

City Council & Immigration Question

From The News Advertiser Sat Oct 26, 1907

The following resolution has been drafted by City Solicitor Cowan for City Council & read before Finance Committee yesterday

⁶⁶Whereas since the first of January last there have immigrated into British Columbia 7,700 Japanese, 1,900 Hindus and 300 Chinese, making a total of 9,900 Asiatics

And whereas this number is out of all proportion to the white immigration during the same period and far beyond the economic needs of the citizens of British Columbia

And whereas this vast influx of Japanese immigrants commenced immediately after and has continued ever since the ratification, on the 20th of January last, by the Dominion Parliament of the Treaty with Japan, by which, amongst other things, the subjects of Japan are given full liberty to enter and reside in any part of Canada.

And whereas certain of these Japanese immigrants, since their arrival took forcible possession of certain public streets of Vancouver, denying to peaceful Canadian citizens the rightful use thereof, and refusing to desist until they had received orders from his Majesty the Emperor of Japan, through his representatives the Japanese Consul at Vancouver.

And whereas the City of Vancouver being charged within its own jurisdiction with the enforcement, not only of the provisions of the Criminal Code,

but also the penal provisions of the provincial laws and the City by-laws, has been and is now being put to enormously excessive expense in its attempts to look after and police this unexpected and underrable swarm of Asiatics invited here by the laws of the land but without any knowledge thereof, and in most cases without the ability or desire to take on Canadian citizenship;

Wherefore be it resolved that the Dominion Government be memorialized to procure for Canada either by diplomatic negotiation or by notice of abrogation under article 2 of said treaty, the untrammelled right which was enjoyed prior to that treaty of passing laws under section 95 of the British North America Act in relation to immigration.

And be it further resolved that a law, excluding for a time at least, the immigration into Canada of Asiatics would not only serve the material interests of our City but would promote its peace and good government, and would meet with the almost unanimous approval of its resident Canadian citizens."

~~Resolution~~ Motion from Ald. Boydell. Jack that resolution be accepted & that to it be added a memorial relating to encouragement of white immigration by Prov. gov.

Ramsay thought Chinese should be included but Boydell Jack said they were already covered by head tax.

Council wanted it brought out very clearly that at the time of the riot the Japanese had ignored the protection of the police & Criminal Code & had armed themselves & taken possession of street themselves. Main motion passed. Also second motion a separate result.