

LOCAL

The Federal Commission concluded its hearings in Christiansted at noon yesterday when those representing the planting element had taken the stand. The commission conducts a hearing in Frederiksted today.

The U.S.S. Grebe arrived here from St. Thomas yesterday bringing the Government Secretary and members of the St. Thomas Colonial Council, and returned after 5 p. m.

The Colonial Councils of the Virgin Islands met in joint session yesterday, twenty eight members in all being present. The resolution referred to in letter of His Excellency the Governor, published in this issue, was past with 25 yeas and 3 nays.

2½ lines of rain was measured at the Fort this morning.

The s. s. "Guiana" from New York is due at Frederiksted at 3 o'clock this afternoon, having 400 packages for this island.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES, TO THE COLONIAL COUNCILS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAINT CROIX AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAINT THOMAS AND SAINT JOHN IN JOINT EXTRAORDINARY SESSION ASSEMBLED—FEBRUARY 7, 1924

It is with much regret that I am not present with you on this most momentous occasion. Only most adequate reasons prevent my coming to St. Croix at this time, the first being that Commander Warfield, the eminent Civil Engineer sent to the Virgin Islands by the Secretary of the Navy to investigate and report on the plans which have been evolved for the establishment of a permanent water supply system for the towns of St. Thomas, Christiansted and Frederiksted, has now completed his investigation in St. Thomas and is ready to report the result of it to me on Thursday, February 7, 1924, unfortunately the date of the joint meeting of the Colonial Councils. Should I delay this matter one day, it would necessitate Commander Warfield delaying his departure for St. Croix on the U. S. S. Grebe Friday, and consequently delay the prosecution of his work in the Municipality of St. Croix. The second reason is a more personal one, of sickness in my family.

I have stated in letters addressed to each of the Chairman of the Colonial Councils, my strong gratification in this joint meeting and I trust that each Chairman will see fit to read my letter to him in the presence of the two Colonial Coun-

cils. I am informed that this is the first occasion upon which the two Councils have met in joint session for accomplishing a legislative purpose. The very fact that this legislative purpose is the same for both Municipalities is, in itself, a great achievement. It is an instance of a co-ordination and cooperation between the two Municipalities, in my opinion of great future significance. It lays the foundation, I am certain, of that co-ordination of effort between the legislative and executive branches of Government, by means of which adequate results may be obtained. The Virgin Islands are a concrete unit of the Federal Government of the United States. They are not two units. The fact that they are divided into two Municipalities is a matter of legislative and administrative convenience, and they should not be considered separate entities.

The occasion of this joint extraordinary session of the two Colonial Councils is tremendously important in two respects. First, the purpose of it is for the consideration of a resolution resulting from a definite action of the people of the Virgin Islands to analyse their economic condition and to develop concrete recommendations to improve it. This, in itself, is profoundly significant. The adoption of this resolution by the two Colonial Councils will mean that there will be presented to the executive branch of the Government a platform upon which both the executive branch and the legislative branch can build. The second purpose is one of opportunity, but it is no less important. At the instance of the President of the United States, the Secretary of Labor appointed a delegation of six eminent citizens of the Continental United States for the purpose of visiting the Virgin Islands, investigating generally their economic condition and make recommendations towards improvement. We have seized this opportunity and will show these gentlemen of the Commission that we ourselves, are not lacking in the ability to analyse our economic situation and to devise ways and means of improving it. The adoption of his Resolution in the presence of this Honorable Federal Commission, will most certainly impress it with a sense of our initiative, clear-headedness and desire to help ourselves, and I sincerely believe, that the gentlemen of this commission, when they see this resolution, will not only be willing, but will be anxious to embody the features it contains in their report to the President of the United States and to the Secretary of Labor, and thereby sanction them as being worthy of such assistance in their fulfilment as we may represent to the proper authorities of the Home Government, is necessary.

I am represented at this joint session of the Colonial Councils by the Government Secretary and by the Despatching Secretary, Saint Croix. I feel that they

will do all that is necessary on behalf of the executive branch, towards bringing the business before the two Colonial Councils to a successful conclusion. I offer only one more remark. The resolution in its present form embodies the most careful and painstaking thought of the two Municipal Committees. The two Municipal Committees were kind enough to permit the Government Secretary to work with them in evolving this resolution, in order that the two Municipal Committees and the Executive branch of the Government, as represented by the Government Secretary, might agree beforehand on a document satisfactory to both, and therefore, I consider it my duty to point out that this document should not be amended upon the floor for the most important reason that, because of lack of time for the adequate consideration of amendments, it may well be that amendments would so weaken the whole document that the Government would find itself unable to utilize it as a whole in representing matters to the Home Government.

Gentlemen, while I am not with you in the flesh I am most certainly with you in the spirit, and I wish you most earnestly, a successful conclusion of this most important matter before you.

PHILIP WILLIAMS,
Governor.

TELEGRAMS.

ST. CROIX STATION.

London, Feb. 4th.—The Prime Minister has decided to take a single salary on only 5,000 pounds, although filling the dual offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Foreign Secretary, which carry a salary of 5,000 pounds.

London, Feb. 4th.—Great Britain has sent a challenge for the Davis Cup.

London, February 4th.—Ministers of the Labour Government miss no occasion to reassure public opinion that the Empire and its interests are safe in their hands. The Solicitor General Mr. Slessar in a weekend speech at Leeds, added to this assurance. His point was that colonials "being more democratic than the English ruling classes, would get along better with Labourmen than with their aristocratic predecessors". In other words, he presumed that the Dominions will be more at home in "shirt sleeves" than in "kid gloves" of diplomacy.

London, Feb. 4th.—The balance of the ministerial appointments are now announced as follows. Junior Lords and Commissioners of the Treasury, William Graham (Edinburgh, Central), who is one of the intellectuals of the Labour Party, Frederick Hall Norman (Yorkshire), who is an examiner, Thos. Kennedy (Kirkcaldy) one of the ablest exponents of Marxian Socialism in Great Britain, and John Roberts (Bochwell, Lanark) who started to work in a mine at 11 years of age and chose the night shift