
FURTHER PAPER

RELATING TO

DOMINION LANDS WITHIN THE PROVINCE.

Copy of a Report of the Honourable the Executive Council, approved by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor the 15th March, 1886.

The Committee of Council advise approval of the following Address, passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly:—

“Whereas in an Act passed by this House in December, 1883, intituled ‘An Act relating to the Island Railway, the Graving Dock, and the Railway Lands of the Province,’ it was enacted (*inter alia*) that ‘The Government of Canada shall, with all convenient speed, offer for sale the lands within the Railway Belt upon the Mainland on liberal terms to actual settlers;’ and

“Whereas little or nothing has yet been done towards carrying out the above recited obligation, and the lands referred to are still for the most part practically locked up against purchase or settlement; and

“Whereas actual settlers, who entered upon some of these lands in good faith, are still unable to obtain patents to which they are justly entitled, and are, by reason of long delay and uncertainty as to their holdings, greatly discouraged and hindered in their legitimate operations; be it therefore

“Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying His Honour to represent to the Dominion Government the disastrous effects of the delay and uncertainty complained of, and urge upon said Government the duty and importance of carrying out the spirit and letter of their agreement, by throwing the lands referred to open to all actual settlers with all possible speed, and also by issuing, without further delay, patents for such of these lands as may be *bona fide* occupied by actual settlers.”

The Committee desire, respectfully, but in the strongest possible manner, to ask the immediate and earnest attention of the Dominion Government to the above Resolution, and to point out the dissatisfaction, disappointment and very great hardship resulting from the, apparently, unnecessary delay in throwing open the Railway lands for settlement, and in the issuing of patents to those entitled to them.

The long continued delay and painful uncertainty have operated most prejudicially to the best interests of the Province, by preventing settlement and discouraging those already on the lands from making substantial and permanent improvements.

The Committee of Council respectfully suggest that if the Dominion Government are not prepared effectively to deal with these lands at once, such of them as are adapted for agricultural purposes, in the valley of the Lower Fraser at least, may be handed over to the Provincial Government to be administered by them without further delay, the proceeds thereof to be accounted for to the Dominion Government.

The Committee further advise that a copy of this Minute, if approved, be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Canada, with the request that immediate action may be taken in the premises.

Certified,

(Signed)

JNO. ROBSON,

Clerk Executive Council.
