

legislation concerning which must originate from the Crown. The members from British Columbia who support the Government in this House, have interviewed myself and some of my colleagues repeatedly on this subject, and have asked us to increase the head tax from \$50, as it is now, to \$500. Well, to increase a tax of that kind, admitting the object to be very praiseworthy, is always a serious consideration. In fact, it is always a serious consideration when the government of any country has to impose a tax, not only on its own subjects, but on those of other nations who come to its shores. However, we took some time to look into the subject; we wanted to inform ourselves as to the other side of the question, because upon this, as upon all other questions, there are two sides. If we increased the tax to such a degree as to make it absolutely prohibitory of immigration, we had to inquire what the consequences would be. We know that we have done our best to establish a trade with China and Japan. Now, it may look a little inconsistent that whilst we have done our best to develop trade between Canada and China and Japan, by granting heavy subsidies to steamship companies, we should, on the other hand, adopt measures that will restrict that trade. But we have to look at the major fact, the dominant fact, that the people of British Columbia, as well as the people of all the other places I have named, belonging to the Anglo-Saxon race, have evinced the greatest repugnance to the Chinese and Japanese settling amongst them. I may say at once, without committing any breach of secrecy, that the Government will be prepared at an early date to inform the House as to what policy they will adopt upon this question. Further than this I will not say at present, but I will repeat, that we have given due consideration to the representations which have been made to us upon this subject by the members for British Columbia.

I may say, however, that in our treatment of this subject, the Government has made a distinction between Chinese immigration and Japanese immigration. Whilst we are prepared to deal with Chinese immigration in the way I have indicated, and to do our best to meet the views of the people of British Columbia, I am sorry to have to say that, so far as Japanese immigration is concerned, though it is the same in all its salient and important features, the question is governed by other considerations, considerations of Imperial policy, which must appeal to every gentleman of this House who is a British subject. As a part of the British Empire, we have duties to discharge to the Empire which we cannot ignore. Our attention was called last year to the legislation of British Columbia placing restrictions upon the employment of Chinese and Japanese labour. We appealed to the Government of British Columbia to revise their legislation in so far only as the Japanese were concerned; we

were not at all disposed to interfere with that legislation in so far as Chinese labour was concerned. We also communicated with the Imperial authorities upon this subject, and we transferred to the Government of British Columbia the representations which had been made to us by the British authorities. The British Columbia authorities replied, giving us their reasons for not complying with the wishes of the Imperial authorities. Then, as the limit within which to disallow was drawing near, with the authority of the Council, I sent the following telegram to Mr. Semlin, Premier of British Columbia, on the 2nd of June last:

The Federal Government has only four days in which to disallow your Acts relating to Japanese as urged by Imperial Government, which fears prejudice to Imperial relations with Japan if Act referring to Japanese is allowed to go into effect. Have you any suggestion to make as to this legislation, so far as it relates to the Japanese? Immediate reply necessary.

On the following day, I received this answer from Mr. Semlin:

Telegram received. Regret that in justice to the interests of labour in British Columbia, can only refer you to minute of Council of February last, copy of which you have no doubt received.

In that minute of Council which the members of the House have in their hands, the British Columbia Government squarely refused to modify their legislation, not only with regard to Chinese, but with regard to the Japanese labour as well. Under those circumstances, we were in this position: either we had to let these Acts go into force and to sanction the restriction against Japanese labour, as well as against Chinese labour, or we were under the necessity of disallowing the Acts concerning both Japanese and Chinese labour. If it had been in our power to disallow only those Acts relating to Chinese labour, we would have done so, but it was not in our power. We had to take these acts as a whole, and, therefore, we were brought to the absolute necessity of disallowing them in toto. Now, I may say, if the British Columbia legislature were to re-enact these Acts, but separating the Chinese labourers from Japanese labourers and simply restraining Chinese labourers, we would not interfere with these Acts, but so long as the British Columbia legislature choose to restrain Chinese and Japanese labour together I must appeal to hon. gentlemen in this House to support the Imperial policy of not dealing harshly with Japanese subjects. Sir, as I said a moment ago, we are proud of our British Empire, and I would say to hon. gentlemen from British Columbia, however strongly they may feel upon this question, they must upon this occasion, allow their strong feeling against Japanese labourers to give way in favour of maintaining the policy of the Imperial Government in these matters. At the present time, as we know, the question of