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TASHME - A JAPANESE RELOCATION CENTRE
(ESSAY FOR UNIV. OF CANADA TRAINING COLLEGE, 1947)

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March 25, 1947.

W. McBride.

TASHME -- A JAPANESE CANADIAN RELOCATION CENTRE.

EVACUATION.

Since this part of the Japanese Canadian problem is being dealt with by Miss Nancy Edwards who knows it far better than I, very little will be said about it. After the Evacuation order was issued, Feb. 25, 1942, single men were sent to road camps in the interior of B.C. while families went to live in the Exhibition buildings of Hastings Park in Vancouver. There does not seem to have been a very consistent policy as some families from Vancouver were in Hastings Park, others were not; families from some towns stayed there for varying lengths of time whereas others from ^{some} small towns moved directly to the camps known as the Interior Housing Settlement Projects. The order-in-council ordered that all Japanese must be outside the Defense area, that is east of the Cascade Mts, 100 miles east of the coastline. Thus most of the settlements or relocation camps as they were commonly called were situated in the interior of B.C. at such points as Kaslo, Sandon, New Denver, Greenwood. The camp in which I worked, Tashme, was the one nearest to the coast.

All fishboats, cars, radios, and cameras were required to be ~~re~~ turned over to the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property. A limit of 150 lbs. baggage per adult and 75 lbs. per child was allowed to be taken to the camps including personal effects, kitchen utensils, etc. Beds could be taken if the owners paid the freight. The rest of the family's belongings and their real property was given to the Custodian for safe-keeping. By virtue of an order-in-council passed June 29/43. (P.C. 5523) the Custodian disposed of a great deal of personal property and real estate, without the consent of its owners, at prices often below their

tax assessment value. Owners were sometimes not notified till a year later that their property had been sold. Much personal property was lost or stolen before the Custodian had proper care of it. On Vancouver Island, a whole carload of personal effects was auctioned off, unknown to its owners. A great deal of it had little monetary value but great personal and associative value to its owners. A credit was placed to the owner in the Custodian's books. Only recently, have the cheques for these sales been sent to the owners.

LOCATION OF TASHME.

Tashme was located on the Trites or Fourteen Mile Ranch, on the new Hope-Princeton Highway, approximately 114 miles south east of Vancouver. It is in a triangular-shaped valley, 2200 ft. high, perhaps one mile wide and four miles long, lying between high mountains (4 - 6000 ft. alt.) which rise very sharply and rockily from the three sides of the valley. The altitude gave Tashme a winter climate not unlike that of Toronto of 1946-47 with a very short and cool growing season. The location was one of great beauty and majesty but the Japanese - Canadian people there, saw in the mountains not only grandeur but an ever present symbol of a barrier, almost a prison wall, that isolated them from the outside world and emphasized their lack of freedom.

The nearest town, Hope, was reached by a narrow winding mountain road, fourteen miles in distance. Because Hope was just inside the defense area, a permit, sometimes difficult to obtain, was required to visit it. It was a town of only 3 to 500 population with a few stores but no recreational facilities till the spring of 1946, unless the two beer parlors might be classified as such. Since possession and drinking of liquor by people of Japanese origin during these four years was a criminal offense, the beer parlors did not draw these people as so often they do draw men when they are fearful or in despair. Hope,

therefore held little attraction for Tashme people. There were not more than four or five white families living on that fourteen miles of road, so that there was no incentive to go visiting there. The road from the other end of the town ran toward Princeton but it was through wild land, forest chiefly so that although they were allowed to go up to fifty miles in that direction, an occasional trapper or prospector would be all the human contacts they would make. Thus Tashme with its population of approximately 2200 was virtually cut off from contact with any people except their own group, the white government or Commission staff (about 30) and the missionaries (9).

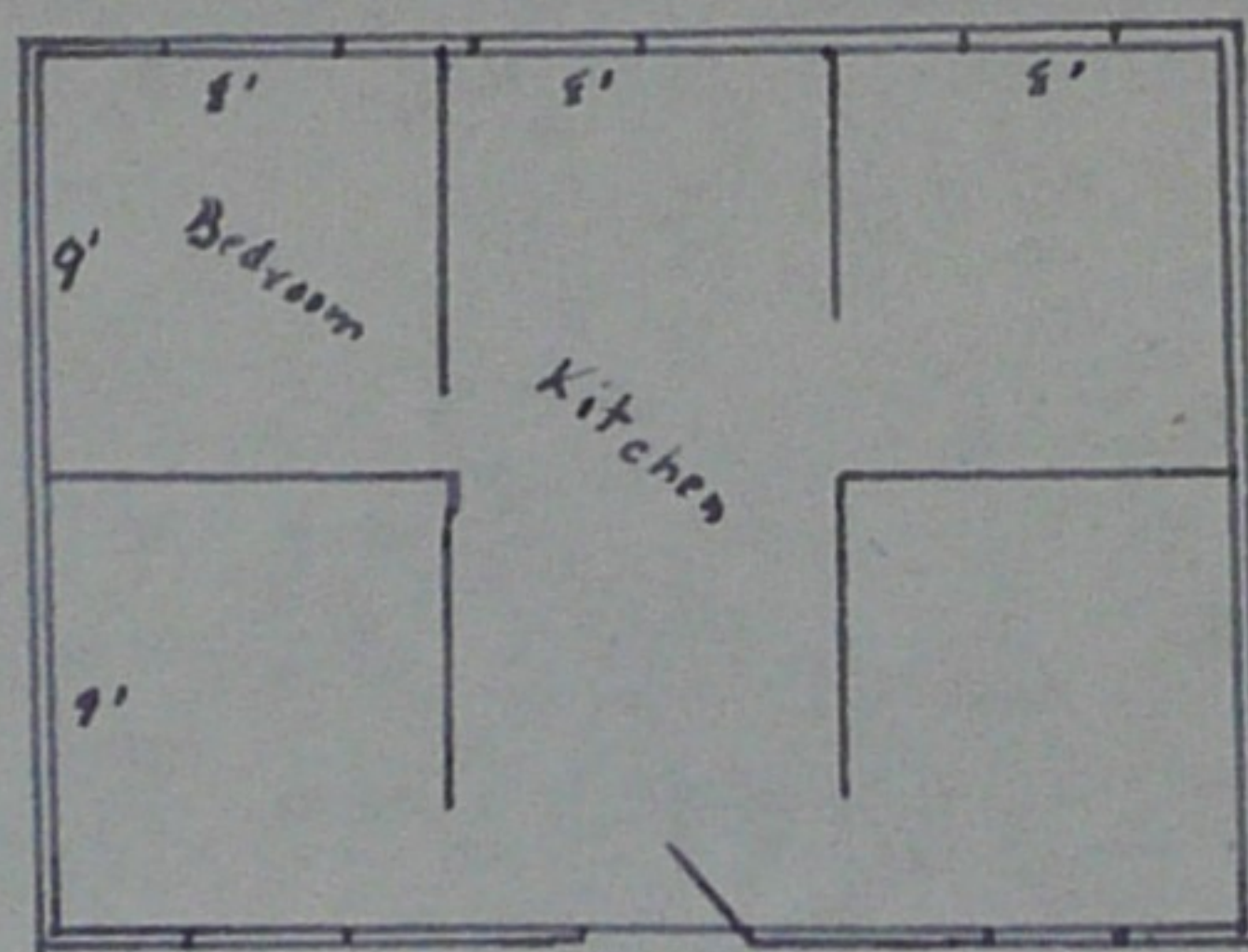
PHYSICAL SET-UP OF TASHME.

1. HOUSING.

Since Tashme had been a dairy farm, its buildings were utilized for public services and living apartments. Most of the Japanese lived in 'houses' in the town, while the Commission staff and the R.C.M.P. officers lived across the river in well-built apartments.

a. Houses.

The houses of the town were almost all of one general plan -- a



Typical House Plan.

structure 18 by 24' made of one layer of sheeting boards covered by tarpaper on the outside and with building paper inside. The interior was divided into five rooms -- a central kitchen, 8' by 16', two bedrooms on each side 8' by 9'.

For some peculiar reason no doors were allowed inside the houses and so curtains served this purpose. Two stoves in the kitchen, heated the house. Water was carried in from outside, taps being placed outside every second or third house. Kerosene was supplied for the lamps and wood for the stoves in the houses. These houses served two families, having as

a

many as ten occupants or even in a few cases thirteen. In the last year or two single families, - at least five persons, were allowed to keep a whole house if the second family left town or for some similar reason moved out. Houses were placed about fifteen to twenty feet apart, joined into groups of two by a woodshed built between. Between each group of two houses ran a lane at right angles to the avenues for fire protection. Needless to say with so many houses so close together, fire was an ever-present menace to be guarded against. The rows of houses were probably 40ft apart at the back, in which space at intervals were placed groups of outside toilets. One thing which greatly added to the appearance of the town was a garden three feet wide in front of almost every house. Nearly every one had flowers and perhaps also vegetables but always it was neat and weeded. Trim vegetable gardens were kept in plots outside the town and at the back of the houses. Community bath houses at the end of every second or third avenue served for washing clothes, having baths and a general social time where neighbours met and chatted over everything from the affairs of state to the latest rumour and gossip.

b. Apartments.

One large barn was divided into two floors of so-called apartments -- single rooms about 20' by 20', each of which housed at least four persons and served for everything except cooking and washing. Cooking stoves (2 or 3 families per stove) were grouped together at the end of the hall as were the sinks for doing dishes. The apartments had electric light and were heated by hot air distributed by fans. Several smaller buildings with much the same type of accommodation were later set up.

As one can readily see, the greatest problem in housing was the overcrowdedness and lack of privacy. The walls were so flimsy that when one was walking down the street, one could easily hear almost any slightly loud

conversation going on in a house while everything except a low-pitched or quiet conversation could be heard inside a house. In the newer apartments the partitions between the rooms did not go to the ceiling so that privacy of conversation was almost impossible. In houses where two families with children lived and where the stove, etc. must be shared, considerable patience and flexibility had to be shown, particularly by parents. On the whole families got along very well together.

c. Staff Houses.

The white personnel of the camp, except the church workers, lived in a separate section of the community. The officer staff, white doctor and nurses, and the R.C.M.P. officers lived in apartments built across the river from the rest of the community. They were nicely finished inside with inside plumbing and water, electricity, and a large comfortable commonroom. Married couples did their own housekeeping while single people batched or ate their meals in the white section of the Mess Hall. The truck drivers, forestry official (scaler), farmer, and the foreman of outside work lived in the houses formerly used by the staff of the farm. They were considered to be of a slightly lower social level than the office staff and so there was not much mixing socially between these two white groups. The Japanese dentist and the doctor and his family lived in a separate duplex house beside the hospital.

2. SCHOOLS.

The KINDERGARTEN, with an enrollment of 120 children, was staffed by two missionaries (Anglican) and one or two Japanese girls (1 paid by the United Church). It was in charge of the Anglicans who had their own building.

The B.C. Security Commission, (later called the Dept. of Labour, Japanese Division), was in charge of, and staffed the PUBLIC SCHOOL.

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It had some 600 pupils and about 25 teachers. For at least one year no boys were allowed to teach. The girls, almost without exception, had had no previous teaching experience or training and many, in fact, had not yet completed their Grade XII work. They were given a summer course in New Denver in preparation for teaching. The public school consisted of parts of two barns divided up into rooms about 15' by 15' and in some cases a little larger. In the summer of 1944, the parents built a fine primary school for grades one and two. *6 months*

The HIGH SCHOOL was staffed by, and in charge of the W.M.S. of the United Church. Its teachers were University graduates, two of whom were missionaries from Japan. When the Dominion government took charge of the Japanese they took over from the Province the responsibility of education as a part of that task but felt obliged to provide only public school education. They did not favour High School education in the camps and did not support it beyond allowing the High School to use the public school buildings when they were not in use, and providing heat and light as it did for everything in the community.

B.C. has an excellent High School Correspondence system with all regular H.S. courses offered to boys and girls for a nominal fee of \$2.00 per year (registration). per pupil, per year. Because it was no longer a provincial responsibility, the only arrangement that could be made was to charge the Japanese Canadian students \$9.00 per course plus the usual registration fee. This meant that an average school year of six subjects would cost the parents \$56 per child, a sum very few parents could afford to pay, particularly when the wages paid by the commission for labour averaged 25 - 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per hour. The students-to-be and their parents asked the United Church minister, Rev. W.R. McWilliams, to try to get a High School started. A United Church committee was able to make arrangements with the H. S. Correspondence Dept. in Victoria to

use their materials (courses) at cost. These were largely the basis of the school courses. Throughout the school's three and a half year's existence the efficient and gracious co-operation of this department, especially its head, Dr. Lucas, has been a light in an otherwise rather dark pattern of government policy of High school education in this situation. The High School was not allowed to build a building nor use any but the public school buildings so that school hours were from 3:30 to 9:30PM.

3. CHURCHES.

The main religious division was not denominational but Buddhist and Christian. The latter, made up of the Anglican and United Churches, co-operated in many projects in an effort to present a Christian emphasis rather than a/ denominational. At its peak, Sunday school attendance in all three groups averaged regularly about 200 children. The Buddhist Sunday School and service were conducted in Japanese. The Christian S.S. were conducted in English, with a morning service in Japanese for the older people and an evening service in English for the young people.

One half of the top floor of one of the barns, "D" Building, was used for the Sunday School for both the Buddhist and United Church (at different hours) as well as acting as a gymnasium for the public school, ^{a hall} for dances, public meetings, funerals, etc. The Anglicans used their Kindergarten for all their services. The United Church used one of the public School buildings - 'A' Building for its services. These two buildings, 'A' and 'D', served the community for almost all its public occasions of every character.

4. STORES.

All stores were in charge of the Commission. There was a fairly good staples food dept., a poor drygoods department, a fish and meat store, shoe repair and barber shop. In addition the Commission ran a blacksmith,

tinsmith and carpenter shops which handled Commission work almost exclusively.

5. HOSPITAL.

Tashme was fortunate in having a hospital of a fairly high standard with two doctors (1 English, 1 Japanese-Canadian) and three registered nurses, one of whom was Japanese Canadian. Japanese girls acted as nurses' aides and were given a good training. Because the houses were so crowded, illness couldn't easily be looked after at home. Consequently, except for a few chronic invalids, those who were too ill to come to the out-patients clinic became patients in the hospital. It is a rather interesting to note that the Japanese Canadian doctor, born and educated in this country, who did the greater part of the work, both surgical and medical, in the last two years, was paid only one half or one third the salary paid to the white doctor.

6. MESS HALL.

Single men ate their meals at the Mess Hall. It was divided into two sections with the kitchen between, one ^{single} for the Japanese men and one for the single Commission staff ~~and~~, truck drivers and R.C.M.P. An early Commission regulation forbade any non-Japanese eating in the Japanese section even though they might wish to do so.

7. MAIL.

All mail of the non-Japanese residents went into a separate box to Japanese mail. The latter was censored, both incoming and outgoing. Censorship appeared to be particularly strict during the time before the 'signing' when people had to decide whether they would stay in Canada or take the seeming advantages offered by the Government if they signed for repatriation to Japan. During this time there were complaints that letters from relatives in Eastern Canada had censored-out the reasons

why they should remain in Canada and other advice pertaining to this decision, so that the receivers felt even more isolated and alone.

OCCUPATIONS.

1. MEN AND BOYS.

The chief occupation for the men was in logging in the woods nearby for the Commission. Others worked in the sawmill to which these logs were taken. A number of men, particularly young single men, worked in the road camps in connection with the construction of the Hope-Princeton Highway. Others worked for and lived at a sawmill a few miles away owned by Peter Bain of Haney. The wages paid at this mill were much above those paid in the Commission sawmill but were still below the union rates. It is interesting to note here that a request by the mill managers to the Regional War Labour Board in the spring of 1946 for an increase of a few cents an hour ^{in wage rates} to bring them up to union rates was refused without very adequate reason given. Some boys, 16 to 20 years mostly, worked in the woods and in the mill but the majority of them worked on the gravel and logging trucks as "swampers." A few men and a number of the High School boys (who worked till 3 in the afternoon only) worked in the store, office and shops. A few other men worked on the farm which grew carrots, celery and cabbage for the store and oats for the horses, while others helped saw wood in the community and did other odd jobs.

2. GIRLS.

Perhaps the chief occupations for the girls were teaching public school and working in the Commission office as stenographers and clerks. Others worked in the stores, and warehouse as clerks or in the hospital as nurse's aides. In all these occupations, the salaries paid, to the best of my knowledge did not exceed \$45 to 50 per month, an exception perhaps being the secretary to the Supervisor of the Camp.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CAMP.

Early in March 1942, The Dominion Government appointed three commissioners as the B.C. Security Commission to be in charge of the evacuation of the Japanese from the coast. The first three men on it were Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. ^S Shirrar of the ^{B.C. Provincial Police} R.C.M.P.; and the Hon. J. ^{Meade} Meighen ^{Deputy Comm. R.C.M.P.} from whose names the word 'Tashme' was formed. In Feb 1945, this commission was officially transferred to the Dominion Dept. of Labour, Japanese Division. The administration remained the same and notices appeared under the Commission's name for some months following the change. In the camp, there was a Supervisor who was responsible to the Head Office in Vancouver, particularly to the Commissioner. He was in charge of the camp and the carrying out of the policies of the Commission. Perhaps his closest associate was the ^{who with the} Placement officer ~~and~~ the Welfare agent ~~were~~ responsible for maintenance cases (relief); and social welfare problems. He looked after the permits for those going east and had a great deal to do with the carrying out of the arrangements for those being voluntarily repatriated in May and August 1946 to Japan. Working with the Welfare agent was a bilingual Japanese who could act as interpreter as well as stenographer and helper. Other men of the Commission were in charge of various sections of the community work as the store, warehouse, woods, farm, etc. while a few were in charge of parts of the office work.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE.

The R.C.M.P. looked after the checking on all visitors to the camp, permits (inspection) for the Japanese to travel, registrations of those who became 16 years old. They were in charge of the "signing" for 'voluntary' repatriation both in April 1945 and later on for the boats that did carry back repatriates.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE CHURCH.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE CHURCH.

The relationship between the church and the Commission left much to be desired. This is apparently more true of Tashme than of some of the other centres. [From all outward appearances the majority of the men and women on the Commission staff were there, not so much because they wanted to help solve a problem but because it was a fairly comfortable job, one that might be considered to be helping the War effort, with a good salary and few expenses. They were not interested in the church; rather they scorned it and ran it down in the office in the presence of each other and of the Japanese on false as well as true charges. This pattern early became so set that it took considerable courage on the part of any member to stand up for the church or its action if any of their own group was present. A few did so and although they could only go so far with their own group, because it was a part of a deeper attitude of greater understanding, they helped the church, often indirectly, and were respected and liked for themselves by the Japanese.]

The Commission members cannot be condemned completely on this score because ~~[when any person or group has to enforce policies which, although they may not admit it, deep down they feel to be wrong, they may do one of two things: Those who refused to compromise their principles beyond a certain point left the job or refused to use methods they felt to be wrong. The others, the majority, excused themselves on the grounds that]~~ they had to do as they were told in order to keep their jobs and so they gradually became hardened and indifferent to the suffering these policies and methods used to enforce them were causing. [The job itself, because the men were not driven by a greater desire than self-aggrandizement, buried and perhaps destroyed much of the good that was originally in them.]

[What has this to do with the church? Simply that the church seemed

~~to be the most consistent force opposing the policies and methods used.]~~
When one of the Commissioners in Vancouver was asked why he was so opposed to the United Church in Tashme, he replied with great heat: "You put in that High School." The Commission did not want a High School there, perhaps because it had been its intention to give girls and boys six month apprenticeship courses in domestic work or office work instead of high school and then send them east to work. The idea did not appeal to either the parents or teen-agers. They wanted to finish high school. The Commission felt that the school would keep the Japanese in the camp, and that without it they might move east faster. A further bone of contention was that the church tried to find places in the east for people so that they would not have to sign for 'voluntary' repatriation at a time when the indirect pressure of local authority was all toward having people sign. They felt the church was not co-operating with them. The church would not kow-tow to the Commission and was not afraid to say certain policies were wrong if it thought they were. This naturally did not put the church in a favourable light with the Commission. ~~[The Anglican church found less opposition from the the Commission to its work and requests than the United Church.]~~

EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR POLICIES ON THE JAPANESE PEOPLE IN TASHME.

1. COMMISSION OR DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, JAPANESE DIVISION,

It must be said in all fairness that mechanically the B.S. Security Commission had a fairly efficient ~~stro~~^{store} system, including the rationing of rice, lard and other short commodities. The bath houses, the fuel and light supply were well provided for as were many other of the more mechanical parts of the administration.

Unfortunately the good effect this should have had on the rapport between the Commission and the Japanese was almost entirely nullified by

the lack of care and understanding on the part of most members of the Commission toward the Japanese. To all appearances the Commission staff felt they were superior, above the Japanese and often treated them as chattels rather than people, failing to realize that even though they perhaps could not speak English well or were only labouring men, they still had deep feelings and self-respect that was hurt when they were looked down upon constantly. Had the Commission staff really cared for these people they could, I think, have worked out and enforced the same general policies without incurring the deep distrust they earned and would have prevented or at least alleviated a great deal of the mental and psychological suffering and the bitterness and fear the camps created. It is worth noting, however, that those men who did live and act so^{on} won the respect and liking of the Japanese in a way to which the others can lay no claim. It is obvious from what has been said that the Commission was, as a whole, distrusted by people. The general feeling was that the Commission would oppose anything they really wanted, particularly if the church supported the request or was in any way involved in it.

POLICIES THAT HELPED TO CREATE THIS FEELING OF DISTRUST.

1. Restriction on Travel.

The requirement of permits to travel, even to Hope, and the frequent difficulty and delay in obtaining those permits, created a feeling of frustration.

2. Sale of Property.

In most cases the owners were not asked if they wished their property to be sold. They had been asked to turn it over to the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property for safe-keeping till their return and did so in good faith. It was a terrible shock to many a family to receive a notice that their property had been sold a year before, often below its assessment valuation, with legal charges usually paid

by the buyer, deducted from the proceeds so that a comparatively small sum stood to their account in the Custodian's books. Some still hold the now worthless deeds for their former homes. For many older people who had put their best years of work and savings into such a home it was a sickening blow.

3. 'Voluntary' Repatriation Decision of April 1945.

On Jan 1, 1945, the American government allowed their Japanese to return to the coastal areas. The people in Tashme were beginning to hope that Canada might follow the American policy. That hope was shattered by the notices posted March 16 stating that "every person of Japanese origin 16 years of age or over is required to report to R.C.M.P. Detachment on April 9 - 13 to signify his or her intention concerning repatriation." (to Japan). Those who wished to remain in Canada "should now re-establish themselves East of the Rockies as the best evidence of their intentions to co-operated with the Canadian Government in carrying out its policy of dispersal. Failure to accept employment East of the Rockies may be regarded at a latter date as lack of co-operation with the Canadian Government." For those going to Japan, transportation would be provided and the net proceeds of their property given to them. For those who wanted to remain in Canada, transportation and a placement allowance would be provided. Nothing was said about the disposal of or proceeds from their property.

Looking back at it from this point two years later, the issue seems clear cut but it was not so at the time. It was possible to obtain independent employment in B.C., or to retain employment under the Commission only if one 'signed' to go to Japan. Men working ~~was~~ for the Commission were told they would lose their jobs if they did not sign. Some refused to do so and lost their employment. For some who had to support their families, but who through circumstances found it impossible to move east

at once as suggested by the notices, the only way out of the immediate problem of maintenance for their families seemed to be to sign and hope to cancel it later. Teen-aged boys and girls who had to interview the R.C.M.P. without their parents, were given the impression that they could cancel¹ their signatures quite easily in a few months' time. Affidavits, typical of the experience of a number of these young people are found in a pamphlet: "Save Canadian Children and Canadian Honour". There was an atmosphere of indecision, and fear which was increased in subtle indirect ways -- by the attitude of the Commission who, to most people, seemed to encourage repatriation; by the presence of the R.C.M.P. officers walking and standing around the streets of the community with a frequency seldom known before and their presence at church services, even those in the Japanese language. The latter appeared to be an unsuccessful attempt to insure that the minister, Mr. McWilliams, would not publicly discuss the pros and cons of this decision.

The final blow came when, a few days before the day of decision, a copy of the forms to be signed arrived and it was found that to sign for repatriation meant automatically to sign away one's Canadian citizenship. This posed a particularly hard problem for teen-agers who did not want to go to Japan but should their parents do so would have either to stay in this country alone and support themselves, though they were still in high school and without any vocational training or go to Japan with their parents and probably forfeit any chance of returning to their native country. In many cases parental claims were so strong that they signed even though they hoped the boat might never sail.

In June and July those who had not signed for repatriation were given orders to move to the centres of New Denver (sick and nationals)

1. Black, N.F., and Norman, H.: "Save Canadian children and Canadian honour." Vancouver Consultative Council, Vancouver, BC. Spring 1946. 4 pp.

and Kaslo (naturalized). Repatriates from these centres were brought to Tashme. Several teen-aged boys and a girl, all High School students, who had not signed although their parents had, were given a week's notice to go to New Denver or East. Fortunately, employment and housing were found for them in the East by their former teacher so that they were able to go directly to Ontario. Such unnecessary separation of parents and children only added to the distrust and resentment toward the Commission.

4. Departation Orders of Dec. 15, 1945. (Orders-in-Council P.C. 7355-56-57)

During the early fall, hundreds sent letters asking for the cancellation of their "voluntary" repatriation signatures, giving the reason for which they had signed. On Dec. 15, without warning three Orders-in-Council were proclaimed. They stated that all Japanese nationals and naturalized Canadians, who had not revoked their request for repatriation before September 1, all Canadian-born of Japanese origin who had not revoked their request at the time of departure and the wives and children under 16 of all such deportable persons would be deported and at that time would automatically be deprived of their Canadian citizenship. The despair and fear this caused was increased when a few weeks later Mr. Pickersgill, Commissioner of Japanese Placement, announced in Tashme that the first groups from Tashme would leave for Japan about the end of January (1946) and the centre would be cleared out by the 10th of March. Perhaps largely because pressure was brought to bear on the government from interested groups from all over the country, these orders were not carried out. Nevertheless the following months were one of anxious waiting for the Supreme Court judgment on the validity of these Orders-in-Council when permits to travel or to go east were almost unobtainable. Towards spring single Nisei were permitted to go east and gradually families

were encouraged to go. They had to go as families having a definite place to stay (address) and a job. Heads of families could not go east ahead of their family to find work and accomodation.

5. Restriction on Visitors.

^{Fall}
From Sept. 1945, visitors to the camp were radically limited.

Non-Japanese visitors were not allowed to enter Tashme without written permission from the Department of Labour's office in Vancouver. They could not speak, even to preach or speak to the High School students on any subject, without specific permission from Mr. Pickersgill or his associate. Such permission was not always easy to obtain as Mr. Pickersgill said they did not want the people in the camp to know what people

outside were thinking about the whole question. One man invited to preach at a service in Tashme took an hour before he could persuade Mr. Pickersgill to allow him to do so. One of the conditions written on his 'permission' was that he should not mention the atomic bomb! (Spring 1946). Alec Grant.

Many of these factors may seem small cause for distrust of the Commission but in an atmosphere of family and group conflict and indecision the fears, rumours and general emotional tension was increased by the geographical, social and cultural isolation of the camp and focussed as distrust on the most obvious source of irritation -- the governmental staff and its policy as it was carried out.

2. SHINWAKAI or JAPANESE COMMITTEE (Town Council).

This body consisted of representatives, elected every six months from each avenue and the apartments. It looked after most of the internal affairs of the town such as the delivery of the wood and kerosene supply, garbage disposal, repairing of stoves, roofs, etc. Its paid bilingual secretary acted as a liaison officer between the Commission and the Japanese people, translating and posting on a public notice board all official documents, and orders from the Commission. He passed on the requests of the community to the Commission. He also daily duplicated all notices received and had them sent from door to door. It kept the people well

informed on local affairs and made possible the calling together of the community on very short notice. The Shinwakai, with the help of Vancouver lawyer, did a great deal of work in the drawing up of the writs of Habeas Corpus to be used in the event of a sudden deportation of those who had cancelled the repatriation requests after Sept. 1. The Educational Committee of the Shinwakai helped the schools and teachers out wherever possible.

Robert McMaster

On the whole the Shinwakai was a representative democratic body of men who were respected by the people and trusted by them to act on their behalf in local matters and in those relating to the Commission. It gave the people an opportunity to handle their own community affairs and to make their desires known to the authorities in an organized way.

3. SCHOOLS.

a. Kindergarten.

The Anglican missionaries were in charge of the Kindergarten. Though its activities had a definitely Christian emphasis, Buddhist as well as Christian children attended. It was a great boon to mothers for it not only gave their children training in good habits, but it took them out of the crowded homes for at least half of each day into organized activity with other youngsters of their own age. The Kindergarten brought the mothers of the children together occasionally in an educational and social program. Out of it grew classes in English for the adults who were interested. Because of the genuine interest the missionaries took in the children and their parents, it established in these people and their close friends a feeling of trust in the church in Tashme and across Canada. It unquestionably brought to church and to a consideration of Christianity as a basis for living, people who would otherwise have remained indifferent to it.

b. Public School.

The Public School was staffed by partially trained teachers who, for the most part had not yet completed their Junior Matriculation. The discipline in the school was poor for a number of reasons. The teachers for at least one year were all girls, mostly 18 to 22 years old, with inadequate training in methods and subject material. They did their best but found it difficult to keep order, although in the last year it improved somewhat. Then too, the physical equipment and environment was not conducive to good discipline, particularly because the students had all to sit in pairs -- a situation that lends itself admirably to talking or playing if the lesson is not very interesting. Each year the class of pupils entering grade 9 showed a poorer grounding in basic subjects such as English and Mathematics than the previous class, showing the effect of partially trained teachers and of the gradual increase in the use of the Japanese language in the community. This was particularly noticeable after those who intended to remain in Canada had left Tashme because this group included a large number of those who used English in the home and was replaced by a group who, on the whole, used less English.

c. High School.

The arrangements of the High School were mentioned earlier. One of the High School's most beneficial results was that it gave its teen-agers an interest in life and something constructive to keep them occupied in a situation where lack of adequate recreational facilities and the general feeling of isolation, ~~an~~ uncertainty and fear would otherwise have produced bitterness and quite probably a shiftless, 'don't-care' attitude towards life. Even though the students, like all normal boys and girls, grumbled about the homework they had to do, they were glad when holidays were over for they said, "There's nothing to do, nowhere to go, no place to get together." The older students with few exceptions had to work part or

or full time in order to help in the financial support of the family. Some worked in the store or office, others as nurse's aides or public school teachers and a few in the mill or shops. Almost all students who weren't employed had to help at home in the mornings. After physical work and because school was at night, it required more concentration and self-discipline to get the work done. Perhaps because these conditions did make the obtaining of a school education more difficult than normally, the boys and girls realized its value much more. It made them more responsible and they learned to work on their own because in the upper grades, particularly, it was not possible to give the regular number of teaching hours required by a course. One concrete result of this is the large number of students who, when they came East had to work full-time but are going to night school at the same time with the intention of finishing their High School and in some cases in the hope of going on to University.

The school was the centre of the lives of most of its students. Almost all their social activities, athletics, music were centred in the school for whose government they were largely responsible. Because they had to take this responsibility and learn to co-operate with each other, and had individually to make life-affecting decisions as on repatriation, these boys and girls were in some ways more mature for their years than many of our boys and girls in normal communities. Life was earnest and real. Some have settled back a bit and taken life more easily since coming East but many have continued to grow.

People not in the school said you could tell the High School students from those of the same age who were not in the school. They had a purposiveness and interest and walked as if life though sometimes hard were worth living, even exciting. These attitudes the others often lacked. Because history, science and literature opened up to the students new ideas, gave them new perspective and a broader view of the world, their total

outlook on life was more balanced and objective.

The High School was undoubtedly the greatest single factor in bringing teen-agers and young people to church. In a town predominantly Buddhist, there was parental disapproval of Christianity and, I would suspect, some razzing by their fellow students. They came, therefore, not because it was the social custom, but primarily because they wanted to find something that would give them a steady strong basis to meet ^{There were,} life, as well, secondary reasons I think, such as the challenge of the sermon to their intellectual capacity, and the opportunity to play the records after. The evening service was always predominantly made up of High School students, many of whom came very regularly ^{individually or} in groups. In a few cases the parents, seeing the interest of the school in their boys and that they were interested in the church, started to attend the Japanese service. Perhaps at first it was an expression of gratitude but later some continued to come because of its inherent value. Throughout the community, Buddhist and Christians alike were exceedingly grateful to and appreciative of the High School and to the Church that made it possible and helped in every way possible to make its task easier.

4. CHURCHES.

a. Christian. (Anglican and United Church.)

The Evacuation and Relocation Centre experience had several diverse 'Christians' effects on people in their attitudes toward the church. A few became so embittered that a 'Christian' country should treat them so, they refused to have anything to do with the church. People who retained that attitude throughout hurt themselves for that resentment and bitterness poisoned their whole lives. Others either refused to be hurt or conquered their resentment and grew out of that experience and were staunch members of the church. They found in ^{the} Christian faith the power to meet each new

situation and not be hurt by it but see the best and the humorous side of it. Because of the large adult Buddhist population there were few 'fair-weather' or 'dead-wood' Christians who attended church.

The most effective Christian work done by the church for the community was done, I think, outside its preaching service though that was good and relevant to the immediate local or world situation. The feeling of the community was that in the church and its ministers they had a dependable friend, that was not cowed by the opposition of the government. In Tashme the ministers' and churches' work ranged from the initiating and carrying on of the Kindergarten and the High School; shopping in Vancouver for everthing from hot water bottles and children's clothes to glass eyes and wedding rings; getting much needed legal advice on problems; championing their cause wherever occasion necessitated it; helping individuals and groups who came for advice ; finding in the East through personal friends and interested church people, homes and work for single people and families; and the sending out of 9000^{10,000} letters all across the country urging action against the Deportation Orders-in-Council of Dec. 1945. The church failed often in its slowness of movement but it did honestly attempt to meet the needs as they arose.

Sept 45
At the invitation of the Japanese, Dr. Arnup, Moderator of the United Church changed his Vancouver itinerary and came to listen to the stories of the representatives of the community on their reasons for signing the repatriation forms in the spring. The fact that so great a man, representing the whole United Church of Canada should come to visit them deeply impressed all in the community. The Commission was so annoyed that he had asked the Japanese instead of them for this information that they immediately made a ruling that no visitors could enter the camp without a permit and special permission to speak. Dr. Arnup's visit was well worth all the inconvenience

and hours later spent in trying to get such permission for speakers desired for the school or church, for it convinced people beyond doubt of the real friendship of the church, not just in its local organization, but in its national aspects.

One girl said that in the community people said you could tell a Christian young person from a non-Christian by his actions. The former was held to have a higher moral code on the whole. This statement is borne out by our observation. The reason, I think, is not hard to find. A few young people deserted Buddhism completely and had no religious affiliation or faith. Most nominal Buddhist young people barely half-believed the things they were taught so that it didn't grip their lives and give them power for living. They were in the transition from the old faith of their fathers which no longer held meaning for the children to the new faith of Christianity which they had not yet examined or accepted sufficiently to find its power. In any such state of transition and culture conflict, the distinction between right and wrong is apt to grow dim. It is however a tribute to the high ethical quality of Japanese culture that in spite of crowded housing and the lack of privacy and adequate recreation, the moral tone of the community was much higher than in many of our white communities with similar housing conditions.

In the 'voluntary' repatriation signing, families kept their decisions very secret so that people often did not know what their neighbours had decided. When the shift of the non-repatriates to Kaslo and New Denver came, it turned out that about one-half to two-thirds of the population of Tashme had signed, but of the adult Christian group the figures were very different. Approximately 100 out of the 115 United Church members and adherents had not signed. In the exchange we received very few Christians. It is true that these people who had become convinced Christians had also accepted more of our Western culture than some of their Buddhist neighbours.

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W. McBride.

but it is an interesting reflection on the church and its influence that the difference should be so marked. On the whole the Christians took the initiative in going east as in many other activities.

b. Buddhist Church.

The camps were set up in part by religious affiliation, i.e. Slocan was predominantly Anglican; New Denver, United Church; Sandon, Buddhist, etc. Tashme was one of the overflow camps which took those that did not go to the other camps. Sandon was a small camp and perhaps for that reason, Tashme *also* was predominantly Buddhist, in its adult population almost exclusively so, but ~~most~~ ^{many} of the Buddhist young people might be called 'nominal' Buddhists as mentioned above. They didn't really accept its beliefs as their own but went to Sunday School because their parents wished them to do so, or others in their social group went, or the recreational and social gathering of the Buddhist Young People's Assoc. attracted them. In Japan, Buddhism is closely connected with nationalism. It is natural that some of these ~~older~~ ^{older} people in being cast out of their adopted home, as many felt the evacuation meant, should turn back in nostalgia to their native home and cling to its customs and religion more desperately than they would in a normal situation. Some parents sent their children to the Buddhist Sunday School in a spirit of nationalism and of bitterness opposing Christianity as being part of the culture of the country that had hurt them. A ~~considerable~~ number of these boys and girls now go to the Christian church since they have left the camp. It is perhaps interesting to note that missionaries from Japan say that Buddhist practice and even thought in this country have incorporated so much of Christianity and our western culture and customs that it is quite noticeably changed from the Buddhism of old-time Japan. The addition of Sunday Schools, grace before meals, the use of Christian hymns with 'Buddha' substituted for 'God' and 'Jesus', sermons at funerals are examples of such changes. This change had apparently started in some parts of Japan before the opening of the war.

5. R.C.M.P.

The R.C.M.P. represented the law and as such occasioned fear in any who were called up by the officers, no matter ^{for} what the reason. That naturally arises in a simple people as most of Tashme's folk were and especially where they are dependent on another to interpret what is said. However, in general the R.C.M.P. were decent men with a kindly just attitude toward the Japanese and in many cases were liked and trusted. It was felt that the R.C.M.P. were in a position between the Commission and the people, sometimes taking the part of one, sometimes of the other. Their very presence and the necessity of reporting to them every time one went to and from Hope never allowed the people to forget they were not free.

6. MOVIES.

The show was held usually for two nights every second week. There was an alterationⁱⁿ of old Japanese pictures and poor English talkies. They were run~~g~~ for the Shinwakai by a man who owned a 16 mm. projector. When questioned in regard to the quality of the English language pictures, it was said that they could not obtain good films for the small projector. It was poor propoganda to allow the poorest of our movies represent American and Canadian life. The Japanese films were owned in Tashme and were put on in rotation until most of the spectators knew the stories off by heart.

No matter how often a picture had been shown, a full house could always be counted on. No other entertainment or meeting could hope to compete successfully with the show, no matter how often it had been shown before. The greatest reason for the show's fascination, I think, was that it provided an escape from reality, from the worry of the present and the facing of the future with its uncertainty and required decisions. It took them from the crowdedness of home^{and} gave them a few hours of ~~make-believe~~ make-belief in another world. It provided entertainment and

something to do. For the Essei, at times homesick in their insecurity, the Japanese pictures brought a picture of their homeland and fond memories of the past even if these were seen through the rose-coloured spectacles of time and distance. The total effect of the show was, I think, poor because it provided an escape not only from reality but from providing other more wholesome forms of recreation for themselves. If the 'D' Building on these two nights could have been used at least part time for organized community recreation and discussions, perhaps one night for the older people and one night for the younger, this active participation would have developed a greater sense of individual and community responsibility and a more objective outlook on life than did the passive watching of a show that took precedence over everything else.

7. OTHER RECREATION.

a. Tashme Youth Organization. (T.Y.O.)

This was made up of young people over 16 years of age. Its active members were chiefly those young people who were working in the community. Perhaps the chief contribution of the T.Y.O. was the sponsorship and leadership of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Before the June 1945 segregation of the 'repatriates', Tashme had the largest troop of Scouts of any town of comparable size in Canada. But in the exchange they lost something like sixteen out of the eighteen Scout leaders and many of their most active members so that the strength and activities dwindled considerably the following year. Another very helpful piece of work of the T.Y.O. was the operation of a small library, chiefly of fiction. They put on each Christmas an excellent concert with both English and Japanese numbers. Their social activity took the form of big seasonal dances, from which in the end, white members of the community had to be excluded because of their drinking propensities. In effect, the T.Y.O. served the young people of the community

and gave them a sense of belonging to an all-inclusive group. At the same time it provided occasional entertainment for the older people.

b. Scouts, Cubs, and Girl Guides.

As mentioned before these were sponsored by the T.Y.O. They included in their membership and leaders practically every boy in High School and Grade 8 and many of the girls of the same grades. The Scouts were relatively much stronger than the Guides. Their general effect was good. They included all boys and girls, Buddhist and Christian. Though the Scout organization, by its very character is not as democratic as some other group's activities for teen-agers, it gave them a sense of responsibility, a sense of achieving something in their field work and of belonging to a group and organization they could be proud of. Because there was no religious affiliation it could be all-inclusive.

c. Outdoor Sports.

After the first year or so in the camp, many almost lost interest in living beyond the immediate tasks of the day and the fear and despair that grew in the camps ~~and~~ pervaded its every activity. Some rose above these forces and some gradually succumbed to their weakening influence. This was seen quite markedly in the area of recreation. Walking and hiking were very popular in the first few years but in the last two, people seemed to sit around their houses more, talking and walk much less. In the winter, skating on the lake two and a half miles away was thoroughly enjoyed by the young people. In the summer, till the last year, baseball held the crown for sports. Leagues were formed, games played on Wednesday and Sunday and the town turned out faithfully to cheer their favourite teams. Competition was keen and the League results were always watched with close interest. Sport of was one of the greatest forces for keeping up the morale and sanity in the

the camp.

TOTAL IMPRESSIONS.

To sum up briefly the main influence of the various institutions in Tashme on its inhabitants, I think it would be much like this. The Commission was feared and distrusted because of its policies and the attitude in which they were enforced by those in authority in Tashme and Vancouver. The Shinwakai was fairly well trusted. It was praised and criticized frankly by the people but it was a fairly democratic mouthpiece through which they could express their desires and ideas, both of approval and criticism of what was being done in the Japanese community and of the enforcement of Government policies by the commission. The schools were a blessing to the community, not only in providing the education the people so desired for their children but in helping to give those children a healthy outlook on life. The Christian church proved in deeds as well as in words that it was the friend of these people and so was trusted more than any other single institution in Tashme or, I venture to say, in Canada. The Buddhist church to some extent gave unity to the life of the older Japanese [but almost most of nothing to the young people for in our western culture its beliefs lacked youth the power and drive needed to face its problems.]

The R.C.M.P. were respected and trusted in a distant sort of way because the men stationed in Tashme were on the whole sympathetic, regarding the people as people not things. No one wanted to have any official relations with them because they represented the law which was after a few years in camp more to be feared than looked to for protection. The show provided an escape mechanism so powerful as to be, I think, unhealthy. There was very inadequate provision for indoor recreation owing to lack of accommodation. Outdoor recreation was unorganized except for baseball but provided a good outlet for excess energy and turned attention away from the cramped living

conditions and the galling restrictions of the isolated camp. Like indoor recreation, it gradually lost much of its appeal as people lost hope in the future.

My two years teaching High School in Tashme were, I feel, an unusual privilege and certainly a most interesting experience. I have tried to make this report as objectively true as I can but realize only too well that my sympathies were with the Japanese with whom I worked. Because the Commission staff looked down on the church and would have nothing to do with us in any personal or social way and as an official body blocked the church and high school at almost every point it seemed, this may be an unfair critique of their actions and motives. We could only see what was done and hear what was said to people as individuals and as groups. Bitterness and disillusion almost inevitably grew in the hearts and minds of people who remained long in Tashme. Some of that bitterness has been carried to Japan. In a world that so desperately needs good will if it is to survive, it is rather humiliating to think that through the policies and personnel of our government we have added to the world's fears and ~~hatreds~~ resentment and that through the deliberate catering to the racial prejudice of a minority part of the population of our country for political reasons, we are responsible not only for having engendered it at home but also for sending resentful people to a defeated nation -- a poor ambassador for Canada, democracy or Christianity. Physically, Tashme is gone, but it is alive in the hearts of many. To me, the most insidious evil in the whole situation is that discrimination having happened once on a large scale, this time to the Japanese, it can happen again. It will be much easier to discipline any other group in the country in the same way be it another national or racial group, class, or even the unemployed in the event of a depression, and on an even smaller pretext of justice.

Dardis,
April 16, '947.

Dear Winifred:

Your photo is very very fine - I like it ever so much and am proud to have it and show it to my friends. Thanks ever so much. I think you look younger - I guess that life has been good for you.

Your essay wasn't with the letter so I wondered but I understand now - there was too much of it for an ordinary envelope! I enjoyed reading it and I think it gives a very good picture of Tashme. I don't notice any "facts" that I would question but I've wondered a bit about the part on the Church & the Commission, - a very difficult subject!!! Is this essay for publication? This is the way I felt after reading it with the thought in mind that people who had never been in Tashme were to read it - I thought I would rather give them facts and not what we thought were the reasons or motives ^{behind these facts} in the minds she and of the commission folk in Tashme. - That applies for instance to the second paragraph on page 11. I think a simple

statement - that - the Com. folk in Tashme had to carry out - surprise policies for which they were not responsible and lost their jobs if they didn't - is a fact - and "that the church seemed to be the most" - - - - - bottom page 11

As you have written there the crux of the matter was that we opposed some of their policies but even more some of the methods used to carry them out. I think your illust. of what was said to Mac re H. S. work is splendid because it is a fact and the reader can judge for himself the motives & spirit of the Comm. by it. There is always the chance that we were prejudiced a bit too in reading motives & that we made mistakes - that is why I didn't like the ~~most~~ ^{part} of your first paragraph and your second paragraph so well (for publication).

Your second illust; namely the conflict over finding places for people in the east is good. I think it is a fact that the people had come to trust the church and to distrust the Commission in the matter of finding places in the east. Also it is a fact that when the head of the church visited Tashme and heard directly from the Japanese their "side of the story" the Comm was furious and refused to allow any further opportunity for church leaders to

visit Tashme. and meet the people
except with special permission who
proved to be very different to blaming ^{the}
I think that sort of thing is better ^{as illustrated by the} ~~as illustrated by the~~ ^{as illustrated by the}
of course what you wrote above there is
what we thought and often said & I
think is true but there is always the
chance that one can be wrong in
reading others motives - but facts are
facts and most people read for themselves
the motives & character of people who were
responsible for those facts. — — Funny
from me who was the worst sinner
among my group in Tashme when it
came to reading "motives"!!

By the way I don't believe I'd say that about
the Anglican church on Pg. 12. After reading
the reasons it almost suggests they agreed
with the Comm or acquiesced - and I think
myself ~~it was a real~~ they were ashamed ~~xxx~~
but tied by Miss Bailey - I feel sure of that.

I wonder if the paragraph on church &
Commission might not be short because
you explain & give so many of these facts
later in detail that the reader will see
for himself more clearly the reasons for that
difference - as he reads further and yet
a statement of the fact that it wasn't all it
sh. have been is very necessary to give a
complete picture of the whole.

Also about the Buddhists - page 24 - I'd say the children went - because they were sent - but I wonder if many instead of 'most' of the B. young people were nominal' is not better. The earnest B. young people might think "most" was not true. Also on page 28 - I would put a period after "to the life of the older Japanese." Perhaps that is wrong in me but ^{the rest} ~~but~~ can be so easily dismissed as the ^{prejudice} mind of a Christian - or by others as proving B - is worthless. Yesterday I heard Dean Swanson in a really great talk but in one place he made a criticism of a very common attitude among some Englishmen, gave an illust. and then added - "but that man's father & mother came originally from Germany." I felt ^{that last remark} ~~it~~ spoiled it. I doubt if he was in the defensive but it sounded that way.

But I certainly think you have made a very fine survey and evaluation of those four years. I am glad I can keep it to put along with my other souvenirs etc of those days.

I think I'll send this along now & write again about other things. I don't know whether

TUTOR.....Professor Irving.....

NAME.....Winifred J. McBride.....

COURSE U.C.T.S. -- One year.....

YEAR.....Sociology.....

DATE.....Mar. 25, 1947.....

TITLE OF ESSAY

Tashme -- a Japanese Relocation Centre.

BOOKS USED

A +

N O T I C E

To all persons of Japanese Racial origin having reference to making application for voluntary repatriation to Japan.

The Minister of Labor has been authorized by the Government of Canada to make known the following decision made with respect to persons of Japanese ancestry now resident in Canada who make application to go to Japan after the war or sooner, where this can be arranged.

1. The net proceeds realized from the sales of their property real and personal in Canada and standing to their credit at time of their repatriation will be secured to them and may be transferred by them to Japan upon repatriation following the close of the war.
2. In cases of persons sent to Japan under agreement for exchange of naturalized Canadians and Japanese before the close of the war under which agreement the amount of personal property and funds carried by the repatriate is established the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property will be authorized ~~to~~ on the advice of the Department of External Affairs to provide such Japanese repatriates with receipts showing the property left behind in Canada or net proceeds of same if sold with a view to their being permitted to secure possession of their property for the net proceeds thereof after the end of hostilities.
3. Free passage will be guaranteed by the Canadian Government to all repatriates being sent to Japan and all their dependents accompanying them and including free transportation of such of their personal property as they may take with them.

The above assurances will apply to such persons as have already made written application in satisfactory form to the Government of Canada to go to Japan, or those who make written application hereafter for that purpose to the Government of Canada within the period of time fixed by the Commissioner of Japanese Placement for the completion and filing of applications.

These assurances do not apply to persons of the Japanese (race) repatriating on other than voluntary basis.

HUMPHREY MITCHELL
Minister of Labour.

R.C.M.P. Special detachment will take applications at Tashme April 9 - 13. Every person of Japanese origin 16 years of age and over is required to report to R.C.M.P. Detachment on April 9 - 13 to signify his or her intention concerning repatriation.

(Posted March 16, 1945).

N O T I C E .

To all persons of Japanese origin now resident in B.C.

1. Japanese Nationals and others of Japanese origin who will be returning to Japan have been informed by notices issued on authority of the Honourable Minister of Labour, that provision has been made for their return and for the filing of an application for such return. Conditions in regard to property and transport have been made public.
2. Japanese Canadians who want to remain in Canada should now re-establish themselves East of the Rockies as the best evidence of their intentions to co-operate with the Canadian Government in carrying out its policy of dispersal.
3. Failure to accept employment East of the Rockies may be regarded at a later date as lack of co-operation with the Canadian Government in carrying out its policy of dispersal.
4. Several thousands of Japanese have already re-established themselves satisfactorily East of the Rockies.
5. Those who do not take advantage of present opportunities for employment and settlement outside of B.C. at this time, while employment opportunities are favourable will find conditions of employment and settlement considerably more difficult at a later date and may seriously prejudice their own future by delay.
6. To assist those who want to re-establish themselves in Canada the Japanese Divisional Placement officers and the Employment and Selective Service officers with the assistance of local Advisory Committees are making special efforts this Spring to open up suitable lines of endeavour and in areas where prospects of suitable employment are best.
7. The Department also provides free transportation to Eastern Canada for the members of a family and their effects, a sustenance allowance to be used while in transit and a placement allowance based in amount upon size of the family.

¹²
Vancouver, March 12, 1945.

T.B. PICKERSGILL
Commissioner of
Japanese Placement.

Posted Mar 16/45.

COPY

BRITISH COLUMBIA SECURITY COMMISSION.

749 Somerset Building,
Winnipeg, Manitoba.
December 18th, 1944

Mr. Walter Hartley,
Supervisor,
B.C. Security Commission,
Tashme, B.C.

Dear Mr. Hartley:

Acknowledging receipt of your letter of
December 12, 1944.

Will you kindly convey to the Parent-Teachers
Association at Tashme that additional or alternative
High School facilities will not be provided or
authorized at the present time.

Yours truly,

(signed)

George Collins,
Commissioner.

copy: Japanese Committee,
Parent Teachers Association,
Rev. Mr. MacWilliams, United Church.

RM
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(Amy Oki)