

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.**Meeting of 23rd November, 1960.**

PRESENT:HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)

SIR ROBERT BROWN BLACK, K.C.M.G., O.B.E.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER BRITISH FORCES

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR RODERICK WILLIAM MCLEOD, K.C.B., C.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

MR. CLAUDE BRAMALL BURGESS, C.M.G., O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

MR. ARTHUR RIDEHALGH, Q.C.

THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS

MR. JOHN CRICHTON MCDOUALL.

THE HONOURABLE PATRICK CARDINALL MASON SEDGWICK

(Commissioner of Labour).

THE HONOURABLE HECTOR WILLIAM FORSYTH

(Acting Director of Public Works).

DR. THE HONOURABLE TENG PIN-HUI

(Acting Director of Medical and Health Services).

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH STRATHMORE KINGHORN

(Director of Urban Services).

THE HONOURABLE NGAN SHING-KWAN, O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE KWOK CHAN, O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE FUNG PING-FAN, O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE RICHARD CHARLES LEE, O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE KWAN CHO-YIU, O.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE GEORGE MACDONALD GOLDSACK.

THE HONOURABLE DONALD BLACK.

MR. ANDREW MCDONALD CHAPMAN *(Deputy Clerk of Councils).***ABSENT:**

THE HONOURABLE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

MR. ARTHUR GRENFELL CLARKE, C.M.G.

THE HONOURABLE DHUN JEHANGIR RUTTONJEE, O.B.E.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9th November, 1960, were confirmed.

PAPERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by Command of His Excellency the Governor, laid upon the table the following papers: —

<i>Subject.</i>	<i>G.N. No.</i>
Sessional Papers, 1960: —	
No. 30—Annual Report by the Director of Commerce and Industry for the year 1959/60.	
No. 31—Annual Report by the Commissioner for Resettlement for the year 1959/60.	
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance, 1960.	
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance, 1960 (Amendment of Fourth Schedule) Order, 1960	A. 135.
Dangerous Drugs Ordinance.	
Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Regulation, 1960	A. 136.
Registration of Persons Ordinance, 1960.	
Registration of Persons (Re-registration) (No. 5) Order, 1960	A. 137.
Nursing and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance.	
Nursing and Maternity Homes Registration (Exemption) Order, 1960	A. 138.

QUESTIONS.

MR. R. C. LEE, pursuant to notice, asked the following questions: —

1. How many parking spaces for private cars are there in the area bounded by Queen's Road Central, Pedder Street, Connaught Road and Murray Road including the two car parks?
2. Is provision being made for an increase in parking facilities in the city area during the next 24 months and if so what are the facilities?
3. It has often been observed that commercial vans are found in the car parks during the day time. What is the policy of Government with regard to the parking facilities for private cars and commercial vans in these car parks?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied as follows: —

Sir, the answer to the first of my honourable Friend's three questions is that in the central area defined by him, and including the two parking buildings, there are spaces for 873 vehicles. In addition there are a further 99 spaces in the area adjoining the City Hall making in all a total of 972 spaces.

As regards his second question, I can say that a third parking building to house 700 cars is now being planned on the Murray Parade Ground site. We hope to have this completed by the end of next year. A suggestion is being made to Finance Committee that we should try to adhere to a regular programme of building one multi-storey car park each year. These buildings would not of course all be sited in the Central area, and it is not possible at present to say where a multi-storey car park for 1962 might be placed.

I would also add that, as honourable Members are aware, the Town Planning Board has the central areas of the city under consideration at the moment, and that the draft plan which we expect to exhibit early next year will provide generous accommodation for parking in the Dockyard area. Meanwhile there are temporary spaces in that area for approximately 400 cars.

In answer to the honourable Member's third question, I would refer him to Gazette Notification No. 920 of 17th June, 1960, in which the Commissioner of Police, in exercise of his powers under the Road Traffic (Parking and Waiting) Regulations, 1958, notified that goods-vehicles not exceeding 2 tons in unladen weight, and dual-purpose vehicles, are permitted to share the accommodation in car parks with private cars and hire cars. Larger commercial vehicles are not permitted to use these car parks. These smaller commercial vehicles park mostly overnight. Consideration was at one time given to restricting the use of the parks by these vehicles to certain prescribed periods, but it was found that there would be insuperable difficulties in implementing such a restriction.

Finally, Sir, I would like to assure the honourable Member that Government is fully aware of the general feeling of concern over the present difficulties of parking in the built-up areas on both sides of the harbour. This is a problem which Hong Kong shares with many other modern cities which have expanded rapidly since the war. The problem does not admit of any easy, quick, or economical solution,

and given the obvious limitation of finance and land shortage, it would be a mistake to suppose that we shall not have this problem with us in a serious form for many years to come. Vehicle registrations have doubled in the five years since 1955, and we are now running at a rate of about 8,000 new vehicle registrations a year. Government is at present engaged on a general review of this matter, but I cannot hold out any hope that there will be a solution fully satisfactory to those motorists who feel that they should have unobstructed passage through the centre of the town and sufficient *and* convenient parking spaces within it.

I am afraid that the Police will have to continue to perform the unwelcome task of taking action against indiscriminate and inconsiderate parking so that obstructions are reduced as far as possible in order to prevent accidents and to maintain a free and uninterrupted flow of traffic. I think, Sir, that there is room for a better understanding of the position of the Police in this matter. It is not a task that they relish, but it has to be done; and I am sure that they do it as fairly and considerately as circumstances allow. It would be a sad thing if general relations between the Police and the public, which the Commissioner is making strenuous efforts to improve, should be prejudiced by a lack of understanding on the part of a small section of the community whose personal interests are sometimes frustrated, not by the Police, but by the congested conditions in which it is our lot to live.

MR. R. C. LEE: —Sir, may I have your permission to ask a supplementary question?

H. E. THE GOVERNOR: —Is it on a question of fact that can be answered by the Colonial Secretary?

MR. R. C. LEE: —Yes, Sir.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR: —Very well.

MR. R. C. LEE: —Sir, the answers given to my questions by the Honourable Colonial Secretary indicate that parking facilities in the city area are likely to remain acute. Would Government consider providing further parking facilities by the construction of underground car parks under Statue Square and under the Hong Kong Cricket Club ground?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: —I believe, Sir, that a suggestion on these lines was examined in some detail three or four years ago. There were, as far as I remember, considerable engineering and financial

difficulties but since the honourable Member has raised this matter I will be very glad to look into it again.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR: —Does that mean that Government will give an undertaking to reconsider the matter?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: —Yes, Sir, it does.

**SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED
30TH SEPTEMBER, 1960.**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the following resolution: —

Resolved that the Supplementary Provisions for the Quarter ended 30th September, 1960, as set out in Schedule No. 2 of 1960/61, be approved.

He said: Sir, the total supplementary provision required for the second quarter of the financial year comes to almost \$9½ millions.

One administrative change necessitates supplementary provision of almost a million dollars. Until recently, responsibility for fisheries was divided between the Co-operative Development Department, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and the University, with its Fisheries Research Unit. All activities have now been concentrated in the Co-operative Development Department, which has taken over necessary staff and equipment from the other two, and has been renamed. Although the additional cost for the rest of the financial year will be almost a million dollars, there should be equivalent savings on the other two departmental votes. The details of the additional expenditure are shown in an appendix to the schedule.

It has been necessary to increase the staff of the Registration of Persons Office quite considerably. The new registration system had not been running for very long before it became quite clear that re-registration of the whole population within the target period of 3½ years could not possibly be achieved without additional staff.

There are a number of additional provisions for public works, and in particular a supplementary of over \$1¾ millions for work on the Wong Tai Sin Resettlement Estate, which has gone ahead much more rapidly than was expected.

The Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund has been supplemented by a further half a million dollars. The immediate reason for this increase was the damage caused by typhoon "Mary", but it was felt that this addition to the Fund could well be permanent.

All the items in the schedule have already been passed by Finance Committee and the covering approval of this Council is now required.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

TELECOMMUNICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1960.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the First reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Telecommunication Ordinance, Chapter 106."

He said: Sir, under the law as it now stands, the charges for telegraph messages to and from ships and aircraft are laid down by regulations which were made by the Governor in Council in 1947 under section 7 of the Telecommunication Ordinance. Now, Sir, rates for these messages are the subject matter of international agreement which imposes the maxima which may be charged; and the local rates have been changed from time to time since 1947, namely, in 1956, 1957, and 1960. These variations were approved administratively but unfortunately no steps were taken to amend the regulations.

Sir, this Bill will do two things. Firstly, it will validate the variations I have mentioned by deeming them to have been prescribed by regulations made under section 7 of the Ordinance, and secondly, it will for the future make a change in procedure. As the rates are established internationally—Great Britain speaking, of course, for her dependencies—it is thought desirable to enable the Governor in future to provide by order for the local charges.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a First time.

Objects and Reasons.

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

Since the rates for telecommunication messages are fixed by international agreement and accepted by the Government of Great British on behalf of the United Kingdom and its overseas territories, it is desirable that the Governor should be empowered to give effect by order to such agreement instead of by enactment of subsidiary legislation under section 7 of the Telecommunication Ordinance as heretofore. This is affected in clauses 2 and 3 of the Bill by amending section 7 of

the Ordinance, and by empowering the Governor to make the necessary orders. Since the rates agreed to by the Government in 1955, 1957 and this year have been charged without the Radiotelegrams (Charges) Regulations being amended, clause 4 of the Bill deems these rates to have been brought into force by the necessary amendment to these regulations. The regulations are revoked by clause 5.

POLICE FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1960.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Police Force Ordinance, Chapter 232."

He said: Sir, I should like to take this opportunity of drawing attention to Clause 31A of the Bill which appears to have been misunderstood in some sections of the Press. This Clause enables the Governor to dismiss Police Officers who are unable satisfactorily to explain to a Tribunal how they are able to maintain a standard of living above that which is commensurate with their official emoluments, or how they have come by pecuniary resources in excess of these emoluments. Questions have been asked as to why the Police Force has been singled out for special attention. The answer, of course, as honourable Members will be aware, is that these measures already apply to the generality of Government officers by virtue of a General Order which was issued in September, 1959. Disciplinary proceedings in respect of Police Officers below the rank of Assistant Superintendent are however governed by the Police Force Ordinance and not by General Orders. The purpose of Clause 31A is therefore to apply to those Police Officers the measures already in force for other Government officers and similar action is being taken in respect of other disciplined units whose disciplinary proceedings are prescribed by Ordinance.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Second time.

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

Clauses 1 to 8 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY reported that the Police Force (Amendment) Bill, 1960, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved the Third reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Third time and passed into law.

ADJOURNMENT.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR: —Well, gentlemen, that concludes the business for today. When is it your pleasure that we should meet again?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: —Sir, may I suggest this day two weeks?

H. E. THE GOVERNOR: —Council stands adjourned until this day two weeks.