

***24th October, 1935.***

**FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Council Chamber, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Mr. R. A. D. Forrest, *Acting*) presiding.

**ALSO PRESENT:—**

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (HON. MR. E. TAYLOR).

HON. MR. R. M. HENDERSON, (Director of Public Works).

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

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON, KT.

HON. MR. J. P. BRAGA, O.B.E.

HON. MR. T. N. CHAU.

HON. MR. J. J. PATERSON.

HON. MR. W. H. BELL.

MR. H. R. BUTTERS, (Clerk of Councils).

**ABSENT:—**

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

HON. MR. M. K. LO.

Votes totalling \$23,650, contained in Message No. 14 from H.E. The Officer Administering the Government, were considered.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am pleased to say that most of these votes although expressed in the form of Expenditure, actually mean savings, and I do not think there is much required to explain them.

Item 67. — 22, Medical Department: — 48, Government Analytical Laboratory. Apparatus and Chemicals \$1,050.00.

HON. MR. PATERSON.—I am not quite clear why £70 equals \$1,050 in Item 67.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Neither am I. (Laughter).

THE COLONIAL TREASURER.—It represents an exchange of \$15 to the pound. We cannot know what the rates will be when purchases are made, say, in December. This is the estimated rate for 1935.

Item 71.—34, Public Works Extraordinary:—Kowloon Buildings, 44, Quarters for Gardeners at Kowloon Hospital \$2,050.00.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—I would like to know how many gardeners are likely to be allocated to each of these institutions.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am afraid I cannot answer the question without further reference.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—The Budget speech referred to eight.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—Eight for the Central British School.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—It seems to me that even six would be a large number.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—I think twelve were asked for for the Central British School.

HON. MR. PATERSON.—What about their quarters?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—There are three institutions in the vicinity of the Central British School and quarters were asked for in each of these places. We find it is cheaper, in view of the fact that they are so close together, to group them in one place.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—I would suggest that six gardeners for the Central British School is rather a large number. I do not want to oppose the vote but I would like it referred back.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I will make a note of that.

Item 72.—28, Miscellaneous Services:—47, Telegrams \$5,500.00.

THE CHAIRMAN.—We have had occasion to send many extra telegrams this year.

Item 73.—28, Miscellaneous Services:—43, Rent of Public Telephones \$350.00.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—Why has the Government to pay for its own directories?

THE CHAIRMAN.—I understand that the Government telephone system has only one terminal connecting with the public system, and is therefore entitled to one directory only. Will the Treasurer please confirm this?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER.—The position is that the Government Exchange is run in connection with the public Exchange and there are a tremendous number of terminals which are only connected through our own exchange. We have to pay for our connections to the Public Exchange and we get directories for those lines only. We have to pay in addition directories for each of the terminals connected to the Government Exchange.

HON. SIR WILLIAM SHENTON.—Don't you pay a separate fee for each branch?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER.—No, we pay a lump sum.

All the votes were approved.

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