

The Congressional Committee conducted its hearings all day yesterday and until nearly midnight during which time a number of persons testified. We shall endeavor to furnish some details of these proceedings in a later issue.

It was our pleasure yesterday to hear Senator Edge of New Jersey, Congressman of the United States and one of the prospective nominees for the presidency, tell the Editor of the Herald that the present form of government is civil, a fact contended by others of the commission during the course of their remarks. So much for the value of the Herald's opinion.

We reprint in this issue an editorial from St. Thomas Mail Notes of the 4th., and an address in its issue of the 5th. instant from the able pen of former Editor Nolte, both articles supporting the desire for a continuance of the present form of Government. Those determined to have it otherwise would do well to note the weight of these contributions on the subject and learn to have some respect for the views of other people not all of whom they are able to teach anything.

Frederiksted, Feby. 9th. 1920.

The S. S. "Monca" arrived here Saturday morning at 7 o'clock from New York via St. Thomas. She brought about 3,850 packages general cargo for this island and the following passengers:

Rev. W. S. Morgan, Mr. & Mrs. E. Rasmussen, Mr. & Mrs. H. Hendricksen, Miss Jenny Lang, Amelia Hay, Lt. J. W. Lytte, M. S. Guogier, Mrs. Olsen, son & nurse, Robt. Skeoch, M. D. Sasso, Mrs. E. Caroe, & child, Dr. H. Hark, Miss Fleming, Sam. Loyd, Mary Lynch, Catharine Robinson, E. Denton, H. Williams, Alfred Edwards, Mrs. Belford, & son Rosa Adams, Florence Javis, A. March, T. Seater, A. Canton, Ethel Joseph, J. B. Marcus, Miss Latimer.

She left about midnight for St. Kitts and other Windward Islands with a few packages general cargo from this island and the following passengers:

For St. Kitts: Ann Thomsen and 2 children, Mr. Douglas S. Armstrong, T. C. Robbins, H. L. Bishop Hutson, C. W. Stout Esq. For Antigua: G. H. Brand Esq., Miss Agnes Skeoch. For Dominica: Mrs. Chas. Watts. For Guadeloupe: Madame Grant. For Barbados: Mr. Chas. Watts. For Demerara: Mrs. Eliz. Barry.

The schooner "Virginia" arrived here yesterday about noon from St. Thomas with a small New York, Porto Rico and St. Thomas mail, some packages general cargo and the following passengers:—From Porto Rico:—Mrs. Alice Lang, Louis R. Golden, Maud L. Jacobsen, Alice E. Bushby.

From St. Thomas:—Victor Birch, George Petersen.

She left at 7 p. m. with outward mail and the following passengers:—For Porto Rico:—Mrs. Alice P. Frederick, Mr. Eli Burkall.

For St. Thomas: Miss Inger Simmonds.

MEN OF MATURE JUDGMENT DO NOT WANT CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGIN ISLANDS AT PRESENT MOMENT.

Many an irresponsible individual has, through their illogical and irresponsible teachings, which have too long been allowed to go unchallenged by others wiser and more mature thought, helped to cause a would-be progressive community to suffer the ills of want through internecine strife. It is only individuals in a community like ours, who having obtained a little education, and thereby becoming obsessed with the belief that they—and they only—are correct in every stand taken by them, in opposition to those who have for years looked at the varied phases of community life, would advocate the placing of the Virgin Islands under a civil administration.

Have these men ever thought of the responsibilities accruing from a civil administration, responsibilities which we never would be able to fulfil? Have they ever given thought to the position in which we would be placed were we, with civil government given us, to prove a failure?

These are two potent factors that must be considered by every patriotic son of the soil ere he cries for something that can be naught but a source of danger to the welfare of his country.

The consensus of opinion in well-informed circles is, that the Virgin Islands do not require a change of government *just now*.

Not that anything is believed to be wrong with a civil form of government. Surely not! But because certain facts have to be squarely faced, facts that are being thus faced by nearly every well-informed member of the community, one of which facts is, *that the Treasury of the Virgin Islands is empty!*

The islands therefore, not being able from a financial point of view to support a civil government, it behooves us then, to remain under the administration of the present Naval Government until such time as our pecuniary circumstances have changed for the better.

And although the island is a naval base are we really under a naval government?

No! Judging from the fact that we have a Legislative body to frame our laws, and that we are not interfered with by "naval regulations," we are simply but *wards of the navy*.

Thus it is, that the Navy Department

taking cognizance of the islands' impoverished condition, pays the salary of the Governor, (an admiral) and his aides (naval officers).

We are therefore willing to await, yet a while, a change in our pecuniary circumstances, before we look for a purely civil form of government.

Meanwhile, however, we expect assistance from the mainland—from that country to which with "hope deferred" we have been looking for many a generation, to come over and make us fellow-citizens.

And when that assistance has been given, and it has fructified into prosperity, it will certainly be found that it had not been bestowed upon an ungrateful people, as the "people of the mainland" will find their generosity amply repaid when the inhabitants of these isles turn their thoughts across the intervening space of ocean to America, and bless her for their achieved prosperity.—*St. Thomas Mail Notes, Feb. 4th.*

ADDRESS To The Congressional Commission.

By LEROY NOLTE, ex-Editor.

GENTLEMEN.

I deem it a real privilege to greet you and to extend to you in the name of a very large number of my fellow-citizens of all classes a Hearty Welcome to our shores, a welcome all the more sincere in view of the opportuneness of your arrival at a most critical period of our island's affairs.

I do not overstate the facts when saying that at no time in its commercial life has St. Thomas faced such a crisis, owing to the standstill in business, loss of trade, and unemployment, with all the hardships consequent thereon. Such a disclosure will not fall pleasantly on proud American ears, but the gravity of the outlook makes plain speaking imperative.

The Harbor is virtually the Island's sole dependence. It is, however, steadily failing as a means of business and of support for the working people. Pre-war prosperity has not returned, its main source having been destroyed. Shipping has greatly fallen off. The extensive passenger and tourist traffic is a thing of the past. The lucrative trade in wines and spirits has been suppressed. Fuel oil is replacing coal at a rate that threatens the extinction of the once flourishing bunkering trade, which spells widespread loss and want, a striking example of which is, that from a turnover of 10,000 tons monthly prior to the war, the figures for the past six months show a paltry total of but 9,000 tons. Add to this the unbearably high cost of living