

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLONIAL COUNCIL FOR ST. CROIX.

(Continued from Saturday's Avis.)

His Excellency Governor Sumner E. W. Kittelle in company with his Financial Aide, John J. Gaffney and Despatching Secretary (C. E. Rappolee) then entered the meeting, and His Excellency addressed the Council as follows:

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Colonial Council of St. Croix.

1.

It was my intention to have returned to St. Croix long ere this, but the press of government work has been unusually heavy and has tied me down very closely to the main office. I inherited, from the previous administration, a tangle in the judiciary, brought about by strange and unusual personal factors. In this matter I had no personal concern, whatsoever, save to preserve intact the dignity and integrity of the island government and to see that the people should have good and faithful service and not be imposed upon. Owing to misunderstandings in Washington, due to the long distance and slow postal communication, a great amount of time was consumed in bringing to light the true facts of the case, but when these facts were finally and fully understood in the National Capital, the fog was quickly cleared away and I trust that we shall not be further diverted, by such complications, from our immediate duties and responsibilities.

2.

In my last letter to the other Colonial Council, I mentioned the active part taken by Senator Kenyon, in securing for the islands the two provisos recently passed by the Congress. I neglected, however, to state, through lack of earlier information, that we are also greatly indebted to Judge Horace M. Towner, M. C., for his influence in the House of Representatives. Both Senator Kenyon and Judge Towner are sincere friends of these islands and have the true interests of the islands at heart.

3.

I am pleased to learn that the Committee of the Colonial Council is giving careful consideration to the local tax law, and thinking to make more clear any of the provisions of the proposed law that may not be fully understood, I have brought with me the Governor's Financial Aide, who will gladly place himself at your disposition for as long a period as you may desire. I realize that you all wish to have concrete examples of how the law will work in special cases and it is much more gratifying to have

the law thus carefully considered by you, rather than to have it jammed through as a purely government measure. We want the best and most just tax law possible.

4.

I congratulate the Colonial Council upon the passage of the judiciary law and from the best legal advice, I am convinced that it will make for economy and efficiency in the courts of the islands.

5.

The Head of the Department of Public Works has just completed carefully worked out plans for a water supply in Christiansted and Frederiksted. These plans will be submitted to you at this session and I will ask you to give them careful consideration, to the end that you may enact legislation authorizing the work to be undertaken at an early date. Water works of sufficient capacity are essential to every community, and in the States the money necessary to construct them is generally obtained through a local issue of bonds, guaranteed by the local government. I know of no duty that should be held paramount to this one of affording an assured water supply to our towns on this island.

6.

The Secretary of Agriculture has taken the keenest personal interest in these islands and has gone to unusual trouble and has exercised painstaking care in the selection of the man to take charge of the Agricultural Experiment Station here. The man selected has had very long and wide experience in the tropics, having served in the Philippines, Guam, Honolulu, California and Florida. The Secretary of Agriculture is very sympathetic toward my desire to make the Virgin Islands self-supporting in vegetable and fruit culture and has expressed his willingness to cordially assist us in this work.

7.

I will bespeak the same cordial support of the new Despatching Secretary that you have always accorded his predecessor, the latter having been recalled from civil and assigned to naval duty in the due course of National Government policy. It is not well that young officers should remain away from naval duties for too long a period, so that Ensign Fox has again taken up the regular duties of his Corps; but I know that you will be glad to learn that the Government considers that he has performed the duties of Despatching Secretary with marked ability and that this fact will be recorded in his official record in Washington. The Navy Department has been more than generous in lending trained officers to the Colonial Government and the island budget has been saved thousands of dollars in consequence. The Despatching Secretary, in the absence of the Governor, is the Governor's immediate repre-

sentative in St. Croix, and Mr. Rappolee will at all times be in the closest touch with the Government, devoting himself entirely to the interests of St. Croix.

SUMNER E. W. KITTELLE,  
Governor.

In addition to my message there is a subject upon which I find it necessary to speak at this time. It has come to my notice that certain persons on this island who labor have quit work. It has also come to my notice that other persons who labor do not wish to quit work. The right to work or not to work is an inalienable right under the American flag. Further information has been received by me to the effect that those who wish to work have been threatened that if they do work upon their peaceful and lawful jobs they will in some way be injured. I will ask you gentlemen to say to your constituents that the Government now offers a reward of twenty-five francs to any person producing evidence that will lead to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons who in any manner threaten or seek to intimidate any other person or to in any way deter or prevent such person from going to and performing his or her daily work or occupation. There shall be no intimidation under the American flag and the Governor will use his full power to quell any such attempt. Every citizen, every man, woman and child shall proceed freely about their lawful occupation and the Governor will see that they are not molested.

This is a period of great depression in business throughout the world and business can survive only if there is entire co-operation between capital and labor. There are thousands of men and women out of work everywhere in the world and in the United States they number into the hundreds of thousands. All the prices in force during the war were inflated and unhealthy. They could not survive the return of peace conditions, so that now both prices and wages are gradually dropping to pre-war figures. This is a very ill-advised time for anyone to strike and my advice to all good citizens is to keep the jobs they have and do their best to rebuild prosperity; and I most solemnly urge upon everyone to observe law and order and carefully refrain from all injury to property.

The Chairman then gave a recess of 10 minutes

After recess the Council reassembled and the Chairman remarked: The next item on the Order of the Day is item 3. This matter is withdrawn as there are technicalities involved. It will be taken up later on.

Item 4.

Election of a member, in lieu of Lawyer A. E. Stakemann, on the Educational Board of Review, according to Title 1, Chapter 2, Section 3a, sub-item 4 of the Code.