PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia.

The humble petition of Colin Buchanan Sword, of Matsqui, sheweth:—

That a Bill is now before your Honourable House for an Act to be entitled "An Act for the relief of Settlers and Owners of Land upon Matsqui Prairie."

This Bill proposes to repeal the "Sumas Dyking Amendment Act, 1883," and part of the "Sumas Dyking Act, 1878."

Your Petitioner is an assign of E. L. Derby, to whom the franchise created by the 1878 Act was granted, and he has invested money on the security of the said Act amounting to more than $65,000.

The grievances alleged as a justification of the proposed Relief Act are not real.

By the Amendment Act of 1883, interest ceases on the charges registered against the lands until the dyke shall have been repaired; thus no bar to the disposal or utilization of the lands is created by the existence of these charges, as the applicants themselves will acknowledge that when the dyke is repaired, and these dormant charges revive and carry interest, their lands will be enhanced in value to a much greater extent than the amount of the charges.

Your Petitioner has made an agreement with the "Matsqui Land Company (Limited)," that they will repair the dyke in terms of the Amendment Act of 1883, before 1st November, 1888.

The applicants seek to be relieved from their liability after the dyke shall have been repaired to pay interest on and, in due course, the principal of the charges now registered against their lands; and they are not entitled to such relief, because by the repair of the dyke their lands will be enhanced in value at least fourfold.

Your Petitioner, therefore, with all due respect, protests against the passing of the proposed Bill, as altering, to his detriment, the terms of the contract contained in the "Sumas Dyking Act, 1878," as a breach of public faith, and as a confiscation (to the amount of the aforesaid charges) of his investment.

Your Petitioner, therefore, humbly prays that the aforesaid Bill now before your Honourable House be not passed.

And your Petitioner will ever pray, &c.

C. B. SWORD.

Victoria, 12th March, 1888.

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