

MINISTER OF  
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS



VICTORIA

August 16, 1946

Honourable John Hart,  
Premier,  
Buildings.

Dear Mr. Premier:

Mr. R. R. F. Sewell, Secretary of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, has asked me to try to get an appointment with you before very long, but at your convenience, for the purpose of discussing a few resolutions passed at the last Union convention dealing with matters of Governmental policy.

Attached is copy of the subjects discussed at the convention, as you may wish to peruse it before meeting Mr. Sewell and myself. Those matters involving policy are marked.

Awaiting your advice,

Yours sincerely,

*R. C. MacDonald*  
Hon. R. C. MacDonald  
Minister

Encl.



# *Subjects*

*arising from the*

*Convention held at  
Qualicum Beach, B.C.*

*Sept. 6th & 7th, 1945*

*to be submitted to*

*The Hon. the Premier  
and Cabinet*

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*Union of British Columbia - Municipalities*



#### 1. RE CIVIC CENTRE.

Whereas it is generally accepted that the idea of Civic Centres is now established as a necessity in combatting Juvenile Delinquency and building bodies and minds of our Younger Generation;

And whereas the Governments recognize the merits of "Pro-Rec" by donating grants according to membership;

Therefore be it resolved that the Provincial and Federal Governments pay a percentage of the capital cost of construction of Civic Centres as a Post War Plan.

#### 2. RE DRAINAGE.

Whereas our drainage of certain sections of British Columbia is becoming a serious menace;

And whereas owing to the removal in the past of standing timber;

And whereas the clearing of land has created a serious problem owing to the fact created by the faster run of water;

And whereas this condition not only effects the individual farm, but municipal and government roads;

And whereas the majority of the creek beds have become full of debris creating a hazard effecting the fishing industry, owing to the fact that fish cannot reach their spawning ground in local creeks.

There be it resolved that the Union of B.C. Municipalities urge, as a Post War Rehabilitation Plan, to create employment and correct this serious menace, that this drainage problem be undertaken by the B.C. Government in conjunction with the Federal Authorities, at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### 3. RE SUCCESSION DUTY.

"Whereas the practice of the Collector of Probate and Succession Duties in insisting upon the Crown's lien for the full amount against properties being sold for taxes, bears too harshly upon municipalities;

"Now therefore be it resolved that the Provincial and Dominion Governments be requested to modify this practice, at least to the point where the lien will be limited to the proportion that the value of the property as such value has been determined for the purpose of Probate and Succession Duty, bears to the whole duty being collected."

#### 4. RE ASSESSMENT.

Whereas in District Municipalities and less populous City Municipalities, the office staff consists of a Clerk and one or two assistants;

And whereas the Clerks in these Municipalities are also appointed as Assessors and Collectors;

And whereas the Clerk has not the qualifications nor the time to devote to this important work;

And whereas in District Municipalities where there is a great diversity of assessing such as farming areas, large industrial areas and residential areas which requires qualified men to make a just and proper assessment so that all the sections are assessed equitably;

Therefore be it resolved that this Union request the Provincial Government to consider the possibility of adding additional employees to their assessing department with the view of training them as competent assessors and then placing them at the disposal of the various Municipalities through the Department of Municipalities at a nominal sum per day.

#### 5. RE EDUCATIONAL COSTS.

Whereas a Commission has been set up by the Provincial Government to make a full survey of the Cost of Education in the Province of British Columbia, and this Commission has now completed hearings in the various School Districts of the Province;

And whereas the findings of the Commission should soon be made known;

And whereas it is imperative that immediate steps be taken to remove the taxation of lands as one of the methods of financing the Costs of Education.

Therefore be it resolved that the Provincial Government be requested to implement without delay any recommendations of the Commission that will relieve the land owner of the ever increasing burden of the Cost of Education.

#### 6. RE FINES, WARTIME PRICES AND TRADE BOARD.

Whereas fines levied for infractions of regulations of the various Federal departments are payable to the Receiver General for Canada.

And whereas the various Federal departments provide their own prosecutors but make no provisions for the services of Police Magistrate, Court Stenographer or other Court Officials, or for the serving of summonses or other expenses,



And whereas considerable assistance is given to the prosecution of such cases by Municipal Officers and or employees, and in many instances it is doubtful if convictions would be obtained without such assistance,

And whereas the costs, which are awarded to the Municipalities, amount to only \$2.50 and do not begin to pay for the expenses incurred by the Municipalities, particularly in cases which are contested and involve lengthy court sessions, which require the attendance of Municipal Officers and or employees (other than Police Officers) for the purpose of establishing infractions of the regulations.

Therefore be it resolved that this Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the Dominion Government to pay over to the Municipalities concerned 50% of all fines collected in such cases and further that the Provincial Government be requested to make representations to the Dominion Government supporting this resolution.

#### 7. RE SANITATION ETC.

Whereas the health, sanitation, building conditions in areas contiguous to Municipalities have become a threat to the health and safety of the citizens inside municipalities, and such conditions are steadily growing worse to a degree that is alarming.

Be it resolved that this convention demand that the Provincial Government and the Department of Indian Affairs take immediate steps to enforce a proper code of sanitation and building laws, on these areas, that will protect the interests of Municipalities concerned.

#### 8. RE HOSPITALS.

1. That the Government of British Columbia assume a larger proportion of the cost involved in the maintenance of hospitals.

2. That Section 32 of the "Hospital Act" be amended to provide that in municipalities where the maximum revenue derivable either for the current year or for the last preceding year from taxes on land or land and improvements is less than \$7500.00 such municipality shall not be required to pay more than twenty per cent of such revenue for hospitalization and that the Provincial Government be requested to take care of any excess in such costs over and above the amount contributed by the municipality.

#### 9. RE POST WAR REHABILITATION.

Whereas Post War Rehabilitation will entail building of many new homes, slum clearances and the establishment of new residential areas and;

Whereas custom has permitted sites with a foot frontage of 25 feet, 33 feet and;

Whereas Sites of such dimensions are not conducive to reasonable privacy and tend to promote congested areas.

Therefore be it resolved that this convention goes on record as advising that future residential subdivisions in organized municipalities and in unorganized districts also be laid out in lots of not less than 50 x 120 feet, or not less than about 6000 sq. feet, and that not more than one third of the lot area be built upon where private dwellings (one family) are constructed.

#### 10. RE SCHOOL COSTS.

Resolved that the Union of B.C. Municipalities take immediate action and demand that the Provincial Government assume the costs of education without further delay.

#### 11. RE FIRE INSURANCE.

That the Provincial Government be asked to enact legislation whereby Fire Insurance Companies shall be obliged to contribute a percentage of all premiums collected in the Province toward a fund for fire fighting purposes and that such fund be apportioned among the municipalities in proportion to the amount of fire insurance in force therein.

#### 12. RE RESIDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY ACT.

Whereas considerable difficulty is often experienced in collecting monies paid out on behalf of Inter-Municipal cases:

Therefore be it resolved that Section (7) of the "Residence and Responsibility for Relief Act" have the following addition made thereto after the word "resident," at the end of the existing section:

That all Inter-Municipal cases be paid in full by the Social Assistance Department, to the City or District administering assistance, and the percentage collection be made by the Social Assistance Department, from the City or District responsible for the payment of same.

#### 13. RE RESIDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY ACT.

That the "Residence and Responsibility Act" being Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of British Columbia, 1936, as amended, be further amended by adding to Section 4 thereof the following Subsection:



"(4) Notwithstanding any of the provisions of this Act any person who at any time after the 3rd. day of September, 1939, has moved or shall move to a local area and has been or shall be employed in any establishment classified pursuant to The National Selective Service Civilian Regulations as a "designated establishment," in such local area or any local area adjacent thereto, shall not be deemed to be a resident of such first mentioned local area until such person has resided continuously in such first mentioned local area for a period of one year after the date of the publication in the Canada Gazette of a proclamation of the Governor General-in-Council that the hostilities in which His Majesty is presently engaged, have ceased."

#### 14. RE ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

Whereas Municipalities in which public hospitals are situated are being required to care for the illegitimate children of mothers who have come from points outside of the Province and have either refused or failed to remove their children from the hospital;

And whereas there is no provision for the caring of such children except by the Municipality:

Be it therefore resolved that the Provincial Government be asked to take the responsibility of paying for all illegitimate children born in this Province when the mothers are residents of other Provinces, and make some arrangements with such Provinces for reimbursement for the care of such children.

#### 15. RE TITLES TO PROPERTY.

Whereas the title of municipally owned real property in many municipalities is registered variously in the name of the Corporation and in some instances in the name of the School Board.

And whereas it is deemed desirable to have all Municipal real property registered in the name of the pertinent City, District, or Village Municipality.

Therefore be it resolved that the appropriate amendment be made to the Statutes, requiring that the title of all Municipally owned real property in Municipalities, be registered in the name of the Corporation of the applicable City, District or Village concerned.

#### 16. RE REPATRIATION OF JAPANESE.

That this Council hereby endorses the resolution passed by the Kelowna Board of Trade on the 19th. January 1945, demanding "the repatriation to Japan after the war of all peoples of Japanese origin, the repatriates to be allowed to take with them to Japan any assets they may have here in Canada";

That this Council urge on the Dominion Government that at the next Federal Election the opinion of the people be taken by way of Referendum on the question of what disposition should be made of the Japanese in Canada in the post-war period;

That all Municipal Councils in British Columbia be sent a copy of this resolution to give it their endorsement;

That a copy of the resolution be sent to the Premier of British Columbia;

And that the Federal Member for this District be requested to make appropriate representations on this Council's behalf pursuant to the resolution, to the proper authorities at Ottawa.

\* \* \*

Whereas by reason of Japanese National doctrine, outlook, and expressed intentions, they will never fit into the Canadian scheme of life, and work with us wholeheartedly in building Canada's future, and

Whereas the Japanese are not assimilable (fortunately, so far, both races have frowned on mixed marriages, but Canada does not want to run the risk of what has happened, as the result of mixed marriages, in other parts of the world), and

Whereas all Canadian-born Japanese have a dual allegiance. (The birth of all children of Japanese parents in Canada were registered at the Japanese Consulate in Vancouver, and the death of persons of Japanese origin were registered in like manner.)

(The statement was made in the Canadian Parliament and not challenged, "That so far, not one Canadian-born Japanese has renounced his dual citizenship), and

Whereas many Canadian born Japanese had returned to their own country to take military training, and many of these people are now fighting for the Japanese armed forces.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that this meeting demands repatriation of all people of Japanese origin after the war to Japan, the repatriates being allowed to take back with them any assets which they may have here in Canada.



## 17. MUNICIPAL FINANCE & PROVINCIAL MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

Whereas financing under the present Municipal Act is becoming a menace to the welfare and progress of Municipalities and the Districts concerned;

And whereas during the past month a conference has been held at Ottawa, between the Federal and Provincial authorities;

And whereas we deplore the fact that the Provincial Government has not seen fit to follow-up with our request of the 1944 Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention held last year, requesting by Resolution that such a Conference be called;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Fraser Valley Municipal Association here assembled urge that the 1945 Union Convention endorse and demand an immediate Provincial Municipal Conference to plan better methods of finance and further we urge consideration be given to this request before the agreement between the Federal and Provincial authorities is signed.

## 18. RE POLE LINES.

Referred to the Cabinet with the suggestion that it be recommended to the Public Utilities Commission.

Whereas Section 59 (234) of the "Municipal Act" provides for exchanging lands for the purpose of improving, widening, straightening or diverting public streets or highways, but no provision is made for relocating telegraph, telephone or electric light and power lines to conform with the new location of the streets or highways;

Therefore be it resolved that provision be made in the Municipal Act to compel the owners of telegraph, telephone or electric light and power lines within a reasonable time to move at the owner's expense, the pole lines to conform with the new street or highway location.

## REPORT of SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE

The reports of this Committee, covering the last few years, have amply demonstrated the feasibility of municipalities operating their own Insurance Company.

May we reiterate some of the main points of those reports.

- (1) The questionnaire covering 5 years showed \$118,621.00 premiums paid and a total loss of \$8,914.00 excluding Vancouver and several other insurable districts.

- (2) The willingness of Re Insurance Companies to underwrite our larger risks, at a nominal sum.
- (3) That the high cost of improved fire protection borne by the taxpayer means more profits to the Insurance Companies.
- (4) The assistance offered by the British Municipal Insurance Company.
- (5) That all major risks be re-insured.
- (6) That present rates should govern, until a sound reserve has been built up Resolution No. 43 Langley.  
Suggests broadening the field of coverage to include other than municipally owned buildings.

While undoubtedly this would bring added revenue to the municipality concerned, it would not be good practice to confine coverage to the small area of a single municipality. As this is contrary to sound Insurance practice, (which in general is about 200 Insurable units of equal value scattered as widely as possible.)

Therefore we suggest that any company that may be formed must cover at least the whole Province.

So far your committee has dealt entirely with Municipal or semi-Municipal properties, and would respectfully suggest that we keep to this field, at the present time.

Acting on the directions of the Convention last year, we again approached the Government, with the request that permission be granted us to establish our own mutual company. Our answer was that the extra risk involved during wartime made it inadvisable for the Government to consider granting us this power at the present time.

The war being now terminated, we suggest that the Government be again approached on the matter. Should permission be granted, we recommend that steps be taken immediately to establish our own Company, and that the executive be so empowered to act.

The Committee would also point out that, should we proceed to establish our own Company, it does not necessarily mean that all Municipalities would insure with us.

There would be the inevitable opposition of some local interested individuals, etc., therefore in order to build on a sure foundation, we should first approach each governing body whether school, hospital or municipal, asking their pledged support, which should be in the form of a resolution agreeing to place their future insurance with their own company.

When sufficient support has been pledged, we could then decide on a



deadline for taking over the various risks. The selection of Directors would be left to the Convention.

Such Directors when appointed would have the power to make appointments, determine rates, place re-insurance and all the usual duties pertaining to the Insurance field.

For guidance in all these matters, we have copies of the British Mutual Insurance Company Charter, also one from a similar company in the U.S.A.

Your Committee recommends continued pressure, until a charter is obtained, for the formation of our own Mutual Insurance Company.

## REHABILITATION COMMITTEE REPORT

We have now reached the longed for period of Peace, the period, during which we must put into practice our various Post War plans. Our ability and willingness to carry them out, depends in large measure, the future prosperity of B.C.

Your committee is naturally of an advisory nature, not having funds of its own to administer, and has in all its reports given suggestions for Post War Employment, and constantly urged that your plans be made ready for swift development.

We have also appeared before the Government Committee on Rehabilitation, urging co-operation in our planning. We have pressed for suitable financial assistance from the Senior Governments, and we have urged the establishment of new industries in the Province, the shortening of hours of labor and many other things that we thought help ul in meeting our Post War problems.

Still there remains unsolved, the greatest of our problems, "an equitable way to finance the schemes."

We must continue to press for cheaper money say 1 or 2%. The money to be raised by the Federal Government, by the same methods that the War Loan has been raised, or issued as a direct loan from the Central Bank.

Your Committee feel that Peace and full employment is just as important as was the winning of the War. It is on that basis that we press our claim for National Funds for Public Works. Perusal of the annual Municipal reports will show that many municipalities with fine plans (and certainly great need) for post war developments, are already heavily burdened by bonded indebtedness, in some cases, having almost reached the limits of their borrowing power.

As these centres will have their quota of men and women to be rehabilitated, as well as the more affluent towns and cities, it will cause them some embarrassment to provide the necessary labor outlets, unless special Government funds are available. To avoid this difficulty, some substantial adjustment must be made between us and the Provincial Government in our fields of responsibility and taxation.

The recent Dominion-Provincial conference was held to bring about a closer co-operation between these governing bodies and no doubt important adjustments will be made.

We as municipalities claim that we have a more urgent cause for re-adjustment and co-operation than had the senior governments.

It is urgent because we are limited in our taxation field, and static of income in spite of the vast growth within urban areas, involving greater responsibilities.

We would again urge the Union to request a Round Table conference with the Provincial Government, with the object of re-adjusting our various fields of Taxation and responsibility. In the U.B.C.M. report to the Cameron Commission you will find a record of the arbitrary way in which our Municipal income has been encroached upon and new responsibilities imposed, without our consent. A good case can be made to substantiate our claim for a Round Table Conference, and this adjustment has a vital bearing on our ability to take full part during the rehabilitation period. Your committee in their previous report, recommended the setting up by the Provincial Government of a separate department of Rehabilitation, with a Minister of Cabinet Rank in charge.

His duties would be to develop new industries and help to provide working capital for them, either from Government sources or interest outside capital to come in to the Province.

Further, to co-operate all the known post-war plans, such as those already prepared by Provincial Government municipalities, Board of Trade Unions, transportation and industry in general, thus bringing a cohesion that would avoid overlapping and waste. Also, to place industries throughout the Province, as the resources and labor needs warrant.

In general to create industrial prosperity for our Province, and prevent the recurrence of the condition prevailing in the 30's. However, this has not been done, therefore we now suggest that the various Municipalities, through the U.B.C.M. could with profit appoint a permanent committee to induce new industries to come to this Province, leaving the choice of location to the industry concerned, but at the same time endeavouring to bring some industry to every settled locality.

This committee could assist in organizing new industries by interesting Capital to invest in them by offering suitable sites and other facilities

Following is a list of suggested manufacturing industries that could profitably be started in B.C.

1. Plastic and Plastic Products
2. Prefabricated Houses, Boats etc.
3. Boots and Shoes.
4. Baggage and Leather Goods.
5. Clothing.
6. Steel Mills.
7. Ranges and Stoves.
8. Farm Machinery.
9. China and Earthenware in general.



10. Rayon Products.
11. Coal Bi-products.
12. Fruit Bi-products.

These are but a few items that are now imported from other countries. It is possible to broaden the scope and powers of the trade and Commerce Department of the Government to do this work, by the admission of Municipal industrial and labour representation to the department. Sufficient finance should be found to explore potential markets, and to contact suitable new industries and new capital. We suggest something like this, as the present efforts by individual towns and Boards of Trade lack the necessary power and drive to meet the ever growing needs of our population. We have both skilled and unskilled labor available, added to our natural resources, and combined with direction and leadership we can easily meet the challenge of Peace-time conditions. If this report is adopted the Executive should make immediate arrangements to discuss the various methods suggested with the Government.

It is our opinion that the Orient is about to develop into the world's greatest market for export trade.

The geographical position of B.C. places us in a very favorable position with regards to this market, therefore a close study should be given to the possible needs of the Orient, after a careful survey is made, steps should be taken to produce those needed goods in B.C.. Instead of being the victims of high freight rates, we should, as far as the Orient is concerned, be in a more favorable position than Eastern Canada. Employment could be found for thousands of people producing machinery and other commodity goods for the Orient, providing steps are taken immediately to contact and develop this potential market.

While it may be argued that all this is beyond the scope of municipal activities, we claim that both public works, and long range industrial planning have a vital bearing on our future, so we urge the Government to co-operate with Industry, labour, and municipalities aiming to bring great industrial prosperity to our Province.

Your committee has noted the absence of Resolutions bearing on rehabilitation at this convention, and trust that it is an indication that plans are already advanced and ready to be put into practice.

If such is not the case, we urge you to recheck our various reports for guidance, especially the one issued in 1942, as these deal in detail with various possible schemes, suitable for municipalities.

We again urge the reduction in hours of labor to meet post-war needs, as well as lowering the age for eligibility for old age Pensions, providing the pension is made adequate to maintain a decent standard of living.

Above all, we urge a concerted effort to bring prosperity to our people, by ensuring as far as possible, full employment.

This calls for bold action on our part, but we are quite satisfied that it can be done, if we pull together to that end.



Municipal Affairs, Minister

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