

In 1916 the Allied tribes presented a statement of claim before the Government of British Columbia, indicating they were willing to settle their case out of court on reasonable terms.

The delegates objected to the report of the Royal Commission on Indians Affairs as being in no way a final settlement with the B. C. Government in the matter of reserves under Article 13 of the Terms of Union.

Under this article the Dominion Government agreed to deal with the Indians as liberally as had been the policy of the colony of British Columbia, and the province on its behalf agreed to set apart lands sufficient for their use and occupation.

Historical Situation.

To understand their claim it is necessary to review briefly the historical position of the Indians in this province. Shortly after B. C. came into Confederation negotiations took place between the Dominion and the Province to settle the problem of Indian reserves. As a consequence the Indian Reserves Commission was set up, composed of Messrs. Alex. Anderson, Archibald McKinley, and Gilbert W. Sproat. Allotment of reserves continued under the Commission and later under Mr. Sproat alone, as well as his successors, Judge P. O'Reilly, and Judge A. W. Vowell.

In 1907 the Government of B. C. refused to set aside any more lands for Indians, asserting that the Government had done its part under the Terms of Union. The Indian Department thereupon sent out the late Dr. J. A. J. McKenna, who came here in 1912. He negotiated with Sir Richard McBride, pleading the application of Section 13 of the Terms, which would have removed disputes between the Dominion and the Province to the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies for adjustment.

The Commission.

The Provincial Government, however, took another course, that of agreeing to the appointment of a Royal Commission. This commission eventually reported, and some of its recommendations have been adopted. It was limited to the readjustment of areas of reserves, and as a consequence 666,000 acres were confirmed, 47,000 acres withdrawn, and 87,200 acres added to the reserves in B. C.

The Government of Canada has expended on the Indians in B. C. \$216,000 in the first decade after Confederation, \$525,000 in the second, \$990,000 in the third, \$1,435,000 in the fourth, \$3,709,000 in the fifth decade, \$1,248,000 in the years 1921-22, and the vote for the current year is \$783,438.

The actual total expended on the Indians of B. C. from Confederation up to March 31, 1923, is \$8,918,328, of which \$500,000 has gone on relief, \$124,000 on aid to agriculture, \$1,078,000 on medical aid, and \$4,321,353 on Indian education.

The population of aborigines from 1871 to 1923 has shown very little change, varying from 25,000 to 40,000 in different years. The actual land held in B. C. to-day by 24,500 Indians on reserves is 30.75 acres per capita, as against the following in the old provinces:

Province	Aborigines	Acres
Nova Scotia	2,000	10.6
New Brunswick ..	1,846	2.5
P. E. I.	292	4.5
Quebec	13,000	16.0
Ontario	26,400	52.5

It will thus be seen that the delegation asks for five times as much land as the Indians at present hold in this province.

Closing Remarks

At the close Dr. Scott complimented the delegation on the intelligent manner in which they had placed the case before him. He said he would place before the Minister a transcript of the proceedings, and his annotations thereon, for his consideration.

Rev. C. M. Tate, Indian missionary, trusted the meetings would result in a settlement of a problem of which he had had personal knowledge for fifty years, and he invited the Divine blessing on the work.

The transcript, it may be remarked, will be about 400 foolscap pages, and will entail considerable review at Ottawa. Dr. Scott will leave for California on Monday with Mrs. Scott, and will return here on August 23.