

JUST RECEIVED

Canary Pots, Flower Pots and Goblets.

ERIK R. STAKEMANN.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COLONIAL COUNCIL

FOR ST. CROIX.

(Continued from Saturday's Avis)

Item 3.

Colonial Council Bill No. 31.

2nd Discussion on Colonial Council Bill No. 31, Amendment to Food Commission Law, introduced by 2nd Member for Christiansted Town and Suburbs [Canegata].

2nd Member for Christiansted Town [Canegata] remarked: Mr. Chairman. In introducing this amendment at 2nd Discussion I wish to affirm everything that I have said before. The amendment is absolutely necessary in the interest of the island. Since this amendment has been introduced in this Council it has been discussed, both privately and in the papers, but so far I have not heard one single valid argument against it. I have heard of a great deal of opposition, both inside and outside of the Council, and I know today many are asked to vote against it, but I only ask those who are prepared to vote against it to state their objections, and, at least, make an amendment that will offer something better than what is here proposed.

As a representative of Christiansted Town and Suburbs I want to take issue with a letter I have seen published, particularly where it says, "what has been done has only been a little inattention to the public", let me illustrate the inference—What does it make if all the children in the town are left without food, what does it matter if the sick suffer and the hospitals are left without milk, they are only a few natives, why worry about them, why take notice of it after all it is only a little inattention. If such are the little inattentions then I say God spare us the gross injustices. If the representatives of the people are going to regard their constituents with such indifference then I say there is no stronger argument for the immediate dissolution of this Council, and the public could well join with Mark Anthony and say "O judgment thou art fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason". No gentlemen these are serious times, the time has come when the rights of the people must be protected. Is the Colonial Council the accredited representative of the people going to place their personal in-

terest above that of their constituents? That's the question this amendment serves to have answered. The public awaits your answer. (Loud applause from the Lobby.)

The Chairman asked that there be no applause in the Lobby as it is against the Rules of Business.

From a spectator in the Lobby: Change the rules.

1st Member for Frederiksted Country District [Andersen] remarked: Mr. Chairman I think the amendment as it stands is unconstitutional, as it is against Par. 75 of the Colonial Law.

The Chairman read the paragraph referred to.

2nd Member for Christiansted Town (Canegata) would like to ask the last speaker to point out in what way the paragraph referred to was unconstitutional.

1st Member for Frederiksted Country District (Andersen) answered: The Food Commission has not the right to take over stock of merchants or producers unless it gives full compensation.

4th Appointed Member [Blackwood] remarked: Mr. Chairman. To ask people who are supposed to be free to vote away their property rights, I believe is going too far; and when it comes to starving the babies, I know of many articles of foodstuffs, the prices of which, are put beyond the reach of the poor people. Before I vote for this amendment I would rather cut off my right hand. During the war it was bad, but now it seems to be getting worse.

3rd Member for Christiansted Country District (Robt. W. Skeoch) remarked: Mr. Chairman. The matter that has caused this amendment to be brought forward was serious, but I hardly believe a drastic measure, such as the Honorable Member has proposed is necessary. On the other hand I cannot see that the welfare of the island should be hampered as the proposed amendment calls for; it would be dangerous to give the Food Commission such power; let us give the community a chance and if we see that they need to be clubbed, well then we will have to club them.

4th Member for Frederiksted Country District [Fleming] remarked: Mr. Chairman. When I heard of what happened at the Dairy to me it was a regrettable thing; I consider it a shame for the Dairymen to put themselves in the same position as those who called the strike in Governor Helweg-Larsen's time. I think the best thing to do is to prevent strikes at the Dairy, in fact strikes of any kind, including laborers.

1st member for Frederiksted Town [Coulter] remarked: Mr. Chairman. I hope that this discussion will not bring up unpleasant features of the past. Let us stick to the old saying, "Let the dead bury its dead". As a member of the Food Commission, of which there are only three in the Council, I wish

to say a word of appreciation to two men who did not join in the cessation of the delivery of milk, Mr. Leevy and Mr. Esmann who continued to send in their milk; the whole island should appreciate the refusal of those men to join with the others; one is justified in saying that the primary thought of the men of the Dairy was, that we can get a good price for our cattle in Porto Rico, we will raise the price on our milk and if the Food Commission don't agree to raise the price we will close down; and their second thought was, let us send our cattle to Porto Rico and we don't care how many babies are going to be buried.

As a member in the Food Commission I am in sympathy with the amendment proposed by the Honorable Member for Christiansted Town. There is a large majority of the public who know that for six months the Food Commission has been under criticism. If the Food Commission is to continue it must have power behind it if it is not to have power behind it then let it be abolished.

1st Member for Frederiksted Country District [Andersen] remarked: Mr. Chairman. I am not in favor of abolishing the Food Commission; there have not been undue profits; the Food Commission is there to see that such a thing does not take place; it is not the business of the Food Commission to put down prices whenever it feels like doing so.

2nd Member for Christiansted Town (Canegata) remarked: Mr. Chairman. I wish to thank the Honorable Member for his comment and the great esteem he has for the Food Commission, but every man must protect his self respect.

4th Appointed Member (Blackwood) remarked: Mr. Chairman. I don't believe that the Dairy meant to starve the children, they closed to get a higher price for their milk, I do not believe they closed down for the purpose of starving the children; it is beyond reason to say that they meant to starve the little children. The measure which is before us is dangerous, don't let children play with fire, because they are liable to get burnt.

The scarcity of milk is caused a great deal by the weather, I know it from experience; I have forty milk cows, I milk ten daily and can only get sufficient milk to supply my home; I don't believe it is the intention to deprive the infants of their milk.

1st Member for Frederiksted Country District (Andersen) proposed that the vote be taken on the amendment.

2nd Appointed Member [Noll] remarked: Mr. Chairman. The power which is asked for in this amendment is in force in the sister island and I have not even seen an editorial in the papers where the Food Commission there has abused that power. I believe the right of property is inviolable, but property can only be taken by due process of law, and that is by going to law. In draft-