
APPENDICES

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE

CHINESE QUESTION.

MR. SPEAKER:

Your Select Committee upon the Chinese question beg to Report, for the consideration of the House,—

- 1st. Draft of an Address to His Excellency the Governor-General.
- 2nd. Draft of an Act to regulate the Chinese population of British Columbia.
- 3rd. Draft of an Act to prevent the immigration of Chinese.
- 4th. Printed copy of papers on the Chinese question.

Your Committee also recommend that for the future Private Bills, granting franchises or rights, contain provision against the employment of Chinese on any works to be undertaken in pursuance of the Bills.

ALEX. E. B. DAVIE,
Chairman.

10th January, 1884.

ADDRESS.

To His Excellency the Governor-General in Council:—

1. The Legislature of the Province of British Columbia beg most respectfully to direct attention to the growing evil of Chinese immigration.

2. In the years 1876, 1879, 1880, 1882, and 1883, the Addresses and Resolutions annexed hereto were passed by this House, relating to the same subject, but hitherto without inducing the Dominion Government to abate the evil.

3. This Province, from its geographical position, is the only one which feels, in all its intensity, the absolute necessity of restrictive legislation to regulate the increasing influx of this most undesirable class of immigrants.

4. The number of Chinese in this Province is variously estimated from 15,000 to 18,000, the large majority of whom were imported here by contractors as labourers, and arrived here in a condition of comparative destitution; and now, owing to the limited amount of employment that can be obtained during the winter months—the canneries being closed and a partial stoppage of railway work having taken place—a large number of these men are scattered throughout the Province without any visible means of support.

5. This class of our population has been a continual source of expense, especially in matters connected with the administration of justice, owing to the enormous difficulty which exists in dealing with evidence filtered through interpreters, and the utter want of veracity which pervades all their dealings and transactions.

6. They systematically evade taxation, owing to the difficulty of detection and similarity of feature, and there are no means available of compelling them to contribute their fair share to the Provincial revenue.

7. Their sick and destitute are left to perish uncared for, and in every walk in life they prove themselves to be an expensive and objectionable class of inhabitants.

8. By their presence here they most materially affect the immigration of a white population, through whom alone we can hope to build up our country and render it fit for the Anglo-Saxon race.

9. Their habits and associations are of such a class and character that they tend to degrade all with whom they come in contact; and though the Legislature has granted large powers to Municipal Corporations for the purpose of preventing the overcrowding of Chinese dwelling-houses, for promoting cleanliness and ventilation therein, and generally for sanitary purposes, it has been found that every effort of the Municipal Councils in such directions has been ineffectual so far as the Chinese are concerned.

10. Though nominally obedient to law, yet, owing to secret organizations of their own, crimes of all degrees pass undetected and unpunished.

11. The United States and Australia have suffered from the evils which we now deplore, and have by legislative enactment dealt with the subject in a practical manner.

12. We earnestly request that an Act may be introduced by the Dominion Government restricting and regulating the immigration of Chinese.

13. We furthermore desire to point out that the Provincial Government and Municipal Councils, for several years past, have uniformly prohibited the employment of Chinese upon public works; and we earnestly request that the Dominion Government will, in every contract for the execution of Dominion public works in this Province, stipulate against the employment of Chinese, and will direct that, in all works in the Province undertaken by the Dominion, Chinese shall not be engaged.

Extract from Journals of Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, dated 9th May, 1876.

Pursuant to Order, the House again resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, for the purpose of considering the expediency of taking some steps towards preventing the country from being flooded with a Mongolian population, ruinous to the best interests of British Columbia, particularly her labouring classes.

On Mr. Speaker resuming the Chair, Mr. *Vowell*, Chairman of the Committee reported—

That, in the opinion of this Committee, it is expedient for the Government to take some steps (at as early a day as possible) to prevent this Province being overrun with a Chinese population to the injury of the settled population of the country.

Report adopted.

Copy of Resolution passed by Legislative Assembly on 31st July, 1878.

On the motion of the Honourable Mr. *Beaven*, seconded by Mr. *J. W. Williams*, it was Resolved,—

That this House is of opinion that Chinese should not be employed upon the Public Works of the Province, and that a clause should be inserted in the specifications of all contracts awarded, to the effect that Contractors will not be permitted to employ Chinese labour upon the work, and that in the event of their doing so the Government will not be responsible for payment of Contract.

Copy of Resolution passed by Legislative Assembly on 19th February, 1879.

On the motion of the Honourable Mr. *Walkem*, seconded by the Honourable Mr. *Humphreys*, it was Resolved,—

That a Select Committee be appointed to enquire into, and report, the best means in their opinion to deal with our Chinese population and to prevent further immigration of Chinese into the Province.

The following Members were appointed to form the Committee:—Messrs. *Williams*, *McGillivray*, *Drummond*, *McIlmoyl*, and *Evans*.

Extract from Journals of Legislative Assembly of 28th March, 1879.

Mr. *J. W. Williams* presented a Report from the Select Committee appointed to consider the question of Chinese Immigration, and to devise means of arresting or diminishing the same, which was read and received.

Ordered to be referred to the Committee on Printing.

Copy of Report of Select Committee on the question of Chinese Immigration.

Your Committee appointed to consider the question of Chinese Immigration as it affects this Province, and to devise means, if possible, to arrest or materially diminish it, have felt much embarrassment in framing their report, in consequence of the scanty information at their command with respect to the views held and the course taken upon the subject by older communities; and this embarrassment has rather been increased, than otherwise, by the recent action of the President of the United States in vetoing an Anti-Chinese measure, passed by Congress in the interests of the neighbouring Pacific States. The measure referred to, as the House is doubtless aware, was not dissimilar in some of its provisions to the Queensland Act, which received the Imperial sanction notwithstanding the existing Treaty between Great Britain and China.

It has, however, been admitted that this Legislature has no power to pass the Queensland Act, as its provisions would interfere with trade and commerce, and thus conflict with the British North America Act, which confers the regulation of that subject upon the Dominion Parliament.

As the Australias are now organizing a combined movement to obtain, if possible, from the Imperial Government such measures of protection against the further influx of Chinese into their country, the time would seem opportune for united or independent action on the part of the Dominion in the same direction.

Your Committee have ascertained that several measures of an Anti-Chinese tendency, and more or less restrictive in character, have been passed in New Zealand, and in Victoria and other Australian Colonies, but have been disallowed by the Home Government,

It is, therefore, respectfully suggested that an Address to the Dominion Government should be passed by the House, setting forth the baneful effects of the presence of Chinese in our midst, and the necessity of such measures being adopted as will effectually prevent their further immigration to the Province.

J. W. WILLIAMS, *Chairman.*

Extract from Journals of Legislative Assembly of 7th April, 1879.

Mr. J. W. Williams moved, seconded by Mr. McIlmoyle,—

That an Address to the Dominion Government be passed by this House, setting forth the baneful effect of the presence of Chinese in our midst, and the necessity of such measures being adopted as will effectually prevent their future immigration to this Province.

By leave of the House the following words were added: "And a Committee of three be appointed to draft an Address, such Committee to consist of Messrs. Walkem, Evans, and the mover."

Motion, as amended, put and carried.

Copy of a Report of a Select Committee appointed to draft an Address to the Dominion Government on Chinese Question.

Your Committee appointed to draft a Report upon the Chinese question, beg to state that, in the absence of any statistical information on the subject, they have felt some embarrassment in dealing with it.

There are various opinions as to the number of Chinese in the Province, but 6,000 is within the mark.

The acknowledged strong and growing antipathy to their presence in the community is attributable to several causes, of which the following would appear to be the most prominent:—

1st. Their moral and social condition is degraded in the extreme. A large majority of the men are in a state of semi-bondage, if not of absolute slavery, while all the women are prostitutes and are daily bought and sold as such. A state of marriage is unknown amongst them; hence the influence exerted upon society by such wholesale vice cannot be otherwise than highly pernicious, as no attempt is even made at concealment.

2nd. They are also undesirable settlers as they are wholly opposed to any assimilation or amalgamation of races or to becoming a portion of the permanent population of the country. The wealth gradually acquired by them is from time to time transmitted to China, and the Province is impoverished to the extent of and in an inverse ratio to their gains.

3rd. Their system of Coolie labour defies competition, as the low rate of wages paid is insufficient to support ordinary labouring classes, hence the Chinese are gradually monopolizing and controlling many industries which have hitherto afforded employment to the permanent population of the Province. This fact is not alone calculated to drive many valuable settlers elsewhere, but is likely to seriously discourage desirable immigrants from coming to the Province.

4th. It is well known from experience that slave labour has a degrading effect wherever it exists, as it causes an unconquerable and not unreasonable prejudice on the part of the free members of a community against engaging in any work similar to that performed by the Coolies in their midst.

The great groups of Colonies constituting the Australias and New Zealand, are now unitedly moving the Home Government to aid them in restricting, if not in stopping, the further influx of Chinese to their shores. The Committee would recommend that advantage be taken of this circumstance, and that the Dominion Government be respectfully requested to co-operate with the other Colonies of Her Majesty's Empire, and add its powerful influence with a view of securing the object mutually aimed at, namely the restriction of further Chinese immigration to British Columbia, as well as to the Colonies referred to.

GEO. A. WALKEM, *Chairman.*

Copy of a Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly 21st April, 1880.

On the motion of the Honourable Mr. Beaven, seconded by Mr. Drummond, it was Resolved, Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, Australia, passed An Act intituled "The Chinese Immigrants Regulation Act of 1877," which has received the assent of the Imperial Government, the principles of which, if made law by the Parliament of Canada, would beneficially regulate the immigration of Chinese into this Province;

Be it therefore *Resolved*, That the Government of the Dominion of Canada be respectfully requested by this Legislative Assembly, by telegram from the Honourable the Speaker, to cause an Act similar in principle to the "Chinese Immigrants Regulation Act, 1877," of Queensland, Australia, to become law during the present Session of the Parliament of Canada.

Copy of Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 22nd April, 1880.

On the motion of the Honourable Mr. *Beaven*, seconded by Mr. *E. Brown*, it was *Resolved*, Whereas the payment of taxes and licences is evaded by the Chinese population:

And whereas an Act has been passed in Queensland, Australia, and assented to by the Imperial Government, to the effect hereinafter mentioned.

Be it therefore *Resolved*, That the Government of the Dominion of Canada be requested by this House to cause a Bill to be passed, empowering the Province of British Columbia to pass an Act to the following effect:—

1. The sum payable by Chinese for a free miner's certificate shall be fifteen dollars, and for a business licence shall be double the rates levied under the various Licences Ordinances and Acts of the Province, for each year during which the same is to be in force,

And no free miner's certificate or business licence shall hereafter be issued to any such Chinese except on payment of such sums as aforesaid respectively.

2. Any Chinese who shall be found mining or carrying on business on any gold field not having in his possession a free miner's certificate or business licence lawfully issued to him;

And any person who shall upon any gold field employ in mining any Chinese who has not in his possession a free miner's certificate lawfully issued to him,

Shall, on conviction thereof, forfeit and pay a sum not exceeding twenty-five dollars, and in default of immediate payment the amount of such penalty shall be levied by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the offender, and in default of such distress, or if sufficient distress be not found, the offender shall be liable to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding three months.

3. In any prosecution for any offence against the provisions of this Act, the averment in the information that any person named therein had not in his possession at the time of the alleged offence a free miner's certificate or business licence lawfully issued to him, shall be sufficient proof that such person had not such free miner's certificate or business licence, unless the defendant shall prove the contrary.

4. Any information for any offence against this Act may be heard and determined by any two Justices of the Peace, and any such Justices may hear and determine the same in a summary manner at any place where any offender shall be found within the limits of any gold field.

5. No Chinese shall be entitled to be naturalized.

6. This Act shall be styled and may be cited as the "Chinese Tax Act."

Copy of a Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on 28th February, 1882.

On the motion of Mr. *Armstrong*, seconded by Mr. *McGillivray*, it was *Resolved*,—

That, taking into consideration the various advantages to accrue to all classes of the community by having Railway and other works carried on by means of a better class of labour than by Chinese labour, be it

Resolved, that the Government of British Columbia be respectfully requested to move the Government of the Dominion to take such steps as may be considered necessary to induce the contractors on the Canadian Pacific Railway to import and employ white labour on their works, instead of Chinese; and also to take into consideration the advisability and expediency of devising proper means of assisting immigration, with the view of carrying out the system of employing white labour on Railway construction throughout the Dominion.

Copy of Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on 28th February, 1883.

That this House strongly urges upon the Government of the Province the importance of adopting every constitutional method which can be devised for restricting the further immigration of Chinese into British Columbia; for compelling those who are now resident here to comply with the revenue and other laws of the Province, and for inaugurating a liberal scheme of assisted white immigration; and this House requests the Government at once to open negotiations with the Dominion Government with a view to concurrent action upon these vital questions in time to be submitted to the Dominion Parliament and this House respectively at their present sessions.