

## P A P E R S

RELATING TO THE MISSION OF THE HONOURABLE JOHN ROBSON  
TO OTTAWA, IN OCTOBER, 1887.

By Command.

JNO. ROBSON,

*Provincial Secretary.*

*Provincial Secretary's Office,  
13th March, 1888.*

*To His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

In pursuance and under authority of a Minute of Council—Appendix B—I proceeded to Ottawa, in October last, for the purpose of discussing the various subjects therein referred to.

Arriving at Ottawa on Friday, the 7th October, I immediately sought and obtained an interview with the Premier, with whom, in conjunction with other Ministers, I had frequent conferences during my stay at the Federal capital.

The result of these conferences, in so far as the subjects comprising the immediate object of my mission are concerned, will be found in Appendix D.

Embracing the opportunity presented by my presence at Ottawa, I urged upon the attention of the Dominion Government—*inter alia*—the following subjects, with the results respectively stated:—

I. The Dominion Government agree to the appointment of two additional County Court Judges, for the present.

II. The lands on the Lower Fraser, commonly known as the “dyking lands,” are to be surrendered to the Province.

III. The granting of subsidies to certain railways to be carefully considered, but no absolute promise was made.

IV. The opinion was expressed that it would not be politic to include the Behring Sea question within the scope of the International Fisheries Commission.

V. The question of the settlement of the boundary between Canada and Alaska was earnestly considered, and the advisability of British Columbia being heard before any Commission appointed to deal with it was conceded.

VI. A proposition to place a Federal revenue cutter in the waters which wash the north-west coast of the Province, for the prevention of illicit traffic and protection of our fisheries, although not absolutely agreed to, was favourably entertained.

VII. Assurance was given that a thorough exploration and survey of our sea fishing-grounds would be undertaken during the approaching season.

VIII. Although no definite promise was made, reason was given to expect that the Dominion Government would establish an immigration agency at the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

IX. It was agreed that one moiety of the expense of the Metlakatlah Commissions should be borne by the Dominion.

Other questions of public importance were discussed, but as they still form the subject of confidential communication, it would be improper to allude to them more definitely here.

I am, Sir,

Your Honour's obedient servant,

(Signed) JNO. ROBSON.

*Provincial Secretary's Office,  
12th March, 1888.*

## A.

OTTAWA, 30th July, 1887.

SIR,—I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of your Government, that His Excellency the Governor-General has had under his consideration in Council a report from the Honourable the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, representing that several important questions remain unsettled between the Dominion Government and the Government of British Columbia, and that it is desirable that a satisfactory conclusion respecting the same should be arrived at as early as possible.

It is further represented that the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Victoria and this Government have endeavoured to arrange these outstanding matters by correspondence with the Provincial Government, but up to the present time no satisfactory solution of the questions at issue have been arrived at.

I have now to request that your Government may be moved to appoint one of the members of the Executive Council as Delegate to this Government, clothed with full power to settle all such outstanding questions,—the following, His Excellency is advised, being the principal matters at issue:—

1. The question of the allotment of lands as reserves to Indians in parts of British Columbia where the Crown lands have been all taken up by settlers,—notably at Soda Creek, Douglas Portage, and on the old Cariboo Road.

2. The question of the right of the Indians of the interior of the Province of British Columbia to a sufficiency of water from streams and lakes wherewith to irrigate the lands allotted to them as reserves, in order to render the same cultivable.

3. The question of the sale to other parties by the Government of British Columbia of reserves, or portions of reserves, which had been allotted to the Indians—*e. g.*, at Osoyoos, Eagle Pass, Similkameen, Shuswap Lake, and near Little Shuswap Lake.

4. The question of title of the Dominion Government in reserves allotted by the Joint Indian Reserve Commissioner who succeeded the Joint Commission.

5. The question of the use of Provincial constables and gaols for the apprehension and imprisonment of parties convicted under the Indian Act of violating the provisions of that Act, when trials have been held before Indian Agents.

6. The disposition of amounts collected as fines for infractions of the liquor clauses of the Indian Act.

7. The erection of lock-ups at certain points where there are no gaols, for the imprisonment of parties who have been convicted of infractions of the provisions of the Indian Act—for example, on the West Coast of British Columbia and in the Fort Rupert Agency; also respecting the appointment of constables in those regions, for the arrest of parties against whom warrants have been issued.

8. The question of payment of expenses incurred in the preservation of peace on Indian Reserves in the Province of British Columbia.

I have, etc.,

(Signed)

JOHN COSTIGAN,

*for the Secretary of State.**His Honour**The Lieutenant-Governor  
of British Columbia.*

## B.

*Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council, approved by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 28th day of September, 1887.*

The Committee of Council have had under consideration a despatch from the Honourable the Secretary of State for Canada to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the 30th July, 1887, referring to Indian affairs, and in particular to the following matters:—

1. The question of the allotment of lands as reserves to Indians in parts of British Columbia where the Crown lands have been all taken up by settlers,—notably at Soda Creek, Douglas Portage, and on the old Cariboo Road.

2. The question of the right of the Indians of the interior of the Province of British Columbia to a sufficiency of water from streams and lakes, wherewith to irrigate the lands allotted to them as reserves, in order to render the same cultivable.

3. The question of the sale to other parties by the Government of British Columbia of reserves, or portions of reserves, which had been allotted to the Indians,—*e. g.*, at Osoyoos, Eagle Pass, Similkameen, Shuswap Lake, and near Little Shuswap Lake

4. The question of title of the Dominion Government in reserves allotted by the Joint Indian Reserve Commissioner who succeeded the Joint Commission.

5. The question of the use of Provincial constables and gaols for the apprehension and imprisonment of parties convicted under the Indian Act of violating the provisions of that Act, when trials have been held before Indian Agents.

6. The disposition of amounts collected as fines for infraction of the liquor clauses of the Indian Act.

7. The erection of lock-ups at certain points where there are no gaols, for the imprisonment of parties who have been convicted of infractions of the provisions of the Indian Act,—for example, on the West Coast of British Columbia and in the Fort Rupert Agency; also respecting the appointment of constables in those regions for the arrest of parties against whom warrants have been issued.

8. The question of payment of expenses incurred in the preservation of peace on Indian Reserves in the Province of British Columbia,—and requesting that one of the members of the Executive Council of the Province be appointed as Delegate to the Government of the Dominion, clothed with full power to settle all such outstanding questions.

The Committee recommend that the Honourable John Robson, Provincial Secretary, proceed to Ottawa as such Delegate, and be authorized on behalf of the Provincial Government to settle with the Dominion Government the several matters hereinbefore mentioned, and also any other matters relating to Indian affairs.

The Committee also advise that a copy of this Minute be dispatched to the Honourable the Secretary of State for Canada.

Dated at Victoria, this 23rd day of September, A. D. 1887.

Certified,

(Signed) T. ELWYN,  
*Deputy Clerk of Executive Council.*

C.

OTTAWA, 18th October, 1887.

The undersigned begs respectfully to submit the following facts and suggestions for the consideration of the Honourable the Minister of Customs and the Honourable the Minister of Marine and Fisheries:—

I. For years many British Columbia Indians have been in the habit of annually repairing to United States territory to engage in hop-picking and other employment. These Indians have usually invested their earnings in various kinds of supplies, including, generally, considerable quantities of intoxicating liquors, bringing these supplies into British Columbia without payment of customs duty.

Although in the first instance these supplies were for the most part for the use of those bringing them in, the Indians soon began to traffic in them; and it has become a common practice for Indians to embark in this smuggling trade as a business.

As abovesaid, considerable quantities of intoxicating liquor have in this way been brought in, and that to the great demoralization and injury of the Indian population and serious injury to legitimate trade on the north-west coast of British Columbia,—not infrequently leading to breaches of the peace and endangering the lives and property of the white population.

II. It is believed that with the removal of the Metlakatlah Indians to Alaska, and the establishment there of a large and attractive trading post contiguous to British Columbia territory, there is every probability of the bulk of the trade of our Indians being attracted to that post, and that the trade so attracted will evade duty of customs, unless prevented by special and efficient measures for the protection of the revenue in these waters.

It is obvious that, in addition to the loss of revenue and demoralization of the Indians by the free and unrestricted introduction of the vilest kinds of intoxicants, the Province is, by these means, deprived of a large amount of trade to which it is justly entitled.

III. The oolachan fisheries on the Naas River are relied upon by our Indians for an annual supply of an essential article of food. Naas River being the great, if not the sole, oolachan fishing ground, the Indians of the entire coast, including many from Alaska, annually resort thither; and it is believed that not only will the Metlakatlah Indians who have recently gone out from us to reside in Alaska return annually to their accustomed fishing grounds in British Columbia waters, but that other foreign Indians will flock to the Naas in larger numbers than ever, and that the river will be over-fished and our own Indians driven to the wall and deprived of this most important means of sustenance.

So alarmed have our Indians become in face of this threatened invasion that they have already sent remonstrances to the authorities at Victoria upon the subject.

IV. The undersigned would respectfully suggest as the most effective remedy for both of the above-mentioned abuses or grievances that a revenue cutter be stately employed in the waters which wash the western shores of British Columbia, as well for the protection of the revenue as the valuable fisheries. The presence of such a craft would not only protect the revenue and the fisheries,— of themselves more than sufficient to justify the entire expense,— but it would exert a most salutary influence in the interests of civilization and trade along the seaboard, and in many ways more than compensate for cost involved.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed) JNO. ROBSON,  
*Delegate from British Columbia Government.*

*(on Indian reserves)*

OTTAWA, 28th October, 1887.

MY DEAR MR. ROBSON,—In accordance with our understanding I beg leave to state the results of our several conferences on the matters which have been subjects of correspondence between the Government of Canada and that of British Columbia.

1. On the subject of water for irrigating purposes for the Indian reserves, I understand it to be your intention to obtain the necessary legislation to enable the Indian Agents, as representing the Indian bands, to obtain water records for irrigation purposes in the same manner as they are obtained by white settlers.

2. In relation to Indian reserves, our understanding is that where land cannot be had in the immediate vicinity of Indian settlements in cases where it is desired to make reserves, the Department of Indian affairs will be permitted to select lands suitable for such a purpose elsewhere, and in as close proximity to the Indian settlements as possible.

3. In relation to the general question of the administration of justice and the preservation of the peace among the Indians, which has arisen on the following points,—

a. The appointment of constables, and the erection of gaols in the northern part of Vancouver Island, and the adjoining Mainland.

b. The use of gaols and the assistance of local constables in the Cowichan District.

c. And the disposal of fines received under the penal clause of the Indian Liquor Act,— it is understood that the Government of British Columbia will assume the ordinary cost of the administration of justice and the preservation of peace among the Indians of the Province, they receiving in return therefor that portion of the fines imposed which has hitherto been reserved for the Indian fund.

It will be necessary to have legislation on this subject, and it is understood that the required legislation will be obtained at the next Session of Parliament.

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Yours truly,  
(Signed) THOS. WHITE.

*The Hon. Jno. Robson,  
&c., &c., &c.*