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RETURN

To an Address of the Legislative Assembly, dated 19th February, 1872, praying that a copy of all correspondence between the Government of British Columbia and the Government of the Dominion of Canada, respecting a Modification of the Tariff, be laid before this House.

25th February, 1872.

A. ROCKE ROBERTSON,
Colonial Secretary.

(TELEGRAM.)

25th January, 1871.

To Lord Lisgar.

Legislature, by Resolution, request me to seek consent of your Government to alteration of our existing Tariff, during this Session, by reducing duty on Spirits to Canadian rate—eighty cents, on Flour to seventy-five cents per barrel, on Wheat to ten cents per bushel, so as to enter Union with British Columbia Tariff so altered. Aggregate Revenue would not be less than under Canadian Tariff. I recommend assent. Telegraph reply.

(Signed) A. MUSGRAVE.

(TELEGRAM.)

1st February, 1871.

To Governor Musgrave.

The Terms of Union are in nature of a Treaty. They have been extensively published in Canada, and accepted by British Columbia. The Canadian Government therefore think they have no right to alter those Terms. After acceptance by Canada, Parliament may, in its discretion, modify the Tariff, on the request of British Columbia. I have no doubt that Parliament will consider any proposition made by you, with a desire to meet your views as much as it properly can.

(Signed) LISGAR.

Governor Musgrave to Lord Lisgar.

Government House, British Columbia,
10th February, 1871.

MY LORD,—I had the honor to receive, on the 2nd instant, Your Lordship's Telegram, dated on the previous day, in answer to mine of the 25th January, conveying a request of the Legislative Council respecting a proposed modification of the British Columbia Tariff.

2. I now forward to Your Lordship another Resolution of the Council upon the subject. Mr. Trutch, the Delegate from this Government, now proceeding to Ottawa, will be instructed to furnish all necessary information; and I have no doubt that your Government will endeavour to meet the views of the Legislature of this Colony as far as it properly can. I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MUSGRAVE.

The Right Honorable
The Lord Lisgar, G. C. B.,
&c., &c., &c.

Lord Lisgar to Governor Musgrave.

CANADA.

Government House,
Ottawa, May 2nd, 1871.

SIR,—With reference to your two Despatches, No. 41, of February 10th, 1871, and No. 9, of March 10th, 1871, I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of a Report of the Privy Council of the Dominion, which embodies the views of the Government on the proposed modification of the Tariff of British Columbia.

2. In compliance with the request contained at the end of your Despatch of March 10th, I have duly forwarded a copy of this Minute to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I have, &c.

(Signed) LISGAR.

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honorable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 26th day of April, 1871.

The Committee of Council have had under consideration the annexed Report, dated 24th April, 1871, from the Honorable the Minister of Finance, on the Despatches from Governor Musgrave to Your Excellency, No. 41, of the 10th February, and No. 9 of the 10th March, 1871, respecting the proposed reduction of duty, in British Columbia, on Spirits and Wheat, and the repeal of a temporary Act imposing a duty of half a dollar a gallon on Spirits, and they report their concurrence in the view expressed by the Finance Minister in his said Report, and submit the same for Your Excellency's approval.

(Certified) WM. H. LEE,
Clerk Privy Council, Canada.

Copy of a Report of the Finance Minister.

The undersigned has the honor to make the following Report on the Despatches from Governor Musgrave to Your Excellency, No. 41, of the 10th February, and No. 9, of the 10th March, 1871. In the first of these Despatches Governor Musgrave transmits a Resolution of the Legislative Council of British Columbia, recommending a reduction of the duty on Spirits from \$2 to 80 cents per gallon, a reduction of duty on Wheat to 10 cents a bushel, and on Flour to 75 cents a barrel.

In the opinion of the undersigned it is not expedient that the Government of the Dominion should come to any conclusion as to the proposed modification of the Tariff of British Columbia, until after the establishment of the new Constitution. Should the new Legislature concur in the recommendations of the Legislative Council, the Dominion Parliament would, in the opinion of the undersigned, be inclined to consider them favourably.

In his Despatch of the 10th March, Governor Musgrave transmits to Your Excellency the copy of an Act of the Legislature of British Columbia repealing a duty of half a dollar a gallon on Spirits, which was imposed by a special Act for temporary purposes.

This Act was passed with a suspending clause, and it is desirable that the views of the Dominion Government on the subject should be conveyed to Her Majesty's Government without delay. Although Governor Musgrave clearly explains that the duty, which it is proposed to repeal, was imposed for a specific and temporary purpose, he does not state that it is in excess of the duty of \$2 per gallon which was understood to be the duty on Spirits when the Terms of Confederation were agreed to.

The undersigned has been assured by the Honorable Mr. Trutch, of British Columbia, that the duty in question is in excess of the \$2; and, if so, the undersigned is of opinion that there can be no objection on the part of the Canadian Government to its repeal.

(Signed) F. HINCKS,
Minister of Finance.

Ottawa, April 24th, 1871.