
ORDER IN COUNCIL

Relating to the withdrawal of Her Majesty's Ships from British Columbian waters.

By Command.

W. J. ARMSTRONG,

Provincial Secretary.

Provincial Secretary's Office,

18th January, 1883.

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Executive Council, approved of by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 5th October, 1882.

The Committee of Council have had under consideration the subject of the probable condition of the Province, in view of the facts that H.M.S. Rocket has sailed for England; that H.M.S. Kingfisher has been ordered South, and that H.M.S. Comus will shortly sail from Esquimalt; and of the report that in future no ship of Her Majesty's Navy will be permanently stationed in British Columbian waters.

The Indian population of the Province, exceeding by at least ten thousand that of any other Province in the Dominion, is largely resident, in scattered groups, along the coast line, and the presence of Her Majesty's ships, stationed at Esquimalt, has for many years past been of the greatest importance in maintaining peace and order amongst the native coast tribes, and in protecting life and property.

The Provincial Government have habitually acted promptly in punishing crime, and it would have been impossible to carry out that policy amongst the Indians on the coast if the assistance of one of Her Majesty's ships had not been readily obtainable. In early days the crews of vessels wrecked on the West Coast of Vancouver Island were not infrequently murdered by the natives, but experience has now taught the latter that deeds of violence will not go unpunished.

The comparative security obtained by the enforcement of law has encouraged the investment of capital in fisheries and other industrial pursuits, which have afforded remunerative employment to and so tended to civilize and improve the native races. The physical power exhibited by a war vessel has an impressive moral effect on the native mind, and it is to be feared that the withdrawal of Her Majesty's ships from these waters would tend to disturb the peaceable attitude now maintained by the Indians. By the Ninth Clause of the Terms of Union it was agreed that the influence of the Dominion Government would be used to secure the continued maintenance of the Naval Station at Esquimalt.

The Committee recommend that the attention of the Dominion Government be called to the above matters, and that they be requested to move the Imperial Government to cause vessels of war to be stationed at Esquimalt. The Committee also recommend that a copy of this Minute be forwarded to the Secretary of State.

Certified.

(Signed)

W. J. ARMSTRONG,

Provincial Secretary,

Clerk Executive Council.