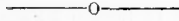


# PETITION.



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

The humble petition of the undersigned ratepayers and land-owners upon the Serpentine River, who were proposed to be assessed under the Surrey Dyking By-Law, 1890, sheweth :—

That your petitioners view with alarm a notice in the British Columbia Gazette, dated the 13th day of January, 1892, of an application to be made to your Honourable House “for a Private Bill to validate the Debentures issued by the Corporation of the District of Surrey, to provide for the payment of the interest thereon, and a sinking fund for their redemption,” which notice was first published in the said Gazette on the 14th day of January, 1892, and in the “Daily Columbian” and “The Ledger,” two local newspapers, on the 22nd day of January, 1892.

That as your Honourable House meets on the 28th day of January, 1892, and the last day for receiving petitions for private bills is Thursday, the 18th day of February, 1892, very little time is given to your petitioners to protect their interests, the latter date being five weeks from the first notice in the Gazette, and only four weeks from its first publication in the local papers.

That the wording of the said notice is false, no debentures ever having been issued by the Corporation of Surrey.

That certain so-called debentures, now we believe in the custody of the Bank of Montreal, are not debentures of the Corporation of the District of Surrey, inasmuch as :—

- (1.) The by-law under which it was proposed to issue debentures was never submitted to the ratepayers of Surrey for their approval ;
- (2.) The said by-law was quashed by the Supreme Court for that reason, amongst others ;
- (3.) The said so-called debentures were not signed by the Reeve of the Municipality of Surrey, but by Mr. James Punch, after he had ceased to be Reeve of Surrey (Mr. Henry T. Thrift, or other person, being then Reeve of Surrey), and after the Council of the said Municipality had refused to authorize their issue.

That the said Municipal Council of Surrey, on the 18th day of January, 1892, by resolution, repudiated the said so-called debentures, or any claim under them, and respectfully requested your Honourable House not to entertain the said Bill, or any legislation of a like nature.

That whereas, under the “Municipalities’ Act,” municipal councils are empowered to tax lands for local improvements, subject to the consent of a majority of the landowners, it would be a hardship for your Honourable House to pass a private Act which would raise municipal taxes contrary to the legislative decision of the Municipal Council, and also would virtually mortgage lands without the consent of their owners.

That your petitioners have reaped no benefit by the dyking of the Serpentine River, the works being partially destroyed on account of bad construction or other reasons.

That your petitioners believe the said private bill is for the relief of the Bank of Montreal, and to condone the negligence of its officers ; your said petitioners being guided hereby by the Judgment of the Supreme Court, which states, in reply to the pleadings of the Bank's counsel :—

“ A person lending money on debentures is in no better position than a mortgagee lending money on a worthless security. He is bound to see that the debentures are properly issued, and that the proceedings are all regular and in order. If he does not, he takes the risk. He cannot say that because the corporation did not know their duty, he is free from blame, and ought to be protected ; he has no one to blame but himself.”

Your petitioners, therefore, beg your Honourable House to reject the said Bill, and any proposed legislation of a like nature, and they will ever pray, as in duty bound, etc., etc.

WALTER J. WALKER,	E. M. WILTSHIRE,
THOS. HOOKWAY,	WILLIAM BELL,
GEORGE W. CANN,	JAMES GOOSTREY,
W. J. ROBINSON,	JAMES JOHNSON,

And 23 others.

A similar petition presented by C. C. Cameron and 5 others.

VICTORIA, B.C. :

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