
REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE

Appointed to ascertain "How and in what manner the payment of \$750 as sustenance allowance to the Gold Commissioner at Cassiar was made?"

Vide the Resolution of the House, dated 5th February, 1879.

MR SPEAKER :

Your Committee beg to report as follows :—

That the appointment of Mr. Vowell to be Gold Commissioner at Cassair, is dated 26th May, 1876.

That on his appointment, no agreement was made to pay him anything beyond his salary.

That by a letter, dated Laketown, Cassiar, 29th June, 1876, Mr. Vowell applies for the same sustenance allowance, from the date of his appointment, as that received by his predecessor.

That by a letter, dated 16th November, 1876, from the Provincial Secretary to Mr. Vowell, he is granted an allowance of \$50 per month to the end of 1876, and also informing him it was to form no precedent for the ensuing year.

That by an Order in Council, No. 249, of same date as Provincial Secretary's letter to Mr. Vowell, the payment of \$350 was approved of.

That by a letter, dated 17th July, 1877, two months subsequent to the passing of the following Resolution by the House : "That no sums shall be paid to any Official, in addition to his salary, without the previous consent of the House," the Provincial Secretary authorizes Mr. Vowell to receive \$50 per month for the year 1877, and a sum not to exceed \$25 per month for the year 1878.

That the Auditor, finding he had no power to pay the money, placed \$600, to cover the allowance for the year, on requisition dated August 31st, 1877, which was paid, and which sum included the \$400 balance of the \$750. Total amount \$950.

That the Order in Council, No. 522, approving of payment of the \$600, is dated as late as February 5th, 1878.

That all payments made to Mr. Vowell were from funds in his hands.

That Government Agents in distant districts often pay money before they are actually authorized to do so.

J. EVANS.
Chairman.

FIRST REPORT OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Mr. Speaker :

The Committee have examined into the large outstanding balance of account due by the Assessor and Collector of the Lillooet District, and find as follows :

1. That the Assessor and Collector, Mr. Allen, was appointed by an Order in Council of August, 1876, at a commission of five per cent. on the Assessment Roll of 1876, and 10 per cent. on subsequent Rolls.

2. That on the 17th June, 1878, the Provincial Secretary (Mr. Elliott), by letter to Mr. Allen, agreed to allow him 25 per cent. commission from date of appointment until 30th June, 1878, and 20 per cent. thereafter for assessing, collecting and payment of expenses connected therewith.

3. That no Order in Council was passed authorizing such commissions to be paid to Mr. Allen.

4. That the School Act limits the commission to 10 per cent. and such travelling expenses as the Government may consider reasonable.

As the good faith of the Government with its servants should be kept, and the commissions of 25 per cent. and 20 per cent. cannot legally be paid, the Committee respectfully recommend the following settlement with the Assessor and Collector of Lillooet: A commission of 10 per cent on total sum collected; a deduction of sundry small accounts amounting to \$26 50, and an allowance for expenses sufficient to balance.

The Committee have examined the statements, memoranda and correspondence relating to the accounts of the Gold Commissioner at Cassiar.

Part of the expenditure in Cassiar was made without authority, but taking into consideration the remoteness of the District and unforeseen circumstances arising, your Committee are of opinion that much of it could not be avoided.

The Committee are of opinion that there is no necessity for the Gold Commissioner retaining on hand \$6,000 or \$7,000 of public moneys. They recommend that the revenue collected should be sent down from time to time, and that no large balance should be retained.

In case of extraordinary emergency, merchants would readily make advances to the Government Agent, and take orders on the Treasury at Victoria in payment.

The Committee find it impossible to ascertain the exact amount owing the Province for lands sold.

The Committee beg to hand in as follows:—

1. Return of Assessment Rolls for 1878, showing amounts of rolls in each district, sums collected, and balances outstanding 31st December, 1878.

2. Return of indemnity and mileage paid members during 1878.

3. Return showing dates salaries were paid after 30th June, 1878.

4. Return (approximate only) of amounts due Treasury on lands disposed of.

Yours respectfully,

WM. WILSON,
Chairman.

3rd March, 1879.