

DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

KINCOLITH,
NASS RIVER, B.C.

SPECIAL REPORT.

July, 14th, 1930.

W. E. Ditchburn Esq:
Indian Commissioner for B.C.
Victoria, B.C.

Re: - Your file #33/S/8/18153.

Sir, -

I have the honour to report that in compliance with the instructions contained in your letter dated June, 28th, 1930, re the above, I handed the letter that was enclosed therein, to James Adams, Chief Councillor of Gitlakdamix, whom I located at Mill Bay Cannery on the night of Saturday, July, 12th, 1930.

After reading the letter, Adams absolutely refused to sign a receipt which I had prepared for him. I explained that the receipt was merely for the letter I had handed him, and asked him to write one out himself in his own way, but he also declined to do that, stating that there were only two other Gitlakdamix councillors at Mill Bay - one of whom I have suspended, owing to intoxication - and he would not undertake the responsibility of signing anything in connection with the matter, without the general consent of the Gitlakdamix Council in full assembly. The remaining members are now at Skeena River canneries.

He then requested me to explain to you that the Gitlakdamix Council had not thought it necessary to reply to your letter dated May, 13th, 1930, file number, - 33/S/8/17682 -, as they had at the time announced their decision to me on the understanding that I was forwarding you a report on the matter, and it was thought that, that was sufficient "although I had not furnished the Gitlakdamix Council with a copy of that report".

Adams further stated that it was impossible to call another meeting of the Gitlakdamix Council until late in September next at the earliest, but he was certain that no other decision would be arrived at in regard to these 19 parcels of land which had been recommended by the Royal Commission of Indian Affairs. He said that he did not see how these 19 reserves could be taken from them anyway as "legally they belonged to the Indians". The trouble in this case was that, the Royal Commission had promised that these reserves should at least consist of 40 acres each and now they were each out to five. He then put it to me "Did I think that the Royal Commission had acted fairly"? I replied that I was sorry but was not in a position to say anything about the Royal Commission. During the year 1916, I was busily engaged in the Battle of the Somme and if the war had gone the other way, the Nass Indians would not have had so much as five acres to call their own. That closed this phase of the conversation.

Adams also requested me to state that the Aiyansh Indians would welcome an opportunity to meet the Indian Commissioner and lay all their troubles before him personally. The Indian Agent had not encouraged them to carry on their affairs in a businesslike manner. Many letters they had written to him were unanswered and important matters were left unattended and when the Dominion Constable visited them he was not able to deal with these important matters.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant, *E. G. Newnham*
(E. G. Newnham.)
Dominion Constable

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File/dossier 33/8
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