

SUPPELMENT

TO ST. CROIX AVIS NO. 240.

SATURDAY, 18TH OCTOBER 1919.

The week-end mails to arrive by the Virginia are reported as having been received in Frederiksted by sub-chaser last night.

At a meeting held in the theatre yesterday the merchants decided to effect no change in prices of foodstuffs etc. before midnight tonight in order to afford the laboring population an opportunity of securing the benefit of normal prices until next week when steps will be taken to meet the situation as far increase of wages is concerned.

THE MONEY QUESTION.

The value of an American dollar rose yesterday from \$1.04 to 1.27½. This change in the rate of exchange follows what has taken place all over the world. The value of the English pound, the French franc, the Italian lire, and the German mark have also been affected. Where previously about five local francs equalled an American dollar, now over six are required.

The Government wishes to assure the public that there is no cause for alarm. The situation has been given immediate and full consideration. Fortunately yesterday morning, the Code Commission was in session in the Administration Building, so that all the members of the Governor's staff and legal talent on the Commission were immediately called into consultation by the Governor. The leading local employers of labour, a representative of the Bank, and the Chairman of the Colonial Council were also conferred with.

The National Bank informed the Government that they had decided to calculate all bills held by them for collection yesterday, whether due or not due, at the old rate of exchange, \$1.05, in order not to cause any loss to merchants who had imported goods through the Bank and perhaps had sold them at a normal rate; goods coming in after October 15th, 1919, however, are to be paid at the new rate. The merchants having the opportunity in the meanwhile to regulate the prices of incoming goods according to the new rates which must be paid by them.

The employers of labor agreed, in order that the purchasing power of the franc may remain the same during the present temporary fluctuating rate of exchange, to continue to pay the present scale of wages, plus a bonus equal to the fluctuating value of the franc. For instance, the man who has previously received a dollar a day (say five francs) will hereafter receive in addition to his pay as much as a bonus as equals the loss in exchange.

Those merchants who have raised their prices, since yesterday, more than 23% are doing so unfairly. The Food Commission will meet this morning to set new prices based on the new rates of exchange, and their new list will be published promptly.

The Government repeats the statement that there is no cause for alarm, and it requests all persons to cooperate with it until the money situation again becomes normal.

Unnecessary purchases should not be made. Purchases should be confined to necessities, and luxuries should not be bought at the present time.

It is thought that the present situation will be but temporary and the money market will again be stabilized.—*St. Thomas Bulletin, Oct. 16th.*