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Customs authorities to admit fish and fish oil from British Columbia free of duty ; also enclosing a copy of a despatch from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office, dated 6th May, 1875, calling attention to, and requesting explanations before bringing the matter to the notice of Her Majesty's Government as to the delay in taking action in the matter on the part of the Government of Canada. A Minute of Council, dated 25th June, 1875, was made in reply to this despatch, setting forth that there was no special cause for the delay in question, but that it had arisen from the fact that the original complaint, on which the question arose, was not succeeded by others, and the matter had been overlooked, and recommending that this explanation be forwarded to the Earl of Carnarvon for transmission to the Foreign Office, with the desire that proper steps might be taken to establish the rights of British Columbia.

It further appears by a despatch, dated 12th August, 1875, addressed by the Earl of Carnarvon to the officer administering the Government of Canada, that Her Majesty's Government consulted the Law Officers of the Crown on the subject, and that they advised that the words "Dominion of Canada" in the Treaty of Washington, Article 21, must be governed by the state of things in May, 1871, and cannot now receive a wider construction from the fact, that additional territory has been added to the Dominion, and that the Act of Congress of the 1st March, 1873, and the Act of Parliament of Canada of the 14th June, 1872, must both be construed, with reference to the Dominion of Canada, as that Dominion was on the 8th May, 1871, and that for those reasons, therefore, it did not appear possible to Her Majesty's Government to instruct the British Minister at Washington to bring the matter before the United States Government as proposed by the Dominion Government.

The request of the British Columbia Government in this matter appears to be reasonable, and at all events in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty ; and under these circumstances the undersigned recommends that a copy of the said despatch from the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, with the Minute of Council accompanying, be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in order that Her Majesty's Government may consider whether it is possible or desirable that further representation should be made to the Government of the United States, either to secure the recognition of the views of Mr. Dorion, formerly Minister of Justice of Canada, or to promote negotiations to obtain a recognition of British Columbia as a portion of the Dominion, under the terms of the Treaty of Washington.

Respectfully submitted.

A. MACKENZIE,

For the Minister of Marine.