

A MEETING OF THE COLONIAL COUNCIL

for the Municipality of St. Croix is called for THURSDAY THE 21ST INST., AT 4.30 P. M. for the purpose of meeting Governor Williams, United States Newspaper Representatives and 10 high Naval Officers of the United States Navy who express a desire to meet the Colonial Council.

(Convened by request of the Chairman.)

Colonial Council Office, St. Croix, February 18, 1924.

ROBT. L. MERWIN,
Chairman.

SEALD proposals for the furnishing and delivery of approximately **1500 barrels of sea gravel** will be received at the office of the Public Works Department, up to 11 A. M. February 23, 1924, at which time they will be publicly opened. A sample of the quality and size of the gravel required can be seen at this office. Quote price per barrel delivered and measured on the wharf, Christiansted, or at the reservoir site. All bidders must be able to guarantee delivery of the entire amount within six weeks from date of award. Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

JOHN C. GEBHARD,
Asst. Public Works Officer.

February 18, 1924.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE JOINT SESSION OF THE COLONIAL COUNCILS for St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John.

(Continued from yesterday's Avis.)

4th Member for Christiansted Country District (Ramsay): Mr. Chairman. I have cultivated sugar cane the same as the Honorable 4th Member for Frederiksted Country District. The Honorable Member forgets that I have been the owner of an estate on this island. He is only an employee of a rich concern. He says that the flat rate tax of \$8.00 per ton on sugar exported from the island is too high, he should be glad that it is not more than \$8.00.

4th Member for Frederiksted Country District (Andersen): Mr. Chairman. I have no answer to make except that the Honorable Member does not know what he is saying.

2nd Member for Christiansted Town

(Canegata) remarked: Mr. Chairman. If a member is allowed to speak more than once on this resolution then I see no use for a time limit.

2nd Member for Christiansted Country District (Berg) remarked: Mr. Chairman. I have this remark to make—It is said that this resolution has been drawn up after the public was given a hearing. Acting upon the request of Governor Hough the Municipal Committee of this island held a meeting in this Hall some time ago at which representative citizens of this island were present, and at which time a motion was made and unanimously adopted that the former memorial now in the possession of the Council be forwarded to Congress. To act contrary to the desire of the people is a serious undertaking for the Municipal Committee.

2nd Member for Frederiksted Country District (Curry): Mr. Chairman. I proposed that the memorial as presented to Mr. Denby be used as a basis on which to formulate a memorial to Congress. I see that another memorial is submitted. I do not see how this Council can go back on itself and vote for another memorial.

2nd Member for Christiansted Town (Canegata) remarked: Mr. Chairman. If such a procedure as outlined were made binding upon the Municipal Committee, the Municipal Committee would be useless. The Municipal Committee makes efforts to meet the wishes of the people, but it cannot be bound by their decision.

Government Secretary (Zane) remarked: Mr. Chairman. A little explanation is necessary. On October 20 last His Excellency the Governor of the Virgin Islands addressed a letter identical in form to both Municipal Committees. In effect it suggested that each Municipal Committee hold hearings for the purpose of determining recommendations and ideas which would tend to better the economic situation of these islands. It was suggested that these recommendations should fall under two heads; one, What can we do for ourselves, and what should we ask the Congress of the United States to do for us. Accordingly the Municipal Committees held hearings and you have got the results before you. I think the two previous speakers misunderstood what the Chairman of the Municipal Committee of St. Thomas said. The resolution, as it now stands before you is intended to accomplish what was originally intended, a basis upon which the Government could build. When I say Government I do not mean the Executive branch alone, but the legislative branch also. There are two features of the resolution which require direct action by Congress—the Coastwise Laws and the Citizenship status—There are other features which will require indirect action by Congress—the Water Supply for both towns—as it will be found necessary to ask for aid in the form of money.

There are certain features which will not require action by Congress, such as the establishment of a Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Labor. In that connection we have three separate departments in the Government dealing with this matter, but here one department is sufficient.

Just one word more by way of explanation, if I may be permitted, to the remark of the Honorable 1st Member for Frederiksted Town on the word "Civil". He is quite correct when he says that the word "Civil" ought to be there, because we have a Civil Government. You had a civil government under Denmark and now you also have a civil government. My idea of what civil government means is a government in which the people have a direct say in the making of laws. A military form of government is a decree by which the people have no voice in the making of laws. It cannot be denied that the people of St. Croix have a great say in the making of laws, otherwise there would be no need for the Colonial Council. The fact that a Naval Officer is appointed Governor of these islands has no bearing. I therefore submit that you have a civil form of government.

2nd Member for Christiansted Country District (Berg): Mr. Chairman. I would like to say that the Colonial Council, on the recommendation of the Municipal Committee passed a memorial, that was pigeon-holed and another is presented for our acceptance.

2nd Member for Christiansted Town (Canegata) remarked: Mr. Chairman. The Honorable Gentleman is all mixed up. The Colonial Council passed a memorial to be presented to Secretary Denby. That was done and it is finished. This is a new memorial.

2nd Member for Christiansted Country District (Berg): I am not mixed up. At a mass meeting 2nd Member for Frederiksted Country District (Curry) proposed and the people voted that that memorial be used as a basis upon which a memorial could be formulated to go to Congress.

2nd Member for Frederiksted Country District (Curry) among other things said the resolution as it stands did not meet with his entire approval because he felt that it should contain the following. In all matters relating to the Colonies, the respective Colonial Councils shall, before any law containing provisions especially relating to the West India Islands be given, be afforded opportunity of giving its opinion in the matter, unless particular reasons render an exception necessary. That the Income Tax Law and the Prohibition Law was put in force on this island by radio while an exception was made of the Philippines. He would suggest that the Council make a start, even though it is a bad start, and accept this resolution.

To be continued.