

MP 176.5 N432
Nelson (B.C.) Ministerial Assn
The situation in Nelson, B.C. : what are



3 3298 00135 6030

THE SITUATION IN NELSON, B. C.



WHAT ARE YOU GOING
TO DO ABOUT IT?

P
176.5
N432

REFERENC

FOREWORD

AN APPEAL TO THE CITIZENS OF NELSON

We, the members of the Ministerial Association of Nelson, herewith submit for your consideration a statement and also an appeal in connection with the matter of the enforcement of law in this city, with special reference to the segregated vice area on Lake Street.

SIGNED

FRED H. GRAHAM
A. E. SMITH
E. S. LOGIE
C. W. KING

November, 1912

THE SITUATION IN NELSON, B. C.

I.—TEN FACTS FOR THE CITIZENS OF NELSON, B. C.

1. IT IS A FACT that there is in this city a segregated district for vice, situated on Lake Street, and that it has been in existence for a long time.

2. IT IS A FACT that this segregated district is contrary to the law of the Dominion of Canada, and yet it continues unmolested as far as the authorities are concerned.

3. IT IS A FACT that the City of Nelson, B. C., receives revenue from this illegal and shameful business, and thereby every citizen is made a partner in the concern. The sum secured in this way amounts, in round figures, to over \$4,000 per year.

4. IT IS A FACT that the Police Commissioners have given orders for the police to obtain certificates of freedom from venereal diseases from each woman in these houses. These certificates are issued by medical doctors, and a fee charged therefor.

5. IT IS A FACT that not only are houses of prostitution recognized by the Board of Police Commissioners, but interference has been offered by individual members of that Board with the Chief of Police in the discharge of his duty to lessen the evils resulting from the said recognition of these houses of prostitution.

6. IT IS A FACT that mortgages are held at unusually high rates of interest on some of these houses on Lake Street by certain citizens of Nelson, some of whom are charged with official responsibility for the enforcement of law.

7. IT IS A FACT that the City of Nelson, B. C., contains today approximately one public prostitute for every eighty of the population of the city; that is to say, that at present in Nelson, B. C., one person out of every eighty is a certificated prostitute.

8. IT IS A FACT that ninety per cent of the convictions made in the Police Magistrate's Court of Nelson, B. C., are convictions for prostitution. These criminal statistics are collected by the Federal Government at Ottawa and published in the annual Criminal Statistics of Canada.

9. IT IS A FACT, for which sufficient evidence can be adduced, that the policy of segregation in Nelson does not limit the evil to a segregated area.

10. IT IS A FACT that the segregated district in Nelson, B. C., as elsewhere, furnishes a convenient rendezvous for all classes of criminals, a station for the WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC, and a profitable field for those who live on the proceeds of vice.

II.—THE MEDICAL ASPECT OF THE CASE.

The members of the medical profession are brought into the closest contact with the social evil. No one is in a better position to guide and protect the public. The conclusions of the highest authorities in the medical profession must therefore command the highest respect.

I.—THE SYSTEM OF REGLEMENTATION. This system, which had its origin in France and which is common to most European countries, means the official supervision of prostitutes and of houses of ill-fame, which carries with it a periodical medical inspection of the inmates. This system was in force in England for a few years in the '60s; it was introduced under the guise of a so-called Contagious Diseases Law, and was, as it were, smuggled in without any adequate discussion in Parliament. At that time there was a great deal of trouble with imported cattle, and laws had been passed applying to the contagious diseases of cattle, and everyone assumed that the new law was of the same kind. When it was discovered what the law really was it gave rise to a fierce contest which lasted about twenty years, a contest in which the leading men of science took part—philosophers and statesmen, like Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill and John Morley. The result was the final repeal of the English Contagious Diseases Act in the middle of the '80s. On the continent, however, this method was long considered the ideal way of dealing with the problem. In 1899 at the first International Congress at Brussels there was found among the doctors the beginnings of doubt as to the efficacy and advisability of this system, but the Congress separated without taking any definite action. In 1902 another conference took place, and those opposed to the State regulation of vice now appeared in larger numbers. While there was not complete unanimity of opinion, and it was deemed best that each country should proceed separately in its policy of education and discussion, one very important step was taken; the Congress, composed to a not inconsiderable extent of eminent physicians, declared its conviction that the old-time belief in sexual indulgence as a physical necessity to the man was unsound and without foundation in fact. This pronouncement, which was unanimous, had an immense influence, and as a result of this second Congress the French Government was led to institute an investigation, and a Commission was appointed, composed not alone of the most eminent physicians of Paris, but of police officials and representatives of every walk in life. After three years of careful and exhaustive discussion this Commission resolved, by an overwhelming majority that the whole French system was useless and worse than useless in repressing prostitution and disease, and that on the contrary it rather increased the amount of disease. Here in the very home of Reglementation it has been abundantly proved that the system is wholly unsound.

THIS SYSTEM OBTAINS IN NELSON, and is considered by the Board of Police Commissioners to be expedient for the sanitary and scientific interest of the community.

II.—THE SYSTEM OF SEGREGATION. This system, though often erroneously supposed to be of European origin, is only found in Europe in a few scattered instances. It had its origin in Japan, where a wellknown district called the Yoshiwara was set apart for the purposes of public prostitution. It has been abundantly proven that just as reglementation cannot regulate, so segregation does not segregate, and just as in France, the original home of reglementation, that system is discredited, so in Japan where segregation was first introduced that system is equally discredited. The Yoshiwara was burnt down a year or so ago, and new ideas have substantial support. The former Chief Minister of Japan,

Count Okuma, now heads a society designed to render impossible the partnership between the Government and the social evil, which still has some measure of existence in Japan.

THIS SYSTEM ALSO OBTAINS IN NELSON, and is looked upon by the Board of Police Commissioners as being in the nature of a lesser evil and a safeguard to the community.

These two systems, the system of Reglementation borrowed from Europe and the system of Segregation imported from Japan, are both in effect in Nelson. There is a distinct partnership between the government of the city and the social evil; and this system must either be considered the very best possible in the interests of society, or the very worst. But medical science, through the mouths of its most authoritative exponents, utterly discredits both systems, the consequences of which from a medical point of view are not only unspeakably demoralizing, but incalculably disastrous to the public health.

III.—THE PREVALENCE OF VENEREAL DISEASE. There are many sources of information to which we may appeal. Here are facts drawn from reliable medical documents. There are 800,000 cases of gonorrhoea in New York City. All prostitutes may be said to have gonorrhoea, and it is estimated that every fourth one is in a condition to transmit syphilis. From these it spreads all over the land. On this continent one boy is infected with venereal disease every three minutes. Upwards of one hundred young women are sacrificed every day upon the altar of the lust and depravity of man. One quarter of the blindness, a large percentage of the surgery of women, and an equally large percentage of infant mortality have their cause in venereal disease. From 30 to 60 per cent of the males dying in lunatic asylums die from the effect of venereal disease upon the brain. Venereal diseases cause more suffering in young people between the ages of 15 and 25 than all other diseases put together. Seventy per cent of all women treated for venereal disease in the New York hospitals are respectable married women infected by their husbands. As the spread of this disease threatens the whole future of the race one can easily see how dangerous a situation it creates.

IV.—THE SERIOUSNESS OF VENEREAL DISEASE. The danger of syphilis has been generally recognized, but gonorrhoea has been rather laughed at as a trifle. Medical science now classifies it as among the most difficult of diseases to cure; the attitude of medical men is that they do not know that it can be cured at all. German statistics show that thirty thousand cases of blindness in that country are due to gonorrhoea. Noeggerath states that fifty per cent of sterile women owe their sterility to gonorrhoea. Price, of Philadelphia, states that of 1000 abdominal operations on women 95 per cent were the result of conditions due to gonorrhoea. Bloch, in his great work on *The Sexual Life of our Time*, sums up the results of the latest investigations in these words: "A remarkable change of view has in the course of the last thirty years taken place in respect to the nature and importance of gonorrhoea. Whereas formerly this was regarded as a comparatively harmless disease, we know today that gonorrhoea in the male, and still more in the female, gives rise to serious danger and harmful morbid phenomena, and is the source of unspeakable woes and of the miserable ill-health of numerous women, and that it is the chief cause of sterility in both sexes. Gonorrhoea in women is . . . HELL UPON EARTH."

Another conclusion that scientific men have reached is that public prostitution is the main source of venereal disease. Dr. Frederic Bierhoff, of New York,

said recently: "It may be assumed that prostitution is the main source of infection." He adds that in his own practice, out of 1329 cases of gonorrhoea 74 per cent were infected by prostitutes. Dr. Wm. T. Belfield, of Chicago, says: "Every prostitute, public or private, acquires venereal disease sooner or later, hence all of them are diseased some of the time and some of them all the time. The man who patronizes them risks his health at every exposure." Dr. Ludwig Weiss, of New York, affirms that "Prostitution must be regarded as the fountain head from which venereal diseases originate. In comparison with this all other modes of propagation are nil. In order to stamp out venereal diseases absolutely prostitution must be annihilated first; no prostitution, no venereal disease."

Still another conclusion reached by medical science on this question is that the attempt to regulate prostitution aggravates the spread of disease. It has been urged that medical inspection can be made a guarantee against contagion, but this opinion is overwhelmingly discredited.

The reasons are the following:

(a) The difficulty of securing proper medical examination. The best physicians will not stoop to such practice. The inmates of such places use every pretext to avoid such examination. For instance one authority states that more than 50 per cent of the medical examinations which ought to have been made on the 4,000 women under regulation in Berlin during the years 1888 to 1891 were in fact neglected.

(b) Only women are examined. A prostitute may acquire the disease immediately after she is certified as healthy, or one herself healthy may pass on the disease from client to client.

(c) It is impossible for the examiner to determine in many cases whether prostitutes are infected or not. Dr. Prince A. Morrow, a great authority on such matters, says: "NOW THE LAW, IN REQUIRING A PROMPT REPORT FROM THE EXAMINING PHYSICIAN AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A PROSTITUTE IS DISEASED, DEMANDS WHAT MEDICAL SCIENCE AND SKILL ARE UTTERLY UNABLE TO FURNISH. The vast majority of infections originate from chronic or latent gonorrhoea. The testimony of all specialists is concurrent on this point, that in these cases it is impossible to determine with certainty the presence or absence of contagious elements." A physician of our own province who is medical examiner in one of the segregated districts admitted that it was impossible to determine whether a prostitute was really free from disease or not. And the general medical testimony is that a certificate issued after such examination and on such grounds is worse than worthless.

(d) Medical inspection encourages men to frequent brothels with a promise of immunity which is illusory, hence it facilitates the spread of disease. The experience of Breslau as described by Dr. Stanislas Lakowski proves this. "The method of regulation was introduced in Breslau in a very scientific and Prussian manner, that means with military regulation. Every prostitute was brought before the Department of Health, and if the disease was not detected she received a certificate that she was well. The following year there was 13 per cent more gonorrhoea in Breslau than before the system was established. Why? Because every man asked for the certificate, and if he found it correct he assumed that there was no danger, and he got infected. The main point is that the examination does not prove anything." In Christiania, Norway, on the other hand, after the abolition of regulation, syphilis declined in frequency. The same is true in London, Bloch affirms, and the reason he gives in both cases is that men, now aware of the danger, keep away from prostitutes.

These considerations have led investigators the world over to condemn the system of regulating prostitution. For example, Bloch, who advocated the system strongly in a book published eight years ago, condemns it utterly in his most recent work. He says: "It is certain that regulated prostitution is more dangerous from the point of view of public health than free prostitution." Similarly the Minneapolis Commission quotes Neisser, of Breslau, the discoverer of the germ of gonorrhoea, and Blaschko, of Berlin, as opposing these measures with all their influence, and condemning them as harmful, pernicious and inefficient. Fournier, the French authority, declares that venereal disease steadily grows worse in spite of regulation, and adds that there is the serious disadvantage about relementation that "it gives the government stamp of approval to an iniquitous traffic, and promises immunity from infection which is but specious and illusory." Foirel, of Switzerland, in his wellknown and authoritative work on social problems, declares that both systems that of relementation and that of segregation, are not only hopelessly inadequate but are a menace of the gravest kind to the public health of any community.

III.—THE SOCIAL ASPECT.

The Board of Police Commissioners of Nelson have given it as their opinion that a segregated district is necessary on scientific and sanitary grounds, and for the protection from disease and molestation of the public generally, and to prevent the scattering of fallen women among the rooming houses, and apartment houses and hotels of the city.

Before passing on to the consideration of that argument, two pertinent questions propose themselves. (1) If the segregated area is simply a sanitary measure, comparable in its nature to the isolation hospital, why is the medical inspection and supervision not under the charge of the City Medical Health Officer, and why is an extra charge made for that inspection. (2) If the restricted district on Lake Street is simply a sanitary measure for the protection of the citizens, why is there a periodic system of fines, which practically amounts to a super tax upon a business thereby made legal by the police authorities?

As for the argument itself that a segregated area is for the sanitary welfare of the city, it has been so abundantly and convincingly disproved that one may say without exaggeration that such an argument is wholly discredited. To the average man, who has not seriously considered the subject, segregation appears as the most acceptable plan when for the first time he approaches the question. Segregation appears on the surface to be a method of rounding up and limiting the evil of prostitution, and keeping it under police control, and thereby lessening it, and it rids the individual of the necessity of further bother, since it has been given over to a set of properly qualified officers of the law. Also, does it not make the virtuous woman secure on the streets? These are arguments which were potent 20 years ago, but since that time scientific investigation, as well as civic experience, has refuted them all, and left practically no basis of argument.

Think of what segregation involves:

(1) A continuous supply of young women, many innocent, to the number of many thousands each year, to fill the places of those dying of disease, by suicide, or cast out to enter the hospitals and asylums. This demand has created a White Slave Traffic, an organization having immense financial resources, having its agents in every place where there is a segregated district to be supplied, an organization whose business it is to debauch, seduce and ruin girls in order to capture them for the filthy purpose of prostitution. Gen. Theo. A. Bingham, ex-Police Commissioner of New York City, says: "It is easy to prove that a large proportion

of the women are enticed into this life. If women in large numbers were willing to become prostitutes it would not be necessary to have such enormous machinery to recruit the ranks; but so unwilling are women to debase themselves that false marriages, drink, and even force are necessary in order to keep the hideous thing flourishing." Any who seek to justify so vile a traffic in human bodies and souls must consider that no line of class or race is drawn, or can be drawn, in the selection of those who are traded in the markets of prostitution, and that this organization has just as much right to call for their daughters, their sisters, for the purposes of public prostitution, as for the daughter or sister of anyone else.

(2) It offers a fertile field for graft and corruption of the worst kind. It puts into the hands of police and civic authorities unlimited opportunities for blackmail, which opportunities have been taken advantage of not only elsewhere but in Nelson.

(3) It furnishes a resort for the criminal classes. When a criminal is to be run to earth the police draw the net over the restricted district, feeling sure that sooner or later they will find him in its purlieus. When Seattle abolished the restricted district 1,000 prostitutes left the town, and according to the testimony of the Chief of Police, no less than 2,000 men of the worst class of criminals and crooks left also, 500 of whom were reckoned to subsist on the earnings of the women.

(4) A segregated area is a public school in lust. Young men of decent instincts but of weak character, or under the influence of liquor, or induced by friends, learn lessons of vice and debauchery which they carry into their after life and into the outer world. Under the system of segregation the violation of girls outside the restricted district is far commoner than under repression. This is not an opinion, it is a fact for which sufficient proof can be advanced. The Chief of Police of the City of Victoria, writing under date of October 15th, 1912, says in answer to the question: "Have crimes against the person increased in number in Victoria since the restricted area was abolished?" "No, it is very rarely that a woman is insulted." It stands to reason that the encouragement of vice in one section of a city can never be confined to that section. A man who enters a segregated district for an immoral purpose carries his increasing immorality and his physical disease wherever he goes. And so pervasive and so deadly are these moral and physical miasmas that their diffusion is perfectly demonstrated in the universality of the diseases which are the loathsome gift of the prostitute to her sisters outside the district.

(5) One capital reason why segregation does not segregate, nor is even meant to, is that, as a matter of simple fact, it legalizes an enormously profitable business. The profits of this business can easily be estimated when it is considered that the houses on Lake Street are able to pay an annual tax of over \$4,000 to the City of Nelson, and doctor's fees for a fortnightly inspection of every inmate, and still ply their illegal, immoral and wholly unsanitary trade at a profit sufficient to justify their maintenance.

To show the light in which such a system appeals to an intelligent outside observer it is sufficient to quote so high an authority as Sir Wm. Osler, Regius Professor of Medicine in Oxford University, who, writing concerning the situation in Nelson, uses these trenchant words: "I should regard it as a scandal of the first rank to have such a system in your community." Nelson is a city priding itself, and justifiably, on its situation, its advantages and its possibilities. It is a city of comfortable homes, of law-abiding people, of excellent schools, and of an unusually high public spirit. It seeks by every means to induce settlers to make it their home. The same Sir Wm. Osler, in the same letter, writes: "I should

think respectable people with sons to bring up would be inclined to shun a community in which one in every eighty individuals is a prostitute."

For the sake of the good name of the city, and to eradicate a condition which, from every point of view, is ruinous and wrong; to efface a dunghill situated at the front door of the city, and which by its very situation is obtruded upon the notice of every new comer to the town and every stranger within its gates; to get rid of an infection which is infinitely more permanent and deadly than any blight which might attack our orchards; to remove from our multitudes of children an influence destructive not only of body but of soul, it is our purpose and our hope to arouse so overwhelming an expression of public sentiment, that no authorities bound by their office to enforce the law and safeguard the best interests supposedly of the community, shall dare to excuse, still less to perpetuate, a system which is at once illegal, immoral and unsanitary, and which is totally subversive, not only of a few, but of all the highest social interests of our city.

IV.—THE LEGAL ASPECT OF THE CASE.

In the recent mighty sweep of sentiment against social vice practically all the civilised nations have legislated drastic measures to outlaw and punish those engaged in this dreadful business. All the great cities of Europe, Great Britain and America are now in active campaign to drive out this class of criminal.

We believe that what is most needed in Nelson now is an informed citizenship, and a sensitised and aroused public conscience so that this wrong against our homes and community will no longer be condoned, nor those charged with the enforcement of our country's laws excused in their refusal to do their duty.

In this matter we are dealing with criminal offenses, and the Dominion Parliament alone has the authority to enact criminal law. No Provincial authority may alter or suspend the criminal law of Canada. On the other hand, the governments of the respective provinces are charged with the duty and responsibility of administering and enforcing the laws so enacted by the Federal authorities.

In granting to Nelson its charter the Provincial Legislature did not and cannot delegate to this city, or to any of its representatives, such as the Police Commissioners, the power to pass by-laws not consistent with the existing Dominion law, framed and enacted for the suppression of disorderly houses, and the punishment of the keepers, inmates and frequenters thereof. Nor have any of the authorities, charged with the duty of law enforcement in the city or country districts, the right, under the Dominion criminal code, to connive at the active presence in the community of these vicious outlaws. Neglect to enforce the law constitutes in itself a violation of the law.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS.

In view of the above the verdict of Judge H. A. Robson, the Royal Commissioner, of November, 1910, in the investigation of social vice conditions in Winnipeg, applies to the situation in Nelson as well.

"Nowhere," says his Lordship, "can there be found any suggestion of authority in the Police Commissioners or any member of the force withholding the enforcement of any law in any area of the city as against any class of offenders.

"I can approach the matter and deal with the facts solely in the light of the law applicable to the matter as declared by the powers in whom that jurisdiction is by law vested.

"That law does not authorize anything but the entire suppression of the offence ; no policy, by whatsoever name it may be known, which involves any conditional or unconditional toleration of this crime or immunity from punishment therefor has any recognition by the law of Canada. The provincial and municipal legislation on the subject in the present case both emphasize this."

Judge Robson also points out that "where any Board of Police Commissioners introduces such a policy as segregation for the regulation of the social evil they are entirely at variance with the principles of common law, and are contrary to the statutes of our Dominion as found in the criminal code."

ENGLISH AND CANADIAN LAW.

On this question the common law of England is accepted authority in Canada. This says: "It is clearly agreed that keeping a bawdy house is a common nuisance, and it endangers the public peace by drawing together dissolute and debauched persons, and also has an apparent tendency to corrupt the manners of both the sexes by such an open profession of lawlessness."

In the Statutes of Canada this same principle is stated. Sections 225, 228, 238 and 239 of the Criminal Code declare the crime and impose the penalty.

Section 225 of the Criminal Code defines common bawdy house as a house, room, set of rooms or place of any kind kept for purposes of prostitution, or occupied or resorted to by any one or more persons for such purposes.

Three important decisions in the courts on this matter make clear the criminal position of some people, connected directly or indirectly with those of ill-repute. The Court of the Queen's Bench at Montreal, upon a reserved case, has put itself on record thus: "That a person who leases a house to another for the purposes of prostitution renders himself a party to and is guilty of the offence committed by his lessee, subsequently to the leasing of the house, of keeping a disorderly house, although he was not himself the keeper, and that he can be prosecuted, tried and convicted and punished for such offence in the same manner as the actual keeper." (See *Queen vs. Roy*, Canadian Criminal Cases, 492).

Another important decision is that "If a lodger let her apartment for the purpose of indiscriminate prostitution it is as much a bawdy house within the definition of Section 225 of the Criminal Code as if she held the whole house."

Again, in a recent decision, the case of *Rex vs. Mercier*, it was held that "a room in a hotel habitually resorted to by only one prostitute and her paramour for the purposes of prostitution is a common bawdy house, and the hotel keeper who with knowledge of the facts permits the continuance of such use of the rooms is properly convicted as a keeper, although the hotel keeper received only the ordinary room rent and made no direct gain from such use." (See *Thirteen Criminal Cases*, 475).

PENALTIES.

A penalty of one year's imprisonment for anyone convicted of being a "keeper" of a disorderly house or house of ill fame is prescribed under the above definition of Section 228 of the Criminal Code.

Vagrancy, as related to this kind of crime, is dealt with in Subsections (i) to (l) inclusive of Sections 238, Criminal Code, and is defined as applying as follows:

"Everyone who, being a common prostitute or night walker, wanders in the fields, public streets or highways, lanes or places of public meeting or gathering of people and does not give a satisfactory account of herself."

"Everyone who is a keeper or inmate of a disorderly house, bawdy house, or house of ill fame or house for the resort of prostitutes."

"Everyone who is in the habit of frequenting such houses and does not give satisfactory account of himself or herself."

"Everyone who, having no peaceable profession or calling to maintain himself by, for the most part supports himself by gaming or crime or by the avails of prostitution."

A fine not exceeding fifty dollars, or imprisonment with or without hard labor for any term not exceeding six months, or both, is the penalty imposed by Section 239, Criminal Code, upon conviction under the preceding section.

In the above mentioned sections we have set forth the main body of the law as it relates to prostitution as at present established in the City of Nelson.

Mr. Justice Robson has this to say with regard to the segregation of social vice, and it applies to things as they are in this city: "The selection of such a restricted area is a conditional licence to commit a continuing offence. In view of the law neither the Police Commissioners nor the Chief of Police have the authority to permit such a state of affairs. Their duty is to see to an unremitting enforcement of the criminal law in all parts of the city."

LAW ENFORCEMENT.

The question is often asked by the uninformed and by the misinformed: Can the law against this kind of crime be enforced with any degree of success; does the closing of bawdy houses and the breaking up of vice colonies improve the situation? The answer is emphatically—Yes. The law against this evil, as against all other evils, certainly can be and is successfully enforced.

There are hundreds of towns and cities in British America, as well as in other countries, that have been without restricted districts and bawdy houses for years. Not a few, some in British Columbia, have never tolerated such places, and would not think of doing so.

Other large centres, such as the City of Victoria, B. C., have found that in getting rid of these crime-breeding resorts, the observance of other laws, such as the liquor licence law, the law against theft, violence, etc., has been vastly improved; and it is also well to note that the tax upon the people for the enforcement of law has substantially decreased.

It is well known that one of the chief sources of revenue to the prostitute is in the illicit sale of liquor, and in the thefts of from a few dollars to many hundreds of dollars at a time from the pockets of their drunken, debauched and often drugged victims.

Ample proof can be given to show that segregation furnishes an easy cover from justice for the worst kinds of criminals, while the policy of no compromise gives the people and their public servants the stronger and quicker hand in dealing with isolated cases.

Not only is such a clear and emphatic verdict against this dreadful evil and against the shortsighted segregation method the result of most careful and prolonged investigation on the part of the world's best citizens, but it constitutes a loud call to all pure and fairminded citizens of Nelson and in British Columbia to act promptly and drastically with the power which the law of our country gives us against our greatest foe.

V.—THE APPEAL.

In the face of the foregoing array of facts and authoritative information we place before you a brief record of the course we have pursued, and we make our appeal to you for action.

In this matter the Ministerial Association approached the City Council on the evening of July 29th, 1912, and laid before them a brief statement and requested the Council to use its offices to the end that the law should be enforced. Three weeks later (August 19th) we again visited the Council seeking an answer to our former request. The City Council made no statement.

The mayor made a statement that during a visit to the cities of Victoria and Vancouver he had gathered information in relation to the matter and would be pleased to have a conference with the Ministerial Association and give expression to his views on the situation. The conference with the mayor took place and a mutual exchange of views was secured. The mayor was urged to use the power residing in him as chief magistrate to eradicate this vice area and clean up the city. The mayor declined so to do.

On Friday, September 6th, the Board of Police Commissioners gave us the privilege of appearing before them and giving expression to our views upon this question. This Board we met on two occasions. We advanced our arguments and appealed for the enforcement of the law in this city. We engaged the attention of this Board for hours and advanced arguments and submitted data which remain unanswered to this hour.

The Mayor, the City Council and the Board of Police Commissioners constitute the recognized authorities in this city. They have in their keeping the shared responsibility of enforcing the law which is the highest expression of the will of the sovereign people who conferred office and authority upon them.

Having received only denial and disappointment in response to our appeals to the constituted authorities, we turn to the last court of appeal, namely the people—the sovereign people. We claim that it is for the enforcement of the law that the people select their public officials; that a public official has no right to select and discriminate as to what law shall be enforced; that leniency in the authorities means lynch law amongst the people sooner or later; that the remedy for disregard of duty on the part of public officials is a strong public opinion making known clear-cut demands in regard to the affairs of the community.

We therefore appeal to the people to make an emphatic declaration of their desires in this matter. DO THE CITIZENS OF NELSON DESIRE A CONTINUANCE OF LAWLESSNESS AND VICE, FLAUNTED AND LICENSED AND CERTIFICATED AS A PART OF THE MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH THEY SUPPORT?

If they can crystalize a conviction that such is not their desire, then let the people make it known.

We submit this appeal to our fellow citizens on these grounds:

1. The City of Nelson is now deriving a portion of its revenue from an illegal and vicious business which ought to cause everyone who has the welfare of the community at heart, and entertains sentiments of personal decency to blush for shame. While the fountain is maintained the stream will flow.

Many young men of the homes of the people are being destroyed in both body and soul through this vice, and more are being seduced by its agents constantly.

The money received as fines from the vice traffic amounts in round figures to over \$4,000 per year, and this is put into the funds of the city and used for municipal expenses. It is the price paid by young men and husbands for vice and disease.

2. We appeal for the enforcement of the law because there is a White Slave Traffic operating upon this North American Continent with great activity. This traffic has large financial resources, and is practically a vice trust.

This traffic has its agents widespread over the land, and especially in towns and cities where there is maintained a segregated area for vice. Nelson is one of the cities where the segregated district, maintained and tolerated by the citizens, enables the traffic in women to be carried on as a going concern. There is every evidence of the presence in this city of the procurer and procureress. The White Slave Traffic cannot flourish without the establishing of segregated districts, and these cannot exist without the connivance of the authorities in refusing to enforce the law of the land.

There are over 250,000 women enslaved to vice in North America. Thousands of them have been stolen from homes and subjected to slavery. They are all debased, and are all of the same flesh and blood as ourselves. Why should not the homes of Nelson make some contributions to this business if the citizens of Nelson desire to see it maintained and continued unmolested in their midst?

3. We take the position that the law of the Dominion of Canada should be enforced by the authorities elected so to do, because it is the law. Failure in this respect on the part of any man holding public office and charged with this responsibility is a patent mark and sufficient evidence of his incapacity.

There is only one intention in the law regarding vice, and that is suppression. VICE is to be SUPPRESSED sharply and continuously wherever it rears its head, whether it be in country side, village, town or city. This intention of the law is effective wherever there is behind it an officer who is in complete sympathy with this intention, and it fails only where there is a weak and vacillating authority behind it.

We appeal to the people to stand by the intention of the law and elect only those to public office who are known to be in complete sympathy with that intention. The people who can be satisfied to see one law infringed are logically moving toward that position where they will be powerless to secure the enforcement of any law; they will soon be slaves to lawless officialdom.

4. We appeal to the people to face the facts and square themselves with the facts. Civic pride and affection must rest finally upon real virtue or else be admitted to be only civic bombast. The City of Nelson must be judged by all the elements which enter into her civic life. Side by side with the Church and the School must be placed the lawless institution of Lake Street. The unexcelled beauty of mountain side and water front must be placed beside the rottenness which makes its financial contribution to the public works of the city. Admiration may be expressed for the enterprise of the City Council in placing cluster lights on the streets to beautify and enlighten, but the same authority tolerates clustered vice on Lake Street which is pouring out disease upon the city. The Board of Trade exerts itself to make known the many excellencies of this city,

and the Board of Police Commissioners flimflams the law and orders certificates to be given to prostitutes. Nelson enjoys distinction as being the chief commercial centre of the Kootenay country, but she is also distinguished as the chief station for the White Slave Traffic in this upper country.

Does this statement give offence to any well disposed citizen of this city? We submit these are incontrovertible facts of the case. Malfeasance in office, certificated vice, lawlessness, widespread disease, as actual facts existing in this city give no offence; the mention of them, that is an offence; lawlessness is no offence; to suggest the enforcement of law, that is an offence. Nelson, a White Slave Station, that gives no offence; to suggest and work for a break-up of this condition, that is an offence. We submit such a position cannot be maintained in the face of the facts.

As ministers we are amongst you with no selfish ends to serve, but with a desire to promote the good of all without selection or degree, and we submit that in appealing to you to smite this illegal vice we could do no other, believing as we do in the principle of salvation, for the achievement of which society exists.



CONCLUSION

We make this entirely reasonable appeal, that the citizens of Nelson use the responsibility of their franchise to elect to civic office men who, without fear or favor, will fulfil the function of their office and ENFORCE THE LAW.