

for the island. This civil government business calls for a careful study of various conditions and it is believed that after a conscientious survey of the same we will let the civil government proposition alone for the present.

The Ranger and auxiliary boats here are understood to be carrying on survey work and may be here for some time.

The mail-sloop Mizpah from St. Thomas returned to this port with mails and passengers at 7 o'clock this morning.

Christiansted St. Croix,
April 2, 1924.

Dear Mr. Editor,—

A certain writer said "Better bear the ills we have than fly to those we know not of."

The above quotation can be applied to these Virgin Islands, Mr. R. Francis and his followers have taken in their hands a big problem, and one which neither Mr. Francis nor his followers can handle. No doubt Mr. Francis is being used and has promises of being Mr. SOMEBODY, but Mr. Francis, you are too insignificant, you and your followers belong to the "Bluff class."

We agree with Voter and Taxpayer
WE DO NOT WANT A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.

TAXPAYERS.

Let Us Take Action.

(St. Thomas Bulletin, 31st March).

His Excellency, the Governor announced by official publication on March 29, 1924, that a bill to provide a permanent form of civil government for the Virgin Islands, was introduced in the Senate on March 10, 1924, by Senator McLean of Connecticut (by request).

He also stated, in no uncertain terms, that he had nothing to do with this bill, was not aware of its contents, and in fact knew nothing definite concerning it until a printed copy was received in the mail on the morning of March 29, 1924.

He further states that insofar as he is aware, the people of the Virgin Islands, as represented by the two Colonial Councils, have never signified a desire for a complete change in the form of Government of these islands, such as the bill in question would provide.

The Governor goes on to say that the danger of legislation vitally affecting the Virgin Islands being presented to Congress without the knowledge or sanction of either the local government or the people, is only too apparent, and, as an illustration, invites attention to the possibility of the Federal Congress ceasing to provide the annual appropriation for these islands.

He calls attention to the fact that Porto Rico, from whose Organic Act the bill

in question is largely copied, receives no direct federal appropriation.

The Governor is very mild and conservative in his statements, obviously because he does not wish to express an opinion as to the merits of the bill itself.

We have had time to do no more than glance over the bill, but no more is necessary to cause us to stand appalled at the thought of the consequences which would ensue if it should ever happen to be enacted into law.

The first outstanding thought which occurs is this: The Organic Act of March 3, 1917, providing for a temporary government for the Virgin Islands among its other temporary provisions provided for an appropriation of \$100,000 from the Federal Treasury for the purpose of providing for such temporary form of government.

Each year a similar appropriation has been made in a greater amount, and these appropriations have been almost entirely used in building up the public school systems of the islands, in maintaining the excellent hospital facilities which we now enjoy and in various other ways contributing directly to the health, comfort and well-being of the population generally.

Furthermore, the officers of the Navy including the Governor, assigned by the Navy Department to fill civil positions under the Government of the Virgin Islands, are paid from Navy appropriations and not from either the Federal appropriation for the Virgin Islands or from the revenues thereof.

The annual average of the appropriations which have been made during the past seven years from the Federal Congress for the Virgin Islands is \$300,000.00. The salaries of the naval officers performing civil duty may be moderately estimated at \$75,000.00 more.

Therefore, the Federal Government is actually contributing at present not less than \$375,000.00 towards the well-being of these islands. Roughly, on this basis the Federal Government contributes 50% towards the total operating expenses of the Government of the Virgin Islands, and the remaining 50% is obtained through taxation.

This financial assistance rendered by the Federal Government to the Virgin Islands must be considered just as temporary as the form of government provided by the Organic Act.

It is not to be supposed for one moment that when Congress provides a permanent form of government for the Virgin Islands, it will be willing to continue the temporary financial aid which it now provides. There is no logical reason for believing otherwise.

The question then resolves itself into whether our economic condition at the present time is such that our present temporary form of government should be superseded by a permanent one.

The first and paramount consideration

is the certainty that the Federal monetary aid will be withdrawn.

(To be concluded.)

TELEGRAMS.

ST. CROIX STATION.

Waterville, Ohio March 31st.—Dr. Baker, who for twenty years has been general superintendent of the anti-saloon league, died at home here today.

New York March 31st.—The Fire Island Lightship was rammed today by the British cargo steamer "Castilian" during a fog. The "Castilian" was not damaged and the lightship remained above water and her crew stayed on board.

London, March 31st.—The Central News reports that the Government at Sophia has announced that the late Prime Minister Stamboulisky had discovered a plot to overthrow the Government and establish a republic. After the overthrow of his Cabinet, he was made prisoner by the troops of the provisional government in June last and was shot dead while attempting to escape.

Rome, March 31st.—Advices from Palermo state that a huge landslide has taken place there, destroying twenty four houses, but so far no casualties have been reported. Over a hundred families were compelled to vacate the affected region.

London, March 31st.—The House of Commons today authorized the expenditure of four hundred thousand pounds for the establishment of the new system of cable and wireless communication between the British West Indies and British Guiana. Mr. Thomas, Secretary of State for the Colonies, said the money was not a grant, but a loan for a period of thirty years. Some of the proposed cables are expected to be working by the coming Autumn and the entire system of cables and wireless by June 1925.

Washington, March 31st.—Mr. Sinclair lessee of the Teapot Dome property, was today indicated by the Federal Grand Jury on charges of contempt growing out of his refusal to testify before the Senate Oil Committee. A resolution calling for the resignation of Mr. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, because of his connection with the oil leasing programme, has been drawn up by Senator Dill. Faced with determined opposition from the Republican Organization and lacking united support among the Democrats, the resolution calling for an investigation of Secretary Mellon has been laid aside indefinitely by the Senate.

Dublin, March 31st.—The blowing up of bridges and the destruction of roads in counties Longford and West Meath, news of which has been fully confirmed are said to be due to labour trouble and not actions of a political nature. The road workers are on strike in the two counties as a consequence of the County Council's proposals for a reduction in wages and the destruction of the roads and bridges is alleged to be an outgrowth of the strike.