

DISALLOWANCE RED HERRING

MCBRIDE AND BOWSER
DRAW IT OVER TRAIL

Refuse to Deal With Province's
Lands for Professed Fear
of Bogey

Legislative Press Gallery,
March 10th.
This evening the House had another exhibition of the "fight-Ottawa" temper of the McBride-Bowser combination. The proposal of a government supporter that the province do something to fight against the Asiatic elements in the population by refusing to sell them crown lands was turned down by the government, the stereotyped reason being given that it would tend to disallowance. And this, although in two government measures this session the attorney-general has placed prohibitions in other matters which are directly in line with what the member for Cowichan wanted applied to lands.

H. C. Brewster made an able speech in reply to the premier's disallowance, and showed plainly that under the constitution the province has also control of its own lands. Further than this, he drew attention to the fact that, while the government is shouting for a white British Columbia all about all it would do to keep it, it not only refuses to enact legislation which is within its right, but retains on the statute book an act which gives Asiatics, in common with all aliens, the same rights as to property as every white citizen possesses.

The attorney-general, in reply to Mr. Brewster, if it can be dignified as a reply, got off a heated tirade against Ottawa, under cover of which he paid no attention to the arguments advanced by the member for Alberni.

Mr. Hayward's Speech.

The bill amending the Land Act came up for final consideration in committee at the evening sitting.

W. H. Hayward (Cowanich) moved the incorporation of the following section in the bill: "It shall not be lawful for the commission or any other person to issue a pre-emption record of any crown land, or sell any portion thereof, or grant authority under the said act to record or divert any water from the natural channel of any stream, lake or river in this province to any but those of the Caucasian race."

In support of this Mr. Hayward made an excellent speech. He said that the evil which he had in mind was a growing menace and must be dealt with. It might be suggested that the section in the bill was too broad, but he said that this could not be urged as a reason against its being placed in the Land Act, since the attorney-general had incorporated a similar section in the Liquor License Act, and against Chinese and Japanese specifically in the Companies Act.

Wherever the Japanese had gone, he said, there the whites had gone out. There were instances of the evil of Japanese competition in the case of the North Fraser, where, instead of the whites controlling the timber industry, as formerly, the Japanese had crowded them out. The salmon fisheries at the mouth of the Fraser and the berry and vegetable growing industry had fallen into Japanese hands. On the Fraser plains, the great growing district, control had passed from the whites to the Japanese. The history of the negro problem in the southern states should be a great warning to us as to the danger of allowing holders of different color becoming holders of the land. It was for us to take care that we were not swamped by this later civilization of Japan.

If the government would bring in an amendment to the Liquor License Act, prohibiting registration by other than Caucasians, the situation would be adequately dealt with. In this amendment only the fringe of the subject was touched. The term "Caucasian" was generally understood as including all whites. The best division of the human race was into five—white or Caucasian, black or negro, yellow or mongol, brown or Malay, and red or American.

It was well to bear in mind in this matter that white men could not buy land in Japan. To make certain on this point he had communicated with the Japanese consul and had a letter from that gentleman stating that no foreign subject could possess land in Japan although as a rule he could enter a lease. He added in his letter that he had an intimation that the government at an early date would give foreigners the right to hold land in Japan, but that it was not yet decided whether to allow Japanese to hold land in a white country. It was for the legislators of to-day to protect coming generations from the yellow race.

The Disallowance Cry.
Premier McBride stated that it was not advisable to incorporate this section in the bill, as it might bring about disallowance, which would destroy entirely the effect of the bill. Inasmuch as the main object of the bill was to keep faith with the province regarding timber license, it would be inadvisable to take any risk. The premier went on to say that it was the policy of the British Columbia government to disallow any legislation which would tend to disallowance.

There was description against disallowance, and to declare that the provincial government was as keen as ever to keep British Columbia a white man's country. They were, however, bound by the constitution, and all they could do was to keep on record the feeling of this province with respect to the question. They had refused to grant timber or mines or water rights to Asiatics. Eventually they hoped to convince the Dominion that it was in the interest not only of British Columbia, but of the Dominion to exclude these races.

Monopolizing Fruitgrowing.

Parker Williams heartily seconded all that the member for Cowichan had said. He ridiculed the premier's reason for declining to accept the amendment, and declared that the existence of a Liberal government at Ottawa was one of the most convenient things the McBride government had. He sheltered behind this flimsy excuse at every opportunity. If there was so much fear of disallowance why not bring in another bill containing this amendment alone? He had, he said, heard Conservatives argue that it was a misreading of the constitution to say British Columbia was not able to legislate to protect itself, and this argument he proposed to adopt. The taking of lands by Japanese was a danger to the province in many ways. Fruitgrowing was one of the coming great industries of this province, but in the Japs even made the discovery that they could grow fruit the white fruit-growers had better get out. Recently a tract of 300 acres near Extension had been acquired by Japanese, for fruitgrowing it was understood. The growers in the Maple Ridge district had found themselves coming out on the ground since the Japs had entered into competition with them.

Mr. Hayward termed the premier's remarks as lacking in logic. What was good for the attorney-general in the liquor license act should be good enough for the member for Cowichan in a land act amendment. Even more so, if it was good for the attorney-general in the companies act, where Chinese and Japanese incorporations were specifically refused registration here.

"If I withdraw this amendment," continued Mr. Hayward, "will the government help me next session in getting a bill through, dealing with this one question which, if killed by Ottawa, will hurt no other policy."

Province Controls Its Lands.

H. C. Brewster recalled that in the earlier stage of the session Mr. Hayward had a motion on the paper, calling upon the Ottawa government to have legislation enacted prohibiting Chinese and Japanese from acquiring or holding lands in the Dominion of Canada. This had disappeared from the agenda, and the speaker said that the amendment apparently was taking its place. On its being moved the premier thought the time had arrived to get off some fireworks at the expense of Ottawa, and the opportunity was seized with both hands. The condition which this province had was one that every member of the House wished to see abated. Japanese were getting hold of land, and as they did it depreciated the value of adjoining property and pretty soon there was to be found a Japanese colony. The premier in saying that this Assembly was not clothed with legislative powers was going too far. The House and the province had heard it stated time after time what the government would do if it had the power. Whenever the Japanese had gone, he said, there the whites had gone out. After being driven into it they put on a \$50 head-tax. In comparison with that the Liberals had gone very much further in a land act which had stated that when the Canada-Japanese treaty was under discussion in parliament the federal government had power to say it wanted the Japanese kept out, but it must be remembered that on that occasion the Conservative opposition took the same view as the Liberal government. The leader of the opposition wanted to know what the value of a land was if it did not want the Japs to come in. He cared about the value of a white man.

In section 92 of the B. N. A. act, subsection 5, the premier and attorney-general would find this among the subjects over which was given to the B. C. absolute jurisdiction: "The management and sale of the public lands belonging to the province and of the timber and wood thereon." That looked as if the province might have some power. But there was more than this. Chapter 6 of the revised statutes was intituled the Alien act and it set forth that every alien should be deemed to have no right in the land rights as to property as every white citizen possesses.

Before the government did any putting it up to Ottawa it was up to British Columbia to clean up legislation of that sort and have some legislation controlling Orientals of our own. Mr. Brewster concluded by calling on the government to do its duty and absolutely prohibit the holding of lands by Chinese or Japanese.

The Premier's Plea.

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MORE EVIDENCE AT COMMISSION

W. A. LAWSON WAS
EXAMINED YESTERDAY

Says Board May Make Further
Reductions on Fire Insurance
Rates

W. A. Lawson, of R. P. Rither & Co., gave further evidence at yesterday afternoon's session of the Royal Commission on fire insurance. Questioned by Mr. Bodwell he gave a list of companies which had recently retired from business on the ground that the business of fire insurance was unprofitable. His firm had carried policies on the Brackman-Ker Milling Co. for the Queen Insurance Company. The only advantage to Mr. Ker in going to Lloyd's was by getting a cheaper rate. The Queen company had refused a "blanket" policy and then Mr. Ker had cancelled policies in the Queen to the extent of \$20,000.

There was a great amount of clerical work in connection with the issuance of an insurance policy, and the existence of the board proved of very great convenience to every insurance company. Were it not for the board the expense in issuing policies would be increased very materially. The non-board companies did about one-sixth of the business in British Columbia.

To Mr. Shallcross Mr. Lawson admitted that the policy issued by the Queen was much the same as that issued by the National Millers' Association of Lansing, Mich., which had been attacked.

Premiums were paid in advance under ordinary circumstances. Certain interest would accrue before a loss occurred, in most instances.

Mr. Shallcross cited this as evidence showing where the profits of the insurance business comes in. Mr. Shallcross contended that insurance companies made huge gains by the interest on the premiums—about 2 1/2 per cent. If the premiums and losses balanced there was still an element of profit to the company.

Taking up Lloyd's, Mr. Shallcross asked it was not a fact that all marine insurance in Canada was done by the British Columbia Marine Insurance Co.?

Mr. Lawson said there were treaty offices—practically the same thing. His experience was that the British Columbia Marine Insurance Co. was not accepted insurance until they had got a first-class lead in some Canadian or American company. He could hardly call fire insurance in Canada a "home industry."

There were more foreign companies than Canadian doing business. The question of fire insurance was an important one. It should be made easy for the public to get insurance in Canada, and if necessary need to look abroad for security. He denied that the bill would have the effect of making it more difficult to get fire insurance in Canada, and he was going to do his best to protect the interests of the public.

With the development in British Columbia there would be an increased demand for fire insurance, but the companies on the ground that the municipality could not go outside its own boundaries in enforcing its by-laws. If any strong case was made he promised he would have it looked into.