

No. 21

Citizenship and Civil Rights

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TORONTO DAILY STAR
ONT. JAN. 4/47

GIVE JAPANESE CANADIANS CITIZENSHIP — C.C.F. YOUTH

Ottawa, Jan. 4—(CP)—Ronald Moats of Saskatoon, Sask., national president of the Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement, in a statement Friday urged the federal government on behalf of his organization that Canadian citizenship rights be given to Japanese Canadians.

Mr. Moats, who attended the co-operative commonwealth university federation convention in Toronto this week, said the C.C.Y.M. welcomed the coming into effect of the Canadian Citizenship Act, but urged that "fullest citizenship rights be guaranteed all Canadians."

His statement added: "On this

occasion we deplore the policy of the Canadian government, which deprives Japanese-Canadians of their rights as citizens.

"Specifically, we ask the Canadian government to abandon its deportation policy, and to remove all restrictions discriminating against Japanese-Canadians; to grant them Canadian citizenship rights, adequate rehabilitation assistance, and full reimbursement for loss of property resulting from forced evacuation from the Pacific coast."

The statement also urged that the government recognize the right of Canadian-born Japanese who felt forced to go with their parents to Japan during recent movements to "return home to Canada if and when they so desire."

TORONTO DAILY STAR
ONT. JAN. 3/47

What Price Canadian Citizenship?

By CHARLES HERBERT HUESTIS

ON New Year's Day I became a Canadian citizen. Up till now I have been simply a British subject, one of hundreds of millions of people who inhabit the far-flung British empire, and when the census man or woman came to my door, despite my protests, I have never yet been able to have myself rated as a Canadian, and that, despite the fact that my forebears left the State of New York shortly after the American revolution and settled in Nova Scotia, and I have four great-grandsons who are the seventh generation of my family in Canada! No wonder I am excited.

But I have some misgivings which tend to cool the emotion. I belong to a racial minority and the privy council recently handed down a judgment to the effect that the Canadian government order-in-council which was passed over the head of parliament, providing for the deportation of Japanese-Canadians to the land of their racial order, is valid.

THE judgment asserts that the order "applies to all persons who are at the time subject to the laws of Canada." I am in the same boat with the Japanese-Canadians. It is true I have committed no crime against the government; but neither had these people. The prime minister testified to this. Seventy-five per cent. of them were rated as Canadian citizens, one-third of them were children under 16 years of age, the majority had lived in Canada over 30 years—that is of those who were born in Japan. No subversive activities had been found among them. They were no more guilty of hostility against Canada than the minister of labor.

The story of the conduct of the government would be declared by an alienist as a description of hysteria. It began on the Pacific coast where most of these persons lived, but it soon infected Ottawa. On Dec. 17, 1941, there was special registration for persons of Japanese race, followed by seizure of their property and sale of the same. In February, 1942, persons of Japanese race, irrespective of citizenship, were summarily ordered from coastal areas to relocation camps in the interior. The same month they were forbidden to acquire homes or lands without special permit. In March all property belonging to them was vested in a custodian "for protective purposes only"—a Fascist device. In April (for by now hysteria was beginning to infect the prairie provinces) the government promised to remove all relocated persons on request. In January, 1945, the custodian was granted power to liquidate, sell or otherwise dispose of the properties of evacuated persons.

THEN in March came the greatest blow of all. All persons of Japanese origin of 16 years and over were suddenly confronted with the alternative of signing applications to go to Japan or establishing themselves east of the Rockies. The government declares that no pressure was put upon these people to sign, but the facts differ. On Oct. 5, 1945, a bill was introduced into parliament with a clause authorizing deportation and revoking of nationality. This the House refused to pass. Then in December, the government, without advising parliament, passed the orders-in-council authorizing deportation.

The Montreal Daily Star comments editorially as follows: "What the rule amounts to is that the government is empowered to revoke the citizenship of any Canadian; it is granted the power to exile which Hitler exercised so brutally before the war. The ruling stands in startling contradiction of the new Canadian Citizenship Act . . . If the privy council ruling is not amended by an act of the Canadian parliament, these rights of citizen-

ship can be revoked any time the Canadian government in office sees fit to declare an emergency."

The government of British Columbia has followed suit and there no Japanese citizens will be allowed to vote so long as the present government is in power. Some of the Southern States do that to their Negro citizens, and Saturday Night comments editorially: "All of the disfranchised are just as much Canadian citizens and British subjects as any Negro in Georgia is an American citizen; and many of them fought for their country and its Allies in the late war, just as many of Georgia's Negroes fought for the United States. Canadians have no grounds for any feeling of superiority."

THE finest monument in Hastings Park, Vancouver, is a noble column inscribed with the names of the battles in which Japanese-Canadians fought in the First World War, set up by the racial group at the Pacific coast. Of those who fought in that war, there are 34 survivors. Were they given better treatment than other of Japanese origin? By no means. They were removed from their homes and their property seized and sold and all grants available to them as veterans has been cancelled.

A case in point has recently become public. Yasuji Shoji was a member of the Princess Pats and was twice wounded and promoted to sergeant. He had 19 acres in B.C., a two-storey house, an electric hatchery and chicken houses for 2,500 fowls. He has been notified that his property was sold for \$1,404.28, and that he has a credit of \$32.09 after deduction of taxes and other expenses. He has written to the minister of labor complaining of this harsh treatment.

What a mockery of the fine things said by leaders of the government in their speeches from the prime minister down. Talk about fighting for freedom against the Nazis who persecute the Jews and drive them from their homes; about "bringing the New Jerusalem to Canada's fair and pleasant land." It makes one a little ill to recall it.

PROFESSOR Rostow of the Yale Law School, speaking of the evacuation of the American-Japanese, which was civilized in comparison with the Canadian methods said: "Its motivation and its impact on our system of law deny every value of democracy. The case is the worst blow our liberties have sustained in many years." To which may be added the declaration of the Charter of the United Nations which was signed by Canada: "We (the peoples) are determined . . . to encourage and promote respect for human rights and for the fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

I shall be proud of the new status conferred on me on New Year's Day, and I have been proud of my status as a British subject. No people have finer traditions than the British, which make it all the more deplorable that some of the noblest of them have been dishonored by the Canadian government in its treatment of a racial minority.

While writing this article there has been running in my head some words written in 1802 by the poet Wordsworth:

"Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour;
England hath need of thee; She is a fen
Of stagnant waters, altar, sword
and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall
and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English
dower . . .

We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,
power."

THINKS U.S. SHOULD PAY NISEI FOR MASS WARTIME REMOVAL

Washington, Feb. 6—(AP)—Dillon S. Myer, former director of the Japanese-American war relocation camps, declared today the mass wartime removal 110,000 Japanese from the west coast of the U.S. was unjustified and the government should make amends.

He said Congress should permit Japanese-Americans to become citizens and should create a commission to receive claims for "several million dollars' worth" of property loss or damage from those forcibly removed from their homes and businesses.

In a report to J. A. Krug, interior secretary, Myer asserted Lieut.-Gen. John L. Dewitt, western defence commander who ordered the 1942 evacuation, "was by no means free of racial feelings" in taking this step.

The report quoted Dewitt as telling a House of Representatives committee on naval affairs at San Francisco in April, 1943: "I don't want any of the Japanese here. They are a dangerous element. It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen, he is still a Japanese."

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What Is Canadian Citizenship Worth?

This week the prime minister announced the government's policy in respect to Japanese Canadians. The minister of labor has been empowered by order-in-council to arrange for the deportation of the Japanese in Canada who signed applications for "repatriation." Such persons will be assured of a specific minimum to assist in their resettlement in Japan.

There will not be deported at once those who became naturalized citizens or were born in Canada and who before Sept. 1, 1945, revoked their "applications" to return to Japan. A quasi-judicial commission is to review these cases, "to ascertain those who are not fit persons to be allowed to remain here."

The government will remove citizenship status from the Japanese who became naturalized citizens of Canada and who are to leave Canada under this deportation order. This policy, said the prime minister, is being applied to the Japanese in Canada because of "the circumstances of war and the peculiar character of the present problem."

It is unfortunate that there was no opportunity for parliament to debate the principles involved in this matter. The very serious question is raised as to the value of Canadian citizenship. Citizenship status is being removed from a large group of Japanese in Canada. In this country, filled with immigrants, many will feel that Canadian citizenship is of small consequence.

The deportation of this large group of Japanese will result in the breakup of many families. Brothers and sisters will be separated from one another, parents from children and kin from kin. Some of these people have lived in Canada for a quarter century or more. Among them are youths to whom Japan will be an alien land.

It should be noted that one of the crimes charged against the Nazis and for which the leaders are being tried is the deportation of civilians on racial and religious grounds. This is precisely what Canada is doing in respect to her Japanese citizens. No other alien group is being treated in this fashion. The Japanese are to be deported not because they have been proven disloyal. It appears that the only reason they are being singled out is that they are Asiatics. A deep sense of shame is growing in Canada on this account.

Is Canada Becoming a Police State?

The dominion labor minister announced this week that persons of Japanese origin are now "permitted to move freely in any part of Canada east of British Columbia." This policy was proclaimed by a new order-in-council, passed on April 14.

The new policy does not remove from Canada the stigma of racial discrimination. Canadian citizens and residents of Japanese origin are still to be restricted in their movements; they will not be permitted to live in British Columbia when they choose to do so. The restriction against them is still on the basis of their race. Many Canadians will be ashamed of the government's action and will continue to oppose it.

The fact is, the cabinet is surrendering to the racial intolerance of some people in British Columbia. The government is forcing the rest of the country to surrender to British Columbia's racialism. It is contended by those who want to keep the Japanese out of B.C. that security is their reason. This is not a reason. We are no longer at war nor is there any threat of invasion by Japan. Nor has there been any proof of disloyalty on the part of the Japanese resident in Canada. There is no reason why the rest of the country should be forced to pander to the racial intolerance of a group in British Columbia; it has been shown that an increasing number of people in that province are opposed to the persecution of people of Japanese origin. By submitting to B.C. racialists, the Dominion is violating its pledge under the United Nations charter.

The absurdity and gross unfairness of the new restriction is illustrated in the case of Mr. Edward Shumpei Yoshioka. He is a Canadian by birth, is this year graduating from Emmanuel College (Toronto), and is to be ordained as a United Church minister in Vancouver on May 16. To go to Vancouver for this purpose, he has to get a permit from the R.C.M.P. "Before the police would give me the permit," Mr. Yoshioka told The Star, "I had to show them a return ticket to Vancouver. I couldn't get a return ticket because I did not know where I was going from Vancouver." That is, he does not yet know to what church he will be appointed.

This is not the end of persecution of Mr. Yoshioka. His father and mother, too, must get police permits to go to his ordination in Vancouver. His father is a United Church minister in Kelowna, B.C., and had come to Canada in 1919 on a scholarship won in Japan. His father too was a student at Emmanuel College. His brother, born in Canada, is a medical student at the University of Toronto.

Why should Canadians have to get police permits to travel anywhere in Canada? The order restricting the Japanese from entering British Columbia has the effect of turning Canada into a police state. This is entirely out of line with what Mr. King said were his desires in connection with the Japanese in Canada. Over two years ago, Mr. King stated in parliament:

"We must not permit in Canada the hateful doctrine of racialism which is the basis of the Nazi system everywhere. Our aim is to resolve a difficult problem in a manner which will protect the people of British Columbia and the interest of the country as a whole, and at the same time preserve, in whatever we do, the principles of fairness and justice."

The new order-in-council puts into operation in Canada the "hateful doctrine of racialism which is the basis of the Nazi system."

June 9/47 G. M.
Civil Rights and Flabby Thinkers

Dangerously current in Canada is the opinion that the State may excusably break its own laws or disregard ordinary civil rights if some social advantage, real or apparent, is gained. The most striking example is the treatment accorded to Canadian citizens accused last year of giving secret military information to a foreign Power. They were held incommunicado for a time, denied the right of "habeas corpus" and stigmatized as guilty in a Royal Commission's report before they had appeared in court. About half of them have been acquitted and the average Canadian is probably not proud of the "spy trial" record. But there is no real public indignation about the injustice done. The accepted view seems to be: "It doesn't matter—they were probably Communists anyway, and Communists have no claim to consideration."

More recent examples of the same kind of flabby thinking are all too frequent. It does not matter, many people seem to believe, that members of the sect called Jehovah's Witnesses are on one pretext or another denied freedom of speech in the Province of Quebec; they are a nuisance and a bore and are better silenced. It does not matter if the law against indentured labor was violated by the importation of Polish girls to work in Mr. Ludger Dionne's spinning mill; they will be much happier there than they were in a Displaced Persons' camp in Germany. It does not matter if Canadians of Japanese descent were cheated when their property in British Columbia was "expropriated" by the Federal Government for inadequate compensation; the veterans now settled on their land got a good deal and are happily settled.

Though name-calling is a fruitless method

of controversy and the word "fascist" is too readily used as a term of abuse, it seems proper to point out that Hitler and Mussolini both consistently acted on the theory that ends justify means. Every denial of German and Italian rights was defended, by the propagandists for the regimes against which the democracies fought a war, on the ground that the oppressive measure served some social purpose. What did it matter if Jewish shopkeepers or industrialists were dispossessed? Germans of racially pure origin profited by the transaction. Of what importance was it that malcontents and critics were locked up or put to death? They were a socially obnoxious element.

It is disturbing that this sort of thinking is now fairly prevalent in Canada. Newspapers with a sound liberal point of view on most questions have applauded Mr. Dionne's private immigration policy for the purely sentimental reason that his Polish employees are content with their bargain. The successful civil re-establishment of a number of former soldiers is regarded, by the same superficial thinkers, as a complete excuse for the defrauding of the Japanese Canadians. It does not seem to occur to people who hold these views that if the State is not bound by rules, and may violate the basic rights and freedoms of the individual on any pretext, then totalitarian despotism is both possible and legitimate. The case for a Canadian Bill of Rights grows steadily stronger.

JAP CANADA STATUS LIKE JEW UNDER NAZI-ROEBUCK

Ottawa, May 8¹⁹⁴⁷ (CP)—Three Liberal senators joined in an attack on continuing restrictions against Japanese citizens of Canada yesterday with Senator Arthur Roebuck (Liberal, Ontario) charging that there "is a striking resemblance between the status of the Jews under Hitler and of the Japanese in Canada."

Senator T. A. Crerar (Liberal, Manitoba) launched the assault against one of the 57 orders and regulations in the government's main control bill as it reached the debate stage in the upper chamber. It would allow the minister of labor to set places of residence and places and conditions of work for Japanese-Canadians.

Senator Roebuck and Senator W. A. Buchanan (Liberal, Alberta) combined with Senator Crerar in labelling it a violation of liberal principles and of Canadian rights of citizenship.

Senator Crerar opposed renewed Oriental immigration but he didn't believe in discrimination against any Canadians now citizens of this country.

Senator Roebuck branded the order as "anti-liberal to the last degree." It was "a drop of poison which makes it impossible for me to vote for the whole bill."

He said war-seized Japanese property had been "scandalously" sold at sacrifice prices. He demanded an investigation of the sale of their rights and properties and, as well, "just compensation for their unnecessary suffering at our hands."

There was no emergency to justify this "heaping of insult on injury" by continuing laws against their movement and work. This was "insincere and undemocratic." It bespoke a "police state" as far as these people were concerned.

Sen. Buchanan said he had found Japanese-Canadians as good citizens as any Canadians. During the war they had engaged in no crime and had manifested nothing but loyalty although Canada did not trust them.

The order was based on a "dangerous principle" which could eventually imperil other minorities in a way that would be "disastrous" to the country. Japanese youth had been taught in Canadian schools that Canada stood for certain high principles and "now we contradict those principles." This "hypocrisy" would bring doubts to other new Canadians.

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Jan 18/47
"White Supremacy" in Canada

Absent from the citizenship ceremony in Ottawa last week were Japanese and British East Indians. It is known that members of these groups have been refused naturalization chiefly on the grounds of their race and color. To those who remembered this fact it seemed that the citizenship ceremony lacked a note of sincerity.

The citizenship ceremony seemed marred also by the fact that several thousand Japanese-Canadians who became naturalized citizens of this country and others who were born here have been deported and over others hangs the threat of exile to Japan for no other reason than their racial origin. Although the prime minister has acknowledged that there is no evidence of disloyalty against them, these Canadians of Japanese origin are still being denied civil rights. They are still subject to all the restrictions of orders-in-council under the War Measures Act, though these have already been removed from aliens of white European origin. It is over a year since the war ended, yet Japanese-Canadians are not allowed freedom of movement, nor the right to purchase land and homes. The government has made no move to restore the property of Japanese-Canadians which was sold—without the consent of the owners—at ruinous prices.

The honor and value of Canadian citizenship will remain marred unless the government rectifies its policies governing Japanese-Canadians. It should cancel the order under which Canadians of Japanese origin may be exiled. It should withdraw the order-in-council under which naturalization of Japanese is cancelled without reason. It should restore to the Japanese-Canadians their homes and business properties, or give proper compensation for possessions which were seized and sold by the Dominion custodian. It should put into operation a humane program for the rehabilitation of Japanese-Canadians who were uprooted from their homes and sources of livelihood at the west coast. It should restore full citizenship rights to all who are entitled to them and prohibit the denial of such rights to those who properly apply for naturalization. Unless justice is done to this group of humankind in Canada, the value and honor of Canadian citizenship will be less than complete.

Jan 18/47

A BLACK MARK

To the Editor of The Star.

Sir: I wish to add my appreciation for Dr. Huestis' fine article, "What Price Canadian Citizenship," in which he championed the cause of minority groups including our Japanese-Canadians. I am also most grateful to you for your editorial article in the same issue re "White Supremacy," referring to the citizenship ceremony at Ottawa. As far as I can see, nobody seems to be very much enthused about our new status. You very definitely stated what you thought the government ought to do to correct the injustice done to the Japanese-Canadians, by either restoring their property or fully compensating them for their loss. Even that cannot remedy the heartache and sorrow caused them by severing family ties, which to my mind in this supposedly "enlightened Christian" land is just about as brutal as the things done in the Negro slave trade. There is a feeling of resentment and shame on the part of many decent thinking people that will not allow them to feel proud of Canadian citizenship while there is racial discrimination against any minorities, black, yellow or red.

ENGLISH CANADIAN

TAKE THE PLACE FOR IT

The Denial of Civil Rights to Japanese-Canadians

It is not generally realized that more than 17,000 Canadian citizens of Japanese origin, two-thirds of them born in Canada, are governed by racial decrees and are subjected to police rule. In this respect, Canada is violating important sections of the United Nations charter which the dominion parliament ratified.

An order-in-council passed in February, 1943 (P.C. 946), prohibits Japanese-Canadians travelling from one province to another, and denies them the right to change their place of residence or to return to their former homes on the West Coast. They may not visit anywhere for longer than thirty days. In British Columbia they may not travel farther than fifty miles without a permit from the R.C.M.P. Officers of their own organizations have been refused permission to visit the relocation centres in which many were placed during the war.

When the war between Canada and Japan started, most of the Japanese on the West Coast were moved from their homes to ghost towns in the mining areas, to road camps of the interior of British Columbia, or sugar-beet fields in Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, and some were placed on farms and in industries in the eastern provinces. Although in 1944 Prime Minister King stated there was little evidence of disloyalty among the Japanese in Canada, their homes, businesses and other possessions were in effect expropriated. The custodian of alien properties sold, for a fraction of their proper values, many personal and business properties belonging to Japanese. Owners of motor cars, for example, received \$10 and in some cases \$3 from the custodian's office after "fees" were deducted from the sale price.

In December, 1945, an order-in-council was passed authorizing the labor minister to deport to Japan individuals and family groups who, it was said, had "applied" for "repatriation." A ruling is expected shortly on this matter from the privy council. It is claimed that those who had signed the applications would not have done so if the government had put into operation a humanitarian resettlement program.

No such problems appear to exist among the Nisei in the United States. It was reported recently in the New York Times that over half of the 90,000 Japanese-Americans who had been evacuated during the war from the Pacific coast have returned to their former homes. Their economic and living conditions, as well as social acceptance, have improved, due to government and citizens' efforts. Social service and race relations groups were formed to help resettle the Nisei. Nisei women have procured employment in professional occupations such as teaching and social work, which they had not had before the war. The public school system of San Francisco has a woman teacher of Japanese descent. In San Jose, Fresno and Berkeley there are more Japanese now than lived there before the war.

The Canadian government has promised to review its policy with respect to Japanese-Canadians. While preparing to do this, it should, meanwhile at least, abolish the travel restrictions and free these citizens from police rule. An investigation should be made as to the disposal of their possessions by the Custodian of Alien Properties and compensation should be made to them for losses. The prime minister in 1944 promised a just resettlement program for this group of citizens and this should now be supplied.