

12th February, 1931.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (SIR WILLIAM PEEL, K.C.M.G., K.B.E.).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX, C.M.G., C.B.E.).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (HON. MR. C. G. ALABASTER, K.C., O.B.E.).

THE SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS (HON. MR. R. A. C. NORTH).

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (HON. MR. C. McI. MESSER, O.B.E.).

HON. MR. H. T. CREASY, C.B.E. (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. E. D. C. WOLFE, C.M.G. (Inspector General of Police).

HON. COMMANDER G. F. HOLE, R.N. (Retired) (Harbour Master).

HON. DR. A. R. WELLINGTON (Director of Medical and Sanitary Services).

HON. SIR SHOU-SON CHOW, K.T.

HON. MR. J. OWEN HUGHES.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA.

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

HON. MR. C. G. S. MACKIE.

HON. MR. J. J. PATERSON.

MR. N. L. SMITH (Clerk of Councils).

ABSENT:—

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

HON. MR. W. E. L. SHENTON.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL, C.M.G., LL.D.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Council were confirmed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid upon the table the report of the Finance Committee, No. 2 of February 5th, 1931, and moved that it be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and this was agreed to.

ESTATE DUTY AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1931.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the law relating to Estate Duty." He said: Sir, I rise to move the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the law relating to Estate Duty." Much assistance in the drafting of this Bill has been rendered by the Committee of the Incorporated Law Society and many of their suggestions appear in its clauses. Since the first reading last week they have been in communication with me suggesting reconsideration of clauses 6, 8, 9, and 16.

Clause 6 substitutes a new section 9 (3) of the principal ordinance in place of a subsection derived from section 7 (2) of the Finance Act, 1894, relating to the allowances for debts. Their suggestion is that it is not desirable to depart further from the language of the Act in this respect. In clause 8 it is suggested that the proviso might be enlarged to cover the case of foreign grants of a similar nature to probate or administration. Clause 9 imposes an obligation on the executors as to the registration of the unregistered shares of a deceased person, which is a new provision. It reduces the liability which the registered owner incurs under the new section 24 introduced by clause 15.

With regard to clause 16, two points are made; firstly, as to the possible retention of the table in the existing third schedule and its application to the valuation of reversionary interests; and, secondly, as to the insertion of a provision similar to that in section 12 of the Finance Act, 1907, making it clear that the new rates are to apply to persons dying after the commencement of this Ordinance.

These are all matters which merit consideration and so, after the second reading, I shall propose that the Bill be referred, under Standing Order 27, to the Standing Law Committee for report, especially on the clauses I have mentioned.

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

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the Bill be referred to the Standing Law Committee for report.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded and this was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR.—Council stands adjourned till Thursday, February 26th.
