

No. 55A.

## PETITION.

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To Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia:

The petition of the British Columbia-Yukon Railway Company, humbly sheweth:—

1. Your petitioners are incorporated by Statute of British Columbia, 1897, Chapter 49, with power to construct and operate a line of railway from some point in British Columbia at or near the head of Lynn Canal, thence by the most feasible route to the north boundary line of British Columbia, the said line of railway being part of a system of railway communication between the Lynn Canal and the Yukon River and its navigable tributaries.

2. Under the said Act your petitioners have constructed a line of railway over the summit of White Pass, at which point it crosses the International Boundary Line between the United States of America and Canada, as fixed by the *modus vivendi* between the two countries, and thence to Bennett City and along the shores of Lake Bennett to Caribou and White Horse. The total distance constructed and in operation from the summit of White Pass is about 91 miles. The construction of said railway was carried on under great difficulties and at an expense of from \$30,000 to \$50,000 per mile.

3. The said railway has been fully equipped with the most modern engines, freight cars and coaches; has successfully handled the freight and passenger business of the last two years over the route in question.

4. The said railway was constructed and completed to Bennett City on the 6th of July, 1899, and was completed to White Horse, so as to afford continuous through service, on the 29th July, 1900.

5. Since the completion of the railway, continuous and heavy expenditures have been made upon the railway in the nature of permanent improvements and betterments of the line and grades, and the construction of depôts and station buildings, and also most extensive and modern warehouses at White Horse terminus.

6. The railway has been remarkably instrumental in aiding the development of the interior Yukon country, from Bennett and Atlin to White Horse and Dawson.

7. The completion of this railway has enabled the merchants of British Columbia and Canada to control the trade of the entire Yukon country, which was formerly mainly in the hands of foreign merchants and transportation companies.

8. Your petitioners are informed that one Michael King is applying to your Honourable House for a Statute empowering him to construct a line of railway from a point at or near the Dyea River, on the provisional Boundary Line between British Columbia and Alaska, to a

point on or near Lake Bennett aforesaid; thence to the sixtieth parallel of latitude; with power to equip, construct and operate branch lines; to build, own and maintain docks and wharves; to equip, own and maintain boats, etc., etc.

9. The proposed line of railway would parallel, and in effect occupy the same territory as, your petitioners' said line of railway from the Lynn Canal to Bennett. The possible freight tonnage offered for many years to come will not equal the capacity of your petitioners' railway as now constructed.

10. There is no public necessity, and there is, as a financial proposition, no bonâ fide field for more than one railway from Lynn Canal to Bennett, or for two systems of communication between Lynn Canal and the headwaters of the Yukon, and the construction of the said proposed railway would destroy the financial success of your petitioners' railway without resulting in any benefit to the country.

11. The said line of railway is proposed by the promoters as a link in a line of railway starting at the American port of Dyea and passing thence through the territory now in dispute between Great Britain, in the right of her Dominion of Canada, and the United States of America.

12. Her Majesty's Government for the Dominion, who have the British side of the case in hand, announced last year, and still maintain, that the granting by the Dominion or the Province of British Columbia of any charters for railways, being links in lines of railway commencing at ports in possession of the United States and running through the disputed territory, is contrary to the interests of Canada and to the policy of that Government.

13. Even if the territory to be served by the proposed railway, which is in substance the same territory as that served by your petitioners, could afford a legitimate field and support for two railways, it certainly could not support three railways, and the granting of the proposed charter would be inimical to the project of an all-Canadian railway from some Canadian port on the Pacific Coast into the same territory.

14. Your petitioners would humbly present that when a charter for the construction of a railway is granted, and the necessary capital is invested in the enterprise, and the line expeditiously constructed, and an adequate and convenient public service provided, that there arises something in the nature of a corresponding obligation, or at least a disposition on the part of the country and of your Honourable House, to protect that company and its capital, which has been employed in the work, from uncalled-for competition and rivalry within the legitimate territory of its line, particularly where it has opened up a new territory and the enterprise has been hazardous.

Your petitioners, therefore, pray that your Honourable House will not grant the petition of the said Michael King for the said Act, and that your Honourable House will not pass the proposed Bill, or any Bill, for a railway competing with your petitioners' railway in its own line of territory.

And your petitioners will ever pray, etc., etc.

Dated at Victoria, British Columbia, this 6th day of March, A. D. 1901.

S. H. GRAVES, [L.S.]  
*President.*