

17TH AUGUST, 1922.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT, HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN, C.M.G.

H.E. THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN FOWLER, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.

HON. MR. A. G. M. FLETCHER, C.M.G., C.B.E. (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP, K.C., C.B.E. (Attorney-General).

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX, O.B.E. (Secretary for Chinese Affairs).

HON. MR. E. A. IRVING (Director of Education).

HON. MR. D. W. TRATMAN (Colonial Treasurer).

HON. MR. T. L. PERKINS (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. A. O. LANG.

HON. MR. CHOW SHOU-SON

HON. MR. A. R. LOWE.

HON. MR. H. W. BIRD

HON. MR. NG HON-TSZ.

MR. A. DYER BALL (Clerk of Councils).

ABSENT:—

HON. MR. E. V. D. PARR.

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting of the Council were approved and signed by the President.

The Swatow Typhoon Disaster

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Officer Administering

the Government, laid on the table financial minutes Nos. 52 to 60 and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded—

H.E. THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT—With regard to financial minute No. 60, this vote (for \$20,000) has been taken to cover the cost of the relief already sent. The magnitude of the disaster that has overwhelmed Swatow and district has awakened the deepest sympathy of this Colony, and the Government has received, through His Majesty's Consul, the thanks of the Chinese authorities for what has been done. In loss of life, it is now evident that no typhoon within living memory has ever caused so great a calamity. In some villages only a fraction, a small fraction, of the population has survived. In material damage, the destruction has been enormous. Most of the houses in the Chinese city have been wrecked and hardly one has escaped serious injury. Swatow is so closely connected with this Colony, by personal ties and by trade, that its well-being is a matter that concerns us most deeply, and I feel sure that members of this Council, as representing the people of Hongkong, will endorse the message of sympathy that has been sent through H.M. Consul to the Chinese authorities at Swatow, with the assurance that every possible help will be given to them.

The financial minutes were then referred to the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, laid on the table the report of the Finance Committee, No. 8, and moved its adoption.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and it was agreed to.

Papers

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table an order made by the Officer Administering the Government in Council under section 9, sub-section 1 of the Post Office Ordinance, 1900, on August 10th; regulations made by the Officer Administering the Government in Council under section 17 of the Piracy Prevention Ordinance, 1914, on August 10th and the Report of the Principal Civil Medical Officer for 1921.

Wild Birds Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to make provision for the protection of certain Wild Birds and Game.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the second reading was carried.

The Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause. The Bill passed through Committee stage without amendment and on the Council being resumed,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved and the COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded the third reading.

This was approved and the Bill passed accordingly.

Registration of Persons

H.E. THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT—Before the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to provide for the registration of certain persons" is moved, I should like to inform honourable members that the Bill was drafted in consequence of certain recommendations made by a Committee of which I was Chairman. The Committee consisted of Official and Unofficial members, the latter being members of the commercial community, and the compulsory principle of the Bill now before you was considered to be essential to the compilation of a satisfactory register. It is not a Bill that the Government would go on with if there is any clear indication that it is opposed by the representatives of the community in this Colony. There are

indications that it has not the unanimous approval of those who will be affected by it, and whether the principle of the Bill is approved or not, it is proposed to amend it in order to remove certain features which may be considered to be of an unnecessarily harassing character. Every member of this Council will be free to vote as he wishes and the Government will not hesitate to withdraw the Bill if there is any strong opposition.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—Sir, I beg to propose that the second reading of this Ordinance be not proceeded with. While I am in full agreement with the principle of the Bill, I feel that there is sufficient opposition to it to justify my asking for it to be withdrawn. I do feel, however, Sir, that it is necessary that the Government should be in possession of the information which is sought in order to compile a satisfactory register of the people in this Colony.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—On behalf of the Government, I beg to second the motion made by the honourable member.

HON. MR. H. W. BIRD—Sir, after hearing the explanation that has fallen from Your Excellency's lips, I should have been prepared to vote for this Bill. On the other hand, I am prepared to fall in with the views of the Hon. Member and vote for it to be withdrawn. There are a few other remarks I should like to make in connection with the Bill. The local Press has, both in its leading articles and by the publication of anonymous letters, tried to create a very large mountain out of a very small molehill. It reminds me of the fable of the old man, his son and the ass, and it goes to show how difficult it is to please everybody. At the time of the general strike there were outcries in all directions as to "What is the Government going to do in this matter?" "Why don't they do something?"; and there were a great number of suggestions put forward as to what they should do. Now that this Bill is brought forward, with the object of being ready in case such an emergency arises again, there is an outcry which leads one to believe that everybody is to be dragged up to the Police Station in chains and there branded with the broad arrow. One suggestion I have to make is that, should it be necessary to

recruit the man power of the Colony on any future occasion, that the Government should forthwith appoint a Committee of men who possess the particular knowledge which is requisite to deal with the special matters that would be taken in hand. I have in mind what happened when private motor cars were sent up to the Police compound during the recent strike, and one can only describe it as utter chaos prevailing. I understand that the Automobile Association has offered its services to the Government to organise motor transport in the Colony, but, as far as I can hear, barring an official acknowledgment of their letter, nothing further has transpired. In the event of the Government requiring the use of private motor cars in the future it will be necessary for them to pass another Ordinance commandeering such motor vehicles, because I feel sure private owners will not be willing to lend them.

HON. MR. A. R. LOWE—Sir, I support the motion for the withdrawal of the Bill although I am in favour of the principle. I think that in the Bill too much power is given to the Police and that the voluntary method of obtaining the information required should be tried first.

The motion for the withdrawal of the Bill was then put and carried.

Recreation Grounds Amendment Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Recreation Grounds Ordinance, 1909.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the second reading was carried.

The Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause. The Bill passed through Committee stage without amendment, and on the Council being resumed,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved, and the COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, the third reading.

This was approved and the Bill passed accordingly.

Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to authorize the Appropriation of a Supplementary Sum of one million and one thousand, two hundred and sixty-two dollars and twelve cents to defray the charges of the year 1921.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Bill be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and it was agreed to.

Later, in the Finance Committee, the Bill was taken item by item. On one or two items the Colonial Secretary (who presided) explained that the increases were entirely due to the fall in exchange. The Committee approved the Bill without amendment and, when the Council resumed, the COLONIAL SECRETARY reported to H.E. the Officer Administering the Government that the Bill had been unanimously approved by the Finance Committee and he, therefore, moved the third reading.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and it was agreed to.

The Bill passed accordingly.

The Indemnity Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the third reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to restrict the taking of legal proceedings in respect of certain acts and matters done during the war and to provide in certain cases remedies in substitution therefor.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded and the motion was carried.

The Bill passed accordingly.

H.E. THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT—The Council will adjourn *sine die*: the next meeting will probably be held early in September.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee followed, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presiding:

Drawing Materials

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$7,000 in aid of the vote Public Works, Establishment, Other Charges, Drawing Materials and Mounting Plans.

THE CHAIRMAN — The estimate was \$2,500, but an abnormal amount of paper and material has been used and the price has gone up considerably.

The vote was approved.

New Cemetery Areas

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$5,000 in aid of the following votes:—

Public Works, Extraordinary:—

Kowloon, Miscellaneous (83) Chinese Cemeteries, Laying out new areas	\$3,000.00
New Territories, Miscellaneous (109) Chinese Cemeteries, Laying out new areas	2,000.00
Total	<u>\$5,000.00</u>

THE CHAIRMAN—The first vote is \$2,000 and the Town Planning Committee have recommended that practically all the cemeteries of Kowloon be centred in the ring of hills in the neighbourhood of Ho Mun Tin, and this estimate is for terracing within that area. The Committee have also recommended that the cemetery beyond Kowloon City on the slope facing Lyemun should be removed to a part of the slope facing away on less valuable ground, and this vote is for preparing a new cemetery further inland.

Approved.

Additional Pumping Plant

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$25,000 in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Water-works, (44) Hill District and High Levels of City, Additional Pumping Plant at Pokfulam Road Station: (a) Engine House Extension.

THE CHAIRMAN—Last year \$10,000 was put provisionally in the estimates because no definite estimate had then been drawn up. The work was proceeded with very quickly; it is expected to cost when completed \$40,000 and we expect to spend \$35,000 this year. It was not known at the time that it would be possible to get on with it.

Approved.

The Steam Launch for Prison Department

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$3,000 in aid of the vote, Prison Department, Special Expenditure, Steam Launch.

THE CHAIRMAN—The vote was \$30,000 and the lowest tender was \$33,000

Approved.

New Police Launch

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$13,300 on account of Police Department, Special Expenditure, One Launch to replace No. 7 Police Launch.

THE CHAIRMAN—No. 7 launch went up for its annual overhaul and it was found to be in a very bad condition, completely worn out, especially the engine. We found we could sell the old engine for \$2,500 and we were offered a new small launch for \$13,300.

Approved.

Waterworks at Taipo and Fanling

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$17,800 in aid of the following votes:—

Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Water Works:—

(112) Taipo Water Supply Scheme (not including resumptions)	\$7,500.00
(113) Fanling Water Works Scheme	10,300.00
	\$17,800.00
Total	\$17,800.00

THE CHAIRMAN—The Taipo vote was \$12,000. It was decided to put in 4-inch instead of 3-inch pipe in order to cope with possible fires and future extension. At Fanling, the sum voted was \$5,000, but it was decided to put in 3-inch instead of 2-inch pipes and there are very large extensions to outlying houses.

Approved.

The Green Island Light

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$623 in aid of the vote Harbour Master's Department, Special Expendi-

ture, Conversion of Green Island Light into Aga System.

THE CHAIRMAN—The vote was \$5,200 and it cost this extra sum.

Approved.

Replanting of Damaged Trees

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$750 in aid of the vote Botanical and Forestry Department, Other Charges, Forestry, New Territories.

THE CHAIRMAN—A very largenumber of small trees recently planted, were blown over in the recent high winds and considerable damage was done. This vote is for re-planting them.

Approved.

Vote for Swatow Relief

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$20,000 on account of Miscellaneous Services, Swatow Relief.

The vote was approved.

This concluded the business.