

NWP
971.65
N278a

Argument

advanced by

Native Sons of British Columbia

**In Opposition to
Granting
of
Oriental Franchise**



JACKSON PRINTING CO., NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C.

Excerpt from the pamphlet, "Argument advanced by Native Sons of BC" that opposed granting the Oriental franchise, 1932

Argument

Canadians have been watching with considerable trepidation the World arming for a recurrence of an era of bloodshed. The Dominion Government, fearful of the future, has voted what to a small population such as ours must be regarded as a considerable sum for defence of this country. In other countries new concepts of government foreign to our ideals of Democracy, and which are based on force are curtailing and brutally stamping out personal liberty and the rights and inheritance of peoples.

In such a World—a World gone mad—is it not time for Canadians to stop and carefully consider their future; to maintain a firm hold upon realities, and to stand unitedly to maintain that individual freedom that has constructed the democratic institutions that we enjoy?

Is the time ripe for us to experiment; to lower the guard that we kept up in more tranquil times? We think that you will agree that it is not.

Yet, today, we have some of our own people, advocating what must be considered only as a most dangerous expedient—the enfranchisement of Orientals: Urging, counselling and assisting the endeavors of peoples whose fundamental ideals, whose outlook on life, whose traditions and whose economic concepts are antagonistic to our own appreciation of a democratic state.

This is no time to even consider such an enlargement of our most sacred privilege as free citizens of the Dominion of Canada. Native Sons of British Columbia are unequivocally opposed to extending the franchise to the Asiatic races, and they call upon every thinking Canadian to join with them in impressing the Dominion Government and the Parliament of Canada the terrible risk such enlargement of citizenship would mean. We believe that it is incumbent upon us, the sons of the pioneers of this Western country to seek to arouse the public to the full portent of this request to share in our heritage.

Many of us can well remember the days when the Orientals—then comparatively few in number—were our servants; we saw them leave those humble domestic and manual pursuits in which they were engaged and become the competitors of our farmers; then, gradually they entered into trade and the business occupations of our urban life, and invaded the professions. Once our servants, now our competitors in industrial occupations and commercial and economic spheres—today they are demanding full citizenship—give it to them and tomorrow they will be our masters.

This is no idle, biased prediction born of prejudice—it is the story so often repeated in the history of a dozen lands. You all remember how the Danes won Britain. They edged in gradually; the price—their promised full price for armed assistance against the enemy of the land—was a small plot of earth that could be enclosed within a bullock hide. You know the result.

Asiatic peoples have many admirable qualities. We admire them for those qualities. We give and are willing to give to them the full measure of the protection of our laws—but we do most strenuously oppose giving them the right to participate in the making of those laws.

The plea is being made that Asiatics who were born within Canada have the right, by the accident of birth, to enjoy the franchise upon attainment of the full age of twenty-one. They have been educated in our schools, have the veneer and polish of our Western culture, and in the

