MEMORANDA : MISCELLANEOUS ORGANIZATIONS
N.D., 1942-1948 (9)

Japanese-Canadian Repatriation to Japan.

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J.L. 3719 - Mikuni

Please pass on my greetings to all the "gang". Remember me to your mother. I hope she is well. Greetings to your wife. Merry Christmas to you all.

Sincerely,

"DONALDA".

November 29, 1948.

Dear George:

It is just about a year since we set foot on the shores of Asia after an absence of more than eight years. Behind us we left many friends having ties of race and culture in this part of the world and, therefore, the time is more than ripe for a brief report and a word of greeting. We recall how anxiously we looked forward to our return. Old friends on this side of the world awaited us and we wanted to know how they were faring. They had endured years of war and had entered into a post war period of social, political and economic confusion. One of them said recently, "In wartime we had to contend with bombs; now, in peace time, we must get accustomed to barter." which reminds me that as I write, inflationary prices makes a loaf of rather poor bread cost the equivalent of one American dollar which, in barter terms is the price of a stamp for an ordinary air mail letter.

During the past year Taiwan has rapidly become more and more like the mainland of China. With the exception of a handful of intellectuals or highly skilled technicians all Japanese have been sent back to the home islands. Snatches of the Japanese language are still heard everywhere, especially among young folk. This freedom to use Japanese, we cannot help but note, marks a striking contrast to the former regimented orders to "use Japanese only." The Taiwanese have to contend with many language changes. With the almost overwhelming influx of mainlanders Mandarin Chinese is now rapidly coming into use. The disturbed conditions in the north are sending tens of thousands of refugees over here. Every ship to the harbour of Keelung is thronged from stem to stern with every last person that can cling to a square foot of space. With them come all the problems and perplexities of a country in confusion and distress; glittering wealth and multi-patched poverty; searchers after special privilege and opportunity--people fleeing from Communist hordes. Amid these conditions, some Taiwanese sigh for the good old days of economic security even though the security they knew was at a low level. Deep down, however, they know that, for the sake of the future, freedom must come first. But with freedom has come a responsibility that is hard to bear.

Not more than two references to Japanese-Canadian doings reached us during the year. Both were encouraging. One was a brief review of Professor LaViolette's book. This indicated the attitude of a social scientist toward our war-time treatment of the little 23,000 West Coast minority. We hope the book may be widely read. The other was a report on the progress made toward rehabilitation and the fine way in which the Japanese Canadians are making good in many fields of Canadian endeavour. For both we were indebted to our good friend B. K. Sandwell of the SATURDAY NIGHT. (The paper is usually about three months late but we read it through, from the Editorial page to Mary Lowrey Ross!)

We two have had a busy year; the one largely responsible for the running of an 80-bed hospital where samples of almost all the problems that arise between Western and Eastern medical practices are of daily occurrence; the other shuttling back and forth between Taipeh and Shanghai--between College, Church and University work and representing Canadian Aid to China and Canadian Red Cross. We could write at length about these things, but at present we just want to greet you and to say MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Sincerely,

DONALDA and HUGH MACMILLAN.

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Dear Friend: December 29, 1948

I was very happy to receive a few days ago two letters from Mr. and Mrs. MacMillan from Taipeh, Taiwan. Since their departure last year, from Toronto, I received a short card from Mr. MacMillan before their departure on the "SS Maiden Creek" from New York. I was informed that their vessel would shortly be leaving for Panama about October 10, 1947. Prior to receiving this recent letter from the MacMillan's their last letter was mailed from Manila en route to China. In that letter they informed me that they would be at sea a total of approximately 60 days since their departure from New York before they would arrive at their destination.

During the interval, I had to forego the pleasure of writing to them to keep them informed of the activities of the Co-operative Committee and the JCCA and the good work that was being continued where they had left off as it was thought possible by the MacMillan's that letters with any reference to Japanese, notwithstanding that they be Canadian citizens, might not be received with any degree of welcome in Taiwan owing to war instilled hatred. But from these present letters from the MacMillan's, I gather that these fears are now groundless and I shall be very happy to keep in close touch with them regarding our work in Canada.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE TANAKA, National Executive Secy,
National Japanese Canadian Citizens Ass'n.

Mackay Memorial Hospital,
Taipeh, Taiwan, CHINA,
November 28, 1948.

Dear George:

It would seem that we have severed all connection with the Western world for we have taken no time off to write to any of our friends back home. The first half of the year was a struggle for me to get back into the life here. Two weeks after arrival I went into our mission hospital as acting superintendent of nurses. That meant not only facing up to an entirely new line of work with inadequate language and little experience but it meant also facing up to a time of tremendous change in the lives of the people and especially in the hospital where the change from Japanese and German medicine to Western medicine was thrust upon us in the hospital without a Western doctor to guide the staff. I spent endless hours with our staff doctors working out a system that would give the best medical care to the many patients that came to our doors. We used a mixed language of Japanese, German, Formosan, English and Mandarin. How we struggled to understand each other and the many medical terms and the new medicines that came in from all the countries of the world through UNNRA and later IRC in Shanghai. It was all a great experience for me and very worthwhile for all that was accomplished in getting the institution on a firm footing. Now, of course, we face other problems of inflation and scarcities of food, etc., but we have forged a strong organization that has a chance of weathering the storm.

The year has sped past and once again we feel we have never been away from here. It all seems a dream to recall the war years at home. Looking back now they seem so peaceful and uneventful after this year of "shaking events". However, we eagerly read every bit of Canadian and American news that we can lay hands on even if it is two or three months late. We are still waiting for the "post mortem" on the American election. Papers from the States take a full month, from Canada and Britain six weeks. Airmail letters come in five to seven days so we are not too much cut off from the recent world happenings.

How I should like to hear of Japanese Canadian doings. It would seem that you have done a good job throughout the year from a few reports that we read in papers but we have heard nothing about the Property Commission.

And, too, we should like to know all about your personal doings. Are you still at the helm? Is Kinzie and Roger still with you? Is the New-Canadian still doing a good job? How do you stand with the government now? What are the battles that have yet to be won? This would look as if I expected to hear from you about all your doings. I certainly would be happy to hear from you if you can spare the time. Both Hugh and I remember gratefully the fellowship we enjoyed with you those few years and though time and space separate us for a period of time we shall look forward to renewing the ties when we return home again.

(continued on reverse side)

3. "To ensure the success of the resettlement, the government has decided to continue the restrictions on movement which are at present in effect. The provision respecting fishing licences which applies to persons of Japanese origin will also be continued."

4. "To ensure the fair treatment promised in 1944, the government is prepared in cases where it can be shown that a sale (of property) was made at less than a fair market value to remedy the injustice."

THE JOB IS NOT FINISHED

We protest the imputation of disloyalty against those who have gone to Japan. No case of disloyalty or grounds for deportation has to our knowledge been proved against any of those concerned. The great majority of those who went voluntarily to Japan were driven to do so by reasons of family duty, despair of being able to re-establish themselves in Canada, and other similar motives, which in no way indicate disloyalty to Canada. We believe that all those who left and who are Canadian citizens have the right, if they are so minded, to return to Canada. Moreover, we believe that there is no legal ground for the statement that naturalized Canadians who have returned to Japan have lost their status. A letter has gone to the Prime Minister asking for clarification on these points.

We are glad that the government has removed some of the special controls affecting persons of Japanese origin. However, we are continuing to press for the removal of the remaining controls. Until Japanese Canadians enjoy the same rights and privileges as their fellow citizens of other races, the job is not complete.

THE PROPERTY ISSUE

Restitution for property losses is the most important issue that remains to be settled. It is only reasonable that the Japanese Canadians should expect fair compensation for losses that they suffered as a result of evacuation. The committee has requested information from the government concerning the machinery that they propose to set up to enable those who suffered losses to present their cases. Interested groups will have to give this matter a great deal of thought in order that we may assist the government to make amends for the injustices inflicted by the forced sale of property.

(Mrs. Hugh) Donalda MacMillan.
Secretary.

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COPY OF LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Ottawa, January 8, 1947.

Dear Sir:

I refer to your recent interview with Mr. Foote of this Department when you discussed the procedure to be followed for making claims for the property in Korea, China and Japan of your Church.

In the outset, I would like to explain there are two types of claims.

(a) Claims for reparation against Japan resulting from war damage.
(b) Claims for restitution of specific identifiable property.

In the first case, a detailed claim should be filed with the Custodian, Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, 7 O'Connor Street, Ottawa, on form "C". Copies of this form may be obtained from that Department. After you have completed and filed the form, the Custodian will have it inscribed on his register.

This Department deals with claims for restitution. At the present time, there is no machinery for pursuing claims of this type for property in China, and Korea. However, I am pleased to enclose a copy of the rules to be followed by Canadian claimants when preparing their claim for property situated in Japan.

Rules for Canadian citizens and residents in Canada owning property in Japan.

1. The Department of External Affairs is prepared to assist Canadian citizens, British subjects permanently resident in Canada, and persons resident in Canada who have applied for Canadian citizenship, to register their claims for the restitution of their property in Japan.

2. Claimants who have not already filed their claims with the Department of External Affairs are advised to follow the instruction outlined below in completing their claims.

3. An affidavit in six copies, one to be in the Japanese language, if possible, should be forwarded to the under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa. The affidavit should contain the following information:-

(a) The full name and change of name, if any, of the claimant.
(b) The former and present nationality of the claimant including the place, number and date of issue of his naturalization certificate, if any.
(c) A detailed description of the property, its value and a description of the claimant's title hereto.
(d) The names and addresses of the persons, company or organization now in possession or custody of the property;
(e) Detailed circumstances of the claim;
(f) The names of any persons connected with the transfer of the property if such transfer was unauthorized by the legitimate owner.

4. The transmission of the affidavits to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs is no way guarantees that the Canadian Government will sponsor the claim nor that the claimant will receive compensation. In all cases the Department of External Affairs will examine the claim and determine to what extent it can be supported. In the event of a decision to support it, the Government reserves to itself the right to urge the claim, to withdraw it or to accept a partial settlement.

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(PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE)

PRESS RELEASE January 24, 1947

The Prime Minister, Mr. MacKenzie King, announced today that the government has decided that it is unnecessary to continue in force orders in council permitting as an emergency measure the deportation from Canada of persons of Japanese origin. Assistance will, however, be continued for voluntary departure from Canada.

In making his announcement, the Prime Minister issued the following statement:

The decision of the government respecting certain orders in council relating to persons of Japanese origin in Canada marks the substantial completion of a program contained in the statement I made in the House of Commons on August 4, 1944. At that time I indicated the following "tentative measures" which the government proposed to put into effect:

(a) Separation of the loyal from the disloyal among the persons of Japanese origin in Canada, and the removal from Canada of those who were disloyal;

(b) Provisions to enable those loyal to Canada to remain and be treated "fairly and justly"; and

(c) Settlement throughout Canada, rather than exclusively in British Columbia, of persons of Japanese origin remaining in the country.

Under the provisions for assisted movement from Canada which the government put into effect, the separation of those whose continued presence would be undesirable in Canada has been accomplished on a voluntary basis. Nearly 4,000 persons of Japanese origin have now left Canada and returned to Japan. Among these were the Japanese whose deportation would have been necessary had they not gone voluntarily. Accordingly the provisions of the Order in Council (P.C. 7355 of December 15, 1945) permitting deportation as an emergency measure have been repealed. In view of the government's decision it is no longer necessary to continue the authority given by the Order in Council (P.C. 7357 of December 15, 1945) authorizing the establishment of a special commission to investigate the loyalty of persons of Japanese origin. That order, therefore, has also been repealed.

The government is retaining the authority to provide free passage and financial assistance to persons of Japanese origin wishing to move to Japan on a voluntary basis. The Order-in-Council (P.C. 7356 of December 15, 1945) respecting the revocation of the Canadian status of naturalized persons of Japanese origin who leave Canada, has also been repealsed. This repeal will not, of course, restore the Canadian status of persons who have already lost such status.

With respect to the property of persons of Japanese origin who were removed from the Pacific coast, and whose property was sold by the Custodian, the government is of the opinion that the sales were made at a fair price. In all cases a complete appraisal was made before disposition. The total of the prices secured is greater in aggregate than the total appraisal value. To ensure, however, the fair treatment promised in 1944, the government is prepared in cases where it can be shown that a sale was made at less than a fair market value to remedy the injustice.

Of 20,558 persons of Japanese origin now in Canada, there are fewer than 1700 who have not as yet settled in new homes and employment. Of these 1700, a large proportion are aged persons, invalids, or persons otherwise unemployable. These persons are still in government relocation centres.

In 1941, out of a total population of 23,149 persons of Japanese origin, 22,096 resided in British Columbia; only 1,153 resided in all the rest of Canada. On December 31, 1946, the total had decreased to 20,558. Of this number only 6,776 were in British Columbia; while 13,782 now live in other parts of Canada. Since 1941 the population of British Columbia of Japanese origin has declined by 15,320 - or approximately two-thirds. In addition, the pre-war concentration on the coast has been eliminated.

To assist in the resettlement of persons of Japanese origin the government provided free transportation to new locations in Canada, gave financial assistance in resettlement, and, through the Department of Labour, assisted in securin suitable employment outside British Columbia.

To ensure the success of the resettlement, the government has decided to continue the restrictions on movement which are at present in effect. The provision respecting fishing licenses which applies to persons of Japanese origin will also be continued. All other Orders-in-Council and special controls respecting persons of Japanese origin, other than those necessary to complete the administration of assets already vested in the Custodian, have been revoked.

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THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS ALSO UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO....

"Resolved that the organizations here represented be urged to assume responsibility for influencing public opinion in favour of the resettlement of Canadians of Japanese origin, and also that the members take definite measures to assist these people in their adjustment, particularly by helping them to secure decent housing and suitable employment, and further that they endeavour to make them feel welcome in our communities."

WE, the persons here present, therefore recommend to the various organizations represented in this meeting that they petition the Prime Minister of Canada and his cabinet to now recognize the citizenship of Canadians of Japanese origin and grant them their full rights.

WE urge in particular, 1. THAT the Dominion Government be asked to at once seek ways and means of encouraging and aiding Canadians of Japanese origin to locate in the various provinces of the Dominion and to assure the Provinces and Municipalities that it is in the interest of this Dominion that permanent settlement should be encouraged by them, not only as a method of dispersal but also as an implimentation of the rights of Canadian citizenship.

2. THAT the restrictions with respect to the purchase of property by Canadians of Japanese origin be lifted.

3. THAT those desirous of settling east of the Rockies be assisted in re-establishing themselves in those lines of work for which by experience and training they are equipped.

4. THAT all who have suffered financial loss with respect to property and the instruments of their livelihood as a result of relocation shall be indemnified.

5. THAT those who for any reason may have signed the application to go to Japan be informed that they are free to reverse their decision and to register their change of mind accordingly.

II Re. Japanese nationals resident in Canada.

We urge THAT in the interest of justice and to avoid breaking up families, loyal Japanese nationals be encouraged to take out Canadian citizenship after the war, and that in the meantime as many disabilities as possible be removed.

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Memoranda drawn up at a meeting, representatives of various organizations, on Tuesday, May 22nd, 1945, in Metropolitan Church House, Toronto.

I Re. Canadian citizens of Japanese origin.

WHEREAS it is stated that 70% of those in British Columbia relocation centres have applied to go to Japan after the war, and

WHEREAS we believe that among the reasons for their decision is their sense of injustice at the denial to them of citizenship rights and the hazard of taking up their lives anew in central and eastern Canada, in spite of the best efforts of the Government Commissioners on replacement, and

WHEREAS this sense of insecurity in locating elsewhere in Canada has been made acute by war-time emergency restrictions, Federal and Provincial, that in our judgment need no longer be imposed;

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