the motion of the Attorney General, seconded by the Colonial Secretary, Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clause 2.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. —I rise to move an amendment of the Bill by the insertion as Clause 2 of a new Clause which shall read:

Section 2 of the Principal Ordinance shall be amended by the deletion of the words "seventy-six per cent." appearing in the proviso to the said section and by the substitution therefor of the words "seventy-two per cent."

The reason for my motion is that at the present time section 2 of the Betting Duty Ordinance provides that 76 per cent. of the total contributions or subscriptions, after deduction of the duty, shall be devoted to prizes for the Subscribers. Since this Bill was introduced, representation has been made that if the duty to be charged on sweeps run by the Jockey Club is to be increased to 25 per cent. the result will be that the Jockey Club would be left with insufficient funds to enable them to carry on their activities. That is so, or would be so, because of their obligation under section 2 of the Ordinance, as it is now, to leave 76 per cent. of the total contributions or subscriptions, after deduction of duty, available for prizes for the subscribers. In order to meet such representation, which appears to be well founded, it is proposed, in the clause which I am now moving for insertion and which is designed to give effect to the proposal, that the percentage which must be retained (that is, 76 per cent., under the present law) to provide prizes for subscribers should be reduced from 76 per cent. to 72 per cent. I move therefore insertion as clause 2 of the clause which I have read to the Council.

HON. MR. M. K. LO. —I take it, sir, that the clause will have a marginal note.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. —A marginal note is included.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR. —There is a marginal note in the copy before me, —“Amendment of Section 2 of the Principal Ordinance.” The question is that the Bill be amended by the insertion of a new clause 2 as proposed by the Hon. the Attorney General and that the clause of which the marginal note was read by the Clerk as clause 2 stand part of the Bill with its number altered to clause 3.

The amendment was agreed to.

Clause 3

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. —I move that the number of this clause be altered from 3 to 4.

The amendment was agreed to.

Upon Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—I have to report that the Bill has passed through Committee with 3 amendments, namely, the amendment effected by the insertion of the new clause 2 and by the re-numbering of clauses 2 and 3 as 3 and 4 respectively from the numbering which occurs in the Bill before Council, and I move that the Bill be read a Third time and passed into law.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

K.E. THE GOVERNOR—That concludes the business before the Council, and the Council will now adjourn until Thursday, 13th February.