

OFFICE OF THE
DIRECTOR



CANADA
DEPARTMENT
OF
MINES AND RESOURCES

13167-42

INDIAN AFFAIRS
BRANCH

AIR MAIL

Ottawa, Ontario,
February 16, 1946.

Major D. M. MacKay, Indian Commissioner for B.C., P.O. Box 70,
Vancouver, B.C.

Under date of February 7th we sent you a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. C. M. Hockridge, 2079 West 46th Avenue, Vancouver, in which we stated that in future the tenants on the Chekwelp Indian Reserve would have to make their own arrangements for water supply. This letter was based on a report made by your office dated January 29th, your file 30-14-2976.

Subsequent examination of our files leaves this office in serious doubt as to whether our position is well taken. The files indicate that the original leases were most of them entered into under date of December 6, 1926. During the three months immediately following it appears that an Engineer of the Dominion Water Power and Reclamation Service, at the request of our field officers and on instructions from the Department, made an examination of the situation and recommended the installation of water services to the Reserve from Soames Creek. Under date of March 18, 1927, the Squamish Band passed a resolution requesting this Department "to have this water installed and the cost thereof charged against the funds of the Squamish Band".

Following so closely on the issue of the leases and after an interval only sufficient to permit the necessary examination to be made, it would appear to this office to be a fair assumption that the tenants were promised a water service. At any rate they enjoyed the water service not only during the currency of their original leases but apparently from 1936 up to the present time. As the water system was Band property and particularly as during all the intervening years they paid rent for the land over which it passes and for the services of an overseer, it may well be that the tenants at Chekwelp are entitled to a water service and that the Band are legally bound to maintain it.

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