

Your petitioners humbly beg leave to represent to Your gracious Majesty, that they are firmly of opinion, that the measures now under consideration of the Imperial Parliament, as introduced by Mr. Labouchere, if they become law, will prove generally prejudicial to the British Empire, and particularly to this loyal colony, inasmuch as there is no reciprocity to be found in the plan proposed for the alteration, or rather the abrogation, of the Navigation Laws, and, moreover, that there is no equivalent provided for Your Majesty's subjects in the concession to be made to foreigners, for the privileges and benefits of the colonial and inter-colonial carrying trade, as in fact they have none to offer, save and except the coasting trade of the United States of America, which is not to be given up to British subjects, unless the coasting trade of Great Britain be conceded to them, which is not contemplated in the measure now under consideration of Parliament.

Your petitioners humbly submit for Your Majesty's gracious consideration the important fact that, in this colony particularly, a large number of Your Majesty's loyal subjects have emigrated and settled, and have invested their capital and industry in British tonnage, upon the faith of Your Majesty's protection to them as such; and, moreover, that a very large amount of the labour of emigrants is absorbed in ship-building, constituting the greater portion of the exports of this province; and if the measure now referred to be passed, it will wholly destroy the export trade of this province, in the production of which a very large amount of British manufactures is consumed.

Your petitioners feel deeply the influence that such a measure would produce upon the feelings and attachment of the people of this province, if left entirely unprotected, and required to compete with foreign countries in the main staples of their export, at a distance so much greater from their only market, and which must lead to the abandonment of the province by a very large portion of its inhabitants, leaving behind them, as valueless, the results of the labour of a lifetime, and destroy the prosperity of this once flourishing province of the British Empire.

Your petitioners, in conclusion, beg respectfully to submit, that if Your Majesty should deem it requisite for the general interests of the empire to alter the Navigation Laws, Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to prevent such a calamity to the loyal inhabitants of this province, as heretofore referred to, by refusing Your Royal Assent to any measure that does not provide for the opening of other markets for their exports, the privilege of selling their ships in any market, the right of procuring registries in foreign countries, perfect freedom in the employment of foreigners in the navigating of their ships, the privilege of trading to and with all countries, coastwise as well as foreign, and the removal of all restrictions in the conduct of their ships.

(signed) *R. J. Hazen,*  
Recorder of the City of St. John, and Chairman of the Meeting.

(signed) *R. Jardine,*  
*James Robertson,* } Secretaries.

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