
PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, in Parliament assembled:

The petition of the undersigned resident free miners and property owners within a radius of fifteen miles of the Towns of Brandon and Slocan City in said Province, humbly sheweth:—

1. That the following notice has for some time appeared in the Slocan City News, published at Slocan City aforesaid, to wit:—

“Notice is hereby given that at the next Session of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia application will be made for the passage of a private Bill to incorporate a company for the purpose of constructing, maintaining, equipping and operating electric power and light stations, and a system of electric lighting plant at some point or points in or near Slocan City and Brandon, in the Kootenay District, in the Province of British Columbia, with power to construct, operate, and maintain tramways in the said Towns of Slocan City and Brandon, and adjacent thereto, for the purpose of carrying passengers and freight in, through, or from the said Towns to any point or points within a radius of fifteen (15) miles therefrom, or from and to any other point or points within such radius and parallel, and branch lines in connection therewith.

“And also to take and use of the waters from Lemon Creek and Springer Creek, or any other creek or stream which may be found most convenient and advantageous within the said radius, as may be necessary, for generating electricity to be used either as a motive power for the said tramways or to supply a power for the operating of stationary machinery or electric lighting, or other works of the applicants, or to be supplied by the applicants to consumers as a motive power for propelling, driving, hauling, lifting, pumping, lighting, crushing, smelting, drilling, milling, or for any other purposes for which it may be applied, or be required, with power to the applicants to construct and maintain buildings, erections, weirs, dams, raceways, with other erections in connection therewith for the utilising and improving, and increasing the water privileges, and also to enter upon and expropriate lands for sites for power houses, stations, tramway lines, and subways, or for carrying the electric current underground or overhead, and to erect, lay, construct, and maintain all necessary works, buildings, subways, tramway lines, rails, pipes, poles, wires, appliances, or conveniences necessary or proper for the generating of electric power, its uses, and the supplying of same, and the construction and operating the tramway lines, and all other such powers as may be necessary to fully carry on and operate such works as aforesaid.

“And also for the purpose of establishing water works and supplying water for mining, domestic, manufacturing, fire and other purposes for the said towns of Slocan City and Brandon and the inhabitants thereof, and to the district and mines adjacent thereto, within the said radius from the said towns, and to lay pipes and erect flumes for the conveyance and supply of water to the said towns and within the said radius; the water therefor to be obtained from the creeks or streams afore mentioned.

“Dated this 2nd day of December, A.D. 1896.

“McPHILLIPS, WOOTTON & BARNARD,
“Solicitors for Applicants.”

2. That your petitioners, view with alarm the possibility of a Private Bill being passed granting such powers, privileges and rights as applied for in such notice.

3. That the territory covered by the application for incorporation exceeding 700 miles in area, taking in the Towns of Brandon, Slocan City, and Silvertown and the mining communities of Ten-Mile, Springer and Lemon Creeks, and containing many mining properties which are daily producing large quantities of valuable ore, thus adding to the wealth of the Province, is so great, and the powers, privileges and rights are so extensive that your petitioners fear that the progress of the community would be greatly retarded, and the development of many mining properties would be seriously handicapped by granting to any company any such extensive powers and privileges.

4. Your petitioners respectively submit that great and incalculable injury can be done to the infant industries of a new country by granting special and exclusive privileges, which will, in the near future, prevent the development of the country and the introduction of capital:

5. That in the opinion of your petitioners the powers of expropriation should only be granted on the grounds of public necessity.

6. That your petitioners are satisfied that the general Public Acts fully provide for securing the necessary water privileges and rights to enable any company or individual to carry on any business or enterprise requiring the use of water rights within the said radius.

7. That owing to large quantities of low grade ore lying at the mines awaiting treatment, it is the intention of many property owners to erect concentrating and milling works.

8. That in order to put low grade properties on a paying basis, it is necessary that the ores extracted from such properties be treated in the immediate neighbourhood.

9. That the expenditure in constructing such works would give an impetus to business.

10. That the increased quantity of ore treated, besides opening up trade, would greatly increase the revenues of the Government, and that the natural richness of the district unhampered will continue to invite capital: and we view with alarm any attempt on the part of any company or individual to monopolize the water rights so important to the prosperity of every miner, prospector and any business man within the said radius.

11. That if such exclusive rights be granted to any company, as said notice would seem to imply, it would effectually prevent the above-mentioned development, or at best it could only be carried out under the burden of such changes as said Company might be inclined to impose.

Therefore, we petition and request:

(a.) That no company be incorporated by Your Honourable Body with such powers of expropriation as in said notice mentioned:

(b.) That said company be not granted by private Act, pursuant to said notice, any charter, privilege, franchise, or exclusive right whatever, but that they be allowed to secure such rights only as are given them under the general public Acts of the Province:

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

FRANK DICK, Assayer, etc.,
J. A. FOLEY, Merchant,
PETER McNICOL, Miner and Prospector,
And 55 others.

VICTORIA, B. C.:

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1897.