

'Whites' Already Taking Over Evacuated Homes in Japtown

When civic inspectors begin their work of reclaiming Vancouver's "Little Tokyo" for white habitation, they will find scores of white residents already installed there.

One long row of cabins, two storeys high and in rather run-down condition, is now occupied almost entirely by white residents.

Some white residents have moved into crowded Powell Street rooms.

On the whole, however, the influx of whites has not been sufficient to counterbalance the exodus of male Japanese and the area already shows signs of becoming a "Ghost Town."

NO RUSH OF BUSINESS

There is little business on Powell Street. Some of the store fronts are boarded up; others carry "Special Sale" signs in a vain attempt to attract business.

Powell Street merchants are keeping only a small stock of goods in hand in anticipation of complete evacuation. Merchants who deal in slower selling commodities are doing their utmost to get rid of the stock they now have on hand.

Store fronts on two blocks along Powell Street were examined, none showed any sign of spring painting.

BUILDINGS NEGLECTED

Evacuation of able-bodied male Japanese and the possible evacuation

of all other Japanese residents from the area is having and increasingly bad effect upon the appearance of the area.

"Not only is there insufficient labor to keep up the buildings; but also there is no incentive for the remaining Japanese to spend time and money upon this property at the present time.

Powell Street is close to the area in which large numbers of Vancouver residents are employed. The city fathers are already worried about the shortage of housing accommodation in Vancouver.

WILL BE 'RENOVATED'

It therefore seems inadvisable to permit an unproductive "shack town" to develop in the busy heart of Vancouver.

The City Council determines to use the area if it can be brought up to health, plumbing, electrical and structural standards.

City Inspectors will soon be combing the area, testing joists and rafters, examining baths and lavatories, chucking insulation around electrical wires.

As workmen follow on the heels of civic inspectors, new life will come to Vancouver's once busy "Little Tokyo."

Excerpt from "'Whites' Already Taking Over Evacuated Homes in Japtown," Vancouver Sun, 15 July 1942.