

MESSAGE.

JOSEPH W. TRUTCH.

The Lieutenant-Governor transmits herewith, for the information of the Legislative Assembly, a copy of correspondence between himself and the Secretary of State for the Provinces, in relation to the Address of the Assembly to him last Session on the subject of the Boundary Line between this Province and Alaska.

Government House, Victoria,

February 11th, 1873.

The Lieutenant-Governor to the Hon. J. Howe.

No. 69.

11th July, 1872.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward herewith, for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General, a copy of an Address to me from the Legislative Assembly of this Province, praying that steps may be taken to have the Boundary Line between British Columbia and Alaska defined at an early date.

I have deferred the transmission of this Address until I could obtain the opinion of my Government on the subject matter thereof, which is expressed in the Minute of Executive Council herewith enclosed.

The Boundary Line between the British Possessions in North America and the present United States Territory of Alaska, formerly Russian America, is laid down in the Convention of 1825, Articles 3 and 4.

But the description therein given of this line of demarcation is not so clearly defined as to render it readily traceable on the ground. The initial point of the line on the Mainland is debatable, and the line of demarcation thence following the summit of the Coast Range of Mountains to the 141st meridian west (but limited, whenever such summit shall be found to be more than ten marine leagues from the Ocean, to a line drawn parallel to the coast, and at a distance of ten marine leagues therefrom, and following all the sinuosities thereof) cannot practically be determined.

I therefore concur with my Ministers in thinking that it is desirable that some more clearly marked and more definitely ascertained line should be substituted for that described in the Convention above referred to. But although it certainly is advisable that attention should be called to this subject, in order that steps may be taken to prevent any occasion for dispute hereafter, I am not aware of any circumstances which appear to render the immediate adjustment of this matter urgent.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

JOSEPH W. TRUTCH.

The Secretary of State to the Lieutenant-Governor.

No. 97.

27th July, 1872.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 69, of the 11th instant, covering a copy of an Address to you from the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, together with a copy of a Report of your Executive Council thereon, praying that steps may be taken to have the Boundary Line between Alaska and British Columbia defined at an early date. Your Despatch and its enclosures will receive early consideration.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

G. POWELL,

for Under Secretary.

The Secretary of State to the Lieutenant-Governor.

No. 106.

September 28th, 1872.

Sir,—With reference to your Despatch No. 69, of the 11th July last, and its enclosures, I have the honor to transmit to you herewith, for the information of your Government, a copy of an Order of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council on the Address of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, praying that the Boundary Line between that Province and the Territory of Alaska may be properly defined.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

E. A. MEREDITH,

Under Secretary.

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honorable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, on the 20th September, 1872.

The Committee have had under consideration a Despatch, dated the 11th July, from the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, covering the copy of an Address from his Legislative Assembly, requesting that "inasmuch as recent discoveries in the northern part of British Columbia give good reason to believe that extensive mining operations will shortly be established in that region, and inasmuch as the Boundary line between the adjoining Territories of Alaska and the said Province of British Columbia has never been properly defined, and inasmuch as it will materially assist in maintaining peace, order, and good government within the said Province to have the Boundary line properly laid down, he will be pleased to take such steps as may call the attention of the Dominion Government to the necessity of some action being taken at an early date to have the Boundary line properly defined;" also covering the copy of an Order in Council of his Government, dated the 5th July last, in favour of action, at an early date, to have the said Boundary line properly defined, and advising that the said Resolution be forwarded to the Dominion Government, with the request of the Provincial Government that such action may be taken as may be necessary to carry out the wishes of the Provincial Legislature.

The above Despatch and enclosures having been referred to the Honorable the Secretary of State, he reports that recognizing the importance of the measure in question, in which the Imperial Government is interested also in the same manner as in the settlement of the International Boundary on the 49th Parallel of North Latitude, he recommends that Her Majesty's Government be communicated with, and respectfully requested to take the necessary steps to have the Boundary under consideration determined and marked.

The Committee concur in the above Report, and submit the same for your Excellency's approval.

(Certified)

W. A. HIMSWORTH,

Clerk, Privy Council.