

For Justice to the Mountain

An Open Letter to the Seattle Commercial Club from the Tacoma Commercial Club and Citizens of Tacoma.

A very decided movement has developed in Seattle as in Tacoma looking to the elimination of the hyphen in The Mountain's name, a thing that, as Mr. Charles T. Conover, in a signed article in the Post Intelligencer of recent date says represents only sectional jealousy and is "a blot on the whole Northwest." The effort is to obtain the renunciation of the name Mount Rainier and the adoption in its stead of a name given it by the Indians. The movement which has been vaguely in the air for more than 25 years, began crystalizing some months ago, following a published interview with Hon. Robert B. Marshall, Chief Geographer of the U. S. during a visit to Tacoma, in which he said he greatly favored aboriginal names in all such cases and that he particularly objected to the name Rainier because the bearer of that name was an enemy of our country, who had no claim to such honor here. Mr. Marshall said he would like to change it and would do so—that is, he was sure the Federal Geographical Board, of which he is the head, would do so—if the people of the state would file a request. He said he would favor any euphonious Indian name—even Seattle—rather than Rainier.

In a published letter (Sept. 22, 1915) the Secretary of the Interior, Franklin K. Lane, wrote: "**The fact is, nobody likes the name Mount Rainier.**"

The Washington State Weekly, of Seattle, declared (Sept. 24, 1915) "**This periodical seconds the effort to restore to the mountain its rightful name and its primitive and proper dignity.**"

A few weeks ago the Rev. W. A. Major, of Seattle, at the head of a delegation of 45 Seattle ministers, in answer to an address of welcome at Tacoma Commercial Club, said he hoped the day would soon come when the mountain would be officially

designated by a name given it by the Indians. Rev. Sydney Strong, of Queen Anne Church, also wrote Mayor Fawcett, using the same words.

Also only a few weeks ago Mayor Gill wrote to Mayor Fawcett, declaring he would be willing to see the change made.

The Seattle and Tacoma Association of Congregational Minister's meeting in Seattle November 19, 1915 passed resolutions asking the Geographic Board to make the change and the Conference of Home Missions, representing all the Evangelical Churches of Western Washington, at a banquet in Seattle (November 20, 1915) did the same, and called upon all Commercial bodies to join them. Hon. James T. Ronald, Judge of the Superior Court, and Frank M. Hawkes, prominent as a business man, and as a member of the Seattle Rotary Club, in open letters called for the same action, as did also Allan Bartow, Librarian of the Seattle Press Club.

The Seattle Argus, in one of many expressions along the same line, said, "Nearly everybody is willing to see the change made."

The Post Intelligencer, (Dec. 7, 1915), proposed the submission of the whole question of nomenclature for a general revision.

The Seattle Star, (Dec. 6, 1915), under a four column front page heading cried: "**LET TACOMA NAME THE MOUNTAIN—here's a fine, big opportunity for Seattle to do a fine, big thing.**" And finally comes Mr. Conover, prominent business man, declaring: "We would all like to please our good neighbor Tacoma," and "Is Tacoma, as the name of The Mountain, historically correct? That is all there is to it, and that is all we want to know."

All this is recited that you may be made aware of the sentiment concerning this matter expressed in Seattle by publicists and organized bodies of citizens in recent weeks and which has encouraged the people of Tacoma to believe that the time has actually arrived when this old ghost that has

haunted us these 27 years may be laid. It is a very fine spirit that is displayed in these expressions, which are only a few of many.

But Tacoma does not seek to name the mountain—it wants to lay the ghost and it could not be done that way. It proposes to meet the people of Seattle in the spirit of Mr. Conover's declaration: "**Anything on earth to do away with this hyphenated monstrosity, Rainier-Tacoma. Hyphens are not in fashion and this one represents only sectional jealousy and is a blot on the whole Northwest.**"

At a mass meeting which filled the rooms of the Tacoma Commercial Club and Chamber of Commerce on the evening of April 18, a committee was appointed with instructions to labor toward the elimination of the hyphen **and until the hyphen is eliminated.**

It is this committee which addresses you and this is our proposal: **That a petition be circulated in Seattle and Tacoma and throughout the State, asking the Geographic Board, at Washington, to renounce the name Rainier and adopt in its stead one of the various forms of the Indian name, to be chosen by said board from such names to be submitted with evidence of authenticity by interested and competent persons for the reason that Rainier, for whom Vancouver named The Mountain, was an enemy of our country and fought against us when we were struggling for our liberty, and that to honor him with such a monument—the most majestic single mountain peak on earth—is extremely offensive to the patriotic feeling of a people living in the State called Washington, and for the further reason that the aborigines, according to all proper sentiment, have the best right to name the physical features of their country and have bestowed upon this one a meaningful and beautiful name.**

This is our proposal and we suggest that a committee of citizens be formed in Seattle to confer with us—we earnestly urge you, indeed, to join with us in this undertaking—that a condition fraught with embarrassment to our visitors and

humiliation to ourselves and which has made us all ridiculous in the eyes of the whole country may be brought happily to an end.

The composition of the Justice-to-the-Mountain committee here follows:

HON. A. V. FAWCETT, Mayor of Tacoma,
FRANK B. COLE, President Cole-Martin Co.,
S. W. WALL, Journalist,
GEN. JAMES M. ASHTON, Attorney,
EVERETT G. GRIGGS, President St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Co.
HENRY RHODES, President Rhodes Bros.,
WALTER J. THOMPSON, Attorney.
REV. FRANK DYER, Pastor First Congregational Church.
W. H. PRINGLE, Vice-President Scandinavian American Bank,
MAURICE LANGHORNE, Attorney,
JOHN B. KAISER, Librarian,
BEVERLY W. COINER, Attorney,
A. H. BASSETT, President Tacoma Rotary Club,
GEO. H. PLUMMER, General Land Agent,
A. J. RITCHIE, Manager R. G. Dun & Co.,
H. G. ROWLAND, Attorney,
W. N. ALLEN, Member Metropolitan Park Board,

W. L. McPherson