

Re-affirm Loyalty as War Flares over Pacific

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(From Jack Scott's Column, "Our Town, In The News-Herald")

ON the night that war began over the Pacific, I went to "Japan Town" and wrote of what I saw. The following day I received a number of letters criticizing me for being "sympathetic", harsh criticism to a reporter.

I have two other letters inviting me into a discussion of a subject that is difficult to discuss.

One writer is bitter that Japanese children should be convoyed across busy intersections by police officers when, so the writer says, there are no officers at certain street corners where white children cross.

The other records a street car vignette in which a white man irately stomped off a street car because a number of Japanese were passengers. My correspondent feels that this may be severe evidence of more subtle cases of undemocratic reaction.

I must confess that my sympathy, which is perfectly legitimate in this space if not in the news columns, is reserved exclusively for the second writer.

I think the only time I have been mad enough to hurt anybody was when a woman stopped me while I was walking with my dog and said I should be ashamed of myself for having an animal of German breeding. And yet I am quite sure that I would have seen an equal amount of red had I been on the street car mentioned by my correspondent.

There are certain aspects of our community's economy which the Japanese have affected by their methods of work and the influence of that has certainly carried over into the present situation.

I do not propose to defend a Japanese or anybody else for taking away another man's income by sacrificing himself to long hours and a starvation income, but I certainly do propose to defend a police department which places its men at the most dangerous corners to guide school children, whatever their color may be.

The danger of any impartial defence of the Japanese who were born here or who have lived here most of their lives is the fact that there must be, and have been necessary precautions.

These have been taken, and will be, by the authorities who know the situation. If their methods are not democratic in the pure sense of the word it is only because of the urgency of taking them quickly and efficiently. It is not a job for hatred, but for intelligence.

Two of my occasional golfing companions are young Japanese writers who were born in Vancouver, graduated from the University of British Columbia and are proud to call themselves second generation. I propose to continue playing golf with them so long as they do not sink too many long putts.

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A GREATER TASK

Marching irresistably upon us for years, it seems now in retrospect, the tragedy of war on the Pacific is at last with us. And of all the little people of the world, few will be more shaken by its anger and its dread than the men and women and children of our own community—23,000 Japanese Canadians in this province.

There is of course only one policy, only one viewpoint for each one of us. There must be now, just as there has been in the past, complete, unswerving loyalty to the country that has given us birth, protection and sustenance. It must be to offer ourselves and everything we have in the defence of the traditions, the ideals, the way of life we regard as our own.

What, if anything, we can do to give expression to that loyalty other than to carry on as we have in the past, is our own problem that we must seek to solve, for the initiative assuredly will not come from other Canadians. This journal itself has urged for two years that the danger of war on the Pacific made it vital that we be accepted into the armed services of our country. Now that the war has come, and the wave of feeling released, it is apparent that such action is next to impossible. And though we do not surrender our conviction, because we believe in the loyalty of our own group, it is our responsibility to search out new ways in which we may serve our nation.

One final responsibility is ours, and it is not the less heavy. It is a challenge not to give way to despair, nor to take refuge in bitterness and hate. This tragic conflict will set back, but it must not destroy our hopes and aspirations to walk with honour and with dignity and with equality as Canadians among all Canadians. Since our coming of age, this has been the fight of the second generation; and in the years of the future, it will be again. For never in the world's history has it been more vividly revealed how vital to our nation is that sense of unity which in a country as diverse as our own, can spring only from the tolerance and understanding of men of reason and goodwill. Indeed the war has not lessened our contribution as a group to the Canadian nation; it has imposed upon us a greater task for the future.

Casualty Bulletins ...

VANCOUVER.—The casualties among Japanese Canadian workers on the home front in the past five days and reported reliably to The New Canadian have been:

- Some 1800 fishermen temporarily at least without any visible means of livelihood, and facing a very uncertain future.
- Employees of 3 Japanese language newspapers, totalling about 50, no wout of work.
- Full-time and part-time teachers in 59 language schools in B. C. now unemployed.
- Discharge of section hands and red caps from the C.P.R.
- Plate glass windows broken

in moronic attacks on grocery and confectionery stores, in the West End and Grandview. One "black hand" note entitled, "first warning," and urging a proprietor to close his store.

- General slump in business, believed to be due particularly to the black-out, rather than to the war situation. Similarly a widespread loss in working time by many mill employees.
- Discharge of bell hops from the Vancouver Club and other city hotels.
- Attempted arson at rooming house on Alexander Street.
- Laying off of saw mill hands in city

Japanese Nationals Report To Registrars Of Enemy Aliens Before February 7

OTTAWA. — February 7, 1942, has been set as the official deadline for aliens of Japanese race and citizens naturalized since September 1, 1922, to report to the registrar of enemy aliens to sign the required undertaking.

This order applies to alien Japanese, other than U. S. citizens, to persons partly Japanese and of alien status, to women whose husbands are aliens or who became naturalized after 1922, and to Canadian-born girls who became Japan-

ese nationals through marriage.

It does not apply to Canadian-born citizens, the U. S. citizens, or to immigrant Japanese Canadians who were naturalized before 1922.

In Vancouver the office of the Registrar is located in the R.C.M.P. barracks at 33rd and Heather St. (Oak Street car).

A list of offices in other centres of the province, where Japanese residents may report, will be published in The New Canadian in the next issue of The New Canadian.

Serious Unemployment Situation Results As Many Japanese Canadians Lose Work FACE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE

Into the hearts and into the simple homes of British Columbia's 23,000 Japanese Canadians came war just last Sunday. And farmers, fishermen, city dwellers — old and young, alien and citizen—turned from a workaday world to the radio waves, speeding to them as fast as light, the story of a savage and treacherous onslaught that snapped at last the frail thread of peace in the Pacific.

Each new flash, each succeeding bulletin, each fragmentary report hammered at a familiar world, a known and safe and secure world, till at nightfall, there remained only confusion, doubt, bewilderment. Words are not adequate for it. Indeed the tumult of emotion, of suspense, yes, of fear, is masked in the faces of the people, in their talk, in their look. Masked in the quietness of resignation—a grave, "It can't be helped."

Among the older people, among the first generation immigrants most of whom have grown grey in Canada raising a family of Canadian sons and daughters, it is an even briefer, "shogana!"—"It can't be helped." Only the little children, playing on the street, and looking forward to Christmas, are too busily occupied to think, to worry, or to hide that worry with an airy quip.

Their Loyalty Sustains Them

And yet, in spite of it all, among the people there is an air of confidence, a continuing belief that they need not despair. More deeply rooted than the hasty observer would suspect, is a strong trust in democratic ideals, even Christian ideals of justice and of tolerance. There is none of the panicky feeling of the guilty due to pay for his crime. There is rather the strength of the innocent, a calmness born of their own conviction that they have tried in every way possible to be good and loyal Canadians. The people can point to demonstration after demonstration of their loyalty, and now that the long-feared conflict has come, they can merely re-affirm what they have declared time and again in the past. Thus telegrams to the Federal Government, assurances of faith to civic and Federal authorities, the active wish and offer to co-operate or to serve in any capacity demanded of them. And the majority of reasoning, unbiased Canadians have faith in Japanese Canadians, just as Japanese Canadians have in them.

Unemployment Serious Problem

Unfortunately many Occidental people have not yet been convinced of that loyalty. They have not yet reduced the question of defence to a purely rational, reasonable basis, where they can distinguish between resident immigrant Japanese and those now become our sworn enemies. And because of that, increasingly grave become the question of employment, the question not now of earning a living, but of fighting for subsistence.

From every side come new reports of Japanese Canadians thrown out of work. In the city the closure of language newspapers, not because of subversive activity but as a precautionary measure, has put some fifty wage earners on the unemployed list. Throughout the province, full time and part time language school teachers now become job seekers. Throughout the coastal waters, from Rupert to Victoria, from the Upper Fraser to the West Coast, some 1800 fishermen, British subjects of enemy origin, face an uncertain future, their boats tide up and immobilized; and a strong movement, both sincere and selfish, is under way to prevent them from fishing again when the season comes around. No less serious are the increasing number of workers employed by Canadian firms and organizations, now being laid off—section hands, red caps, bell boys sawmill workers, factory hands, all searching now for a means of living. And tradesmen, merchants and clerks throughout the city wonder about their clientele, wonder if the customers can see beneath the Japanese exterior into the human being. Some gather the remnants of a shattered plate glass window in silence. The tension hovers just as heavily in the Japanese quarter, as credit is tightened, and people refrain from buying. Only the farmer perhaps, close to the fruitful, protective earth, dependent first upon nature, not man, is not visibly affected.

But there Is No Panicky Fear

So, too, the day-to-day routine is upside down. For what routine can be established if violent death lurks in the skies, and slower but surer starvation threatens from within. One cannot even gather on the street freely or carelessly, even if only to weep. For there are suspicious eyes, inflamed minds, hostile hands, thrown rocks. Small wonder there is but little heart for the social affairs of yesterday, the laughter, the dancing, the wedding feast. Most of these today and tomorrow have been cancelled. They will be sought only as an escape from the "tough time."

But there is no panicky fear, either of attack from within or without, of blackout of light, or blackout of freedom and dignity, even as the ruins settle. It is not the first time the Japanese Canadian community has faced a difficult situation. And the tradition of fighting unflinchingly for right and justice, yes, and for democratic principles, is one that is deeply ingrained in the hearts of Canadians of Japanese descent.