

Your Petitioners would refer to the legislation of the Imperial Parliament which was passed for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the said Award, to the Orders in Council and to the instructions to cruisers, which have been adopted by the British authorities under this legislation, and to the extraordinary extensions of the Regulation prescribed by the Paris award, which have been conceded under Imperial legislation, Orders in Council and instructions.

Your Petitioners would refer in this connection to the reports of the Marine and Fisheries Department of the Dominion of Canada and to the despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of the Colonies to the Most Honourable the Principal Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, where it is said, "The extent to which British sealing vessels have been unnecessarily harassed by the United States patrol vessels during 1895 and 1896 may be judged from the fact that in 1894, when the British sealing fleet numbered only twenty-two vessels, thirty-six boarding operations were performed, an average of one and one-half per vessel, while in 1895 when a fleet of forty British vessels was engaged, the number of boardings rose to 183, an average of four and a half per vessel, and in 1896 the British fleet of fifty-seven vessels was subjected in Behring Sea alone to 171 boardings by the United States patrol, an average of three times per vessel. . . . If it is borne in mind that at each boarding operation by United States vessels the whole catch is pulled out of the salt in which it is packed, and each skin carefully examined, and then left to be re-salted and re-packed by the crew of the sealing vessel, some idea may be formed of the extent to which the operations of the sealing fleet are subjected to active obstruction, in addition to the loss caused through the effect of the constant movements of the steam-patrol vessels in sealing the seals. In addition, most of the vessels were boarded one or more times by Her Majesty's ships."

Your Petitioners are able to testify to numerous instances where instructions issued by both Governments concerned to the ships of war and revenue cutters, have permitted an enforcement of the Regulations under the award to be carried out in a most severe and unjust manner, no regard being had to special circumstances, nor indeed to the usual incidents in all marine voyages, such as stress of weather, fogs, adverse winds, currents and accidents, over which no mariner however skillful is able to exercise successful control.

If the interpretation of the award be such that mutual consent is a condition precedent to the modification or change of the Regulations aforesaid, Your Petitioners submit that the time has arrived when such consent should be obtained.

If it be found impossible to obtain the consent of the United States to a modification of the Regulations under the award, Your Petitioners submit in view of the facts referred to in the foregoing paragraphs of this Petition, the Imperial Authorities should be moved to review the Imperial Legislation, Orders in Council and instructions aforesaid, so as to relieve as far as possible Your Petition.