

words of that Proclamation a tribal ownership of the territory, we should be dealt with in accordance with its provision, and that no part of our lands should be taken from us or in any way disposed of until the same has been purchased by the Crown.

By reason of our aboriginal rights above stated, we claim tribal ownership of all fisheries and other natural resources pertaining to the territory above-mentioned.

For more than twenty-five years, being convinced that the recognition of our aboriginal rights would be of very great material advantage to us and would open the way for the intellectual, social and industrial advance of our people, we have in common with other tribes of British Columbia, actively pressed our claims upon the Governments concerned. In recent years, being more than ever convinced of the advantages to be derived from such recognition and fearing that without such the advance of settlement would endanger our whole future, we have pressed these claims with greatly increased earnestness.

Some of the advantages to be derived from establishing our aboriginal rights are:—

1. That it will place us in a position to reserve for own use and benefit such portions of our territory as are required for the future well-being of our people.
2. That it will enable us to a much greater extent and in a free and independent manner to make use of the fisheries and other natural resources pertaining to our territory.
3. That it will open the way for bringing to an end as rapidly as possible the system of Reserves and substituting a system of individual ownership.
4. That it will open the way for putting an end to all uncertainty and unrest, bringing about a permanent and satisfactory settlement between the white people and ourselves, and thus removing the danger of serious trouble which now undoubtedly exists.
5. That it will open the way for our taking our place as not only loyal British subjects but also Canadian citizens, as for many years we have desired to do.

In thus seeking to realize what is highest and best for our people, we have encountered a very serious difficulty in the attitude which has been assumed by the Government of British Columbia. That Government has neglected and refused to recognize our claims, and for many years has been selling over our heads large tracts of our lands. We claim that every such transaction entered into in respect of any part of these lands under the assumed authority of the Provincial Land Act has been entered into in violation of the Proclamation above mentioned. These transactions have been entered into notwithstanding our protests, oral and written, presented to the Government of British Columbia, surveyors employed by that Government and intending purchasers.

The request of the Indian Tribes of British Columbia made through their Provincial Organization, that the matter of Indian title be submitted to the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council, having been before the Imperial Government and the Canadian Government for three years, and grave constitutional difficulties arising from the refusal of British Columbia to consent to a reference, having been encountered in dealing with that request, we resolved independently and directly to place a petition before His Majesty's Privy Council.

In following that course we desire to act to the fullest possible extent in harmony both with other tribes of British Columbia and with the Government of Canada.

We are informed that Mr. J. A. J. McKenna sent out by the Government of Canada has made a report in which he does not mention the claims which the Indians of the Province have been making for so many years, and assigns as the cause of all the trouble, the reversionary claim of the Province. Whatever other things Mr. McKenna found out during his stay, we are sure that he did not find out our mind or the real cause of the trouble.

We are also informed of the agreement relating only to the so-called reserves which was entered into by Mr. McKenna and Premier McBride. We are glad from its provisions to know that the Province has expressed willingness to abandon to a large extent the reversionary claim which has been made. We cannot, however, regard that agreement as forming a possible basis for settling the land question. We cannot concede that the two Governments have power by the agreement in question or any other agreement to dispose of the so-called Reserves or any other lands of British Columbia, until the territory of each nation or tribe has been purchased by the Crown as required by the Proclamation of King George Third.