

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLONIAL COUNCIL FOR ST. CROIX.

(Continued from yesterday's Avis.)

The *Chairman* remarked: Honorable Members before proceeding to the order of the day, I desire to make a few remarks upon the Council's visit to St. Thomas to meet with the Colonial Council of St. Thomas and St. John, the Secretary of the Navy and Congressional party.

As you are aware at a caucus meeting it was decided that all the members of the Council should go to St. Thomas, as members desired. However, only ten went.

It gives me great pleasure to report that our Council, represented as we were, made a most favorable impression upon the visitors, the Governor, the Members of the St. Thomas Council and the public in general; they looked upon us as a body of experts. It is very gratifying to know that we made such an impression on the Members of the Council of the sister island.

Our Memorial was read by our esteemed Secretary, Dr. Canegata, in his clear and lucid style which materially assisted our case. Secretary Denby listened most attentively, and when he omitted the statistics, with the object, no doubt, of shortening the time, Mr. Denby requested that the statistics be read.

We have to thank His Excellency the Governor for the very able support he gave us in our problems. From all sides we were complimented upon the masterly style and the concise manner in which we presented our case. St. Thomas had such a voluminous report that they could not get a hearing on all the matters presented.

The *Governor* asked that speeches be made short, and desired to limit each speaker to two minutes. Under those circumstances we were forced to limit our speeches to subjects introduced. I have to thank Mr. Curry and Captain Blackwood for the masterly style in which they forcibly presented our dissatisfaction upon the Prohibition Law, also to Mr. Andersen for the very quick and convincing answers he made upon the tax question and to each member of our party for the co-operation and the good impression evinced. I feel persuaded that our efforts have not been in vain; that much good will result from our visit.

That all the subjects touched upon in our memorial were not discussed is in my opinion immaterial as by our memorial we have, so to speak, registered our needs and grievances will be evidence in future years that we were this day alive to the difficulties which beset us and

which a strong parent could in a large measure relieve if so disposed. And I was assured by several Senators whom I met in conversation that there was no doubt but that the islands needed aid. However, we have direct and positive assurances in the speech of Secretary Denby, made at the meeting, and which has been duly published in the press, and with which you are, no doubt, already familiar. In it he makes a definite promise, which is as follows:

"As to myself, I am going to send down here and have attached to the Governor's staff a civil engineer from the Navy of as good capacity as I can get to make a study in the hills of St. Thomas and the Hills and plains of St. Croix and find what method, if any can be adopted, to impound rain or whether or not he thinks it worth while to dig for water; whether artesian wells are likely to produce, and if not, whether it is a mechanical and engineering possibility to impound rain in order that the water may be conserved for the use of the people and for the use of the cattle on these islands."

Therefore, we have at least, at the moment, accomplished this which will be much if the engineers can succeed, and that alone will be well worth our efforts and trip to St. Thomas.

Senator Kendrick of Wyoming was greatly interested in our cattle problem. Evidently he was an old cow boy for he scented out Mr. Armstrong and had a long talk with him upon our cattle industry. I was glad we had such a good advocate for that all important industry.

Admiral Coontz who was one of the distinguished party told me in conversation that while he was Governor of Guam he had the same problem and with the Federal aid the rainfall had been impounded as we had suggested, and that it was a success in Guam. That is certainly comforting information.

Therefore our mission was most successful on the main issues. I am sorry that all our members could not go to St. Thomas. His Excellency, Governor Hough, desired to express to the Council his appreciation of our efforts which he did by writing to me the following letter:

Government House,
St. Thomas,

Virgin Islands of the United States,
April 9, 1923.

The Honorable R. L. Merwin,
Chairman of the Colonial Council
of St. Croix.

Dear Mr. Merwin,

It gives me great pleasure to express to you and through you to the Colonial Council my gratification at the manner in which presentation was made to the Secretary of the Navy and the visiting Congressional members, of the questions affecting St. Croix and the islands as a group.

It is my opinion that many were very

much interested, and that the statements made fell on receptive ears, won sympathy, and that the conference will be productive of good results.

Faithfully yours,

HENRY H. HOUGH.

and to which letter, on behalf of the Council I took upon myself the responsibility to send a reply as follows:

St. Thomas, April 10, 1923.

His Excellency

Captain H. H. Hough,
Governor of Virgin Islands
&c., &c.
St. Thomas.

Mr. dear Governor Hough,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed letter of yesterday and to thank you personally and on behalf of the Colonial Council of St. Croix for your thoughtful and highly complimentary expressions so pleasantly tendered.

I am gratified to learn that our efforts have not been misdirected and that they are likely to be productive of lasting benefit to the inhabitants of St. Croix.

May fortune's wheel so turn, under the flag of our great Republic to place St. Croix yet again into the unenviable position of being called the Garden of the Antilles, the unique distinction she enjoyed for so many years.

I shall have much pleasure in presenting your kind message to the Council at my earliest opportunity.

Faithfully yours,

R. L. MERWIN.

I conclude by saying that I feel highly grateful for our trip to St. Thomas, I also feel that we have done something good, may God bless the effort.

To be continued.

LOCAL

With reference to what a correspondent signing himself "Several Independent Voters" in yesterday's issue of the Herald has to say about Mr. Berg as being ineligible for election to a seat in the Colonial Council because he holds a government position and as the writer claims is budgetted for a salary of \$1,500, it would appear that there is little or no argument whatever in the contention presented apart from the fact that the writer is wrong about the budgetting of the salary and of the amount, the salaries of the personnel of the Telephone System not being on the budget at all, but defrayed from the Telephone Fund, and the manager's salary being not what is stated. The logic of the writer is poor in the extreme when he attaches so much importance to the budget and Mr. Berg's passing on his own salary, an item of business that would come up but once a year anyway, and is first practically disposed of by the municipal committee before being brought before