

File

January 9,

42.

To: Mr. H. F. Angus

From: Mr. Couper

Subject: The Conference on the Problem of the Japanese
in British Columbia.

1. I enclose for distribution to some members of the Conference, if desired, ten copies of the letter of March 14, 1941, to employers of trade unions re Employment of Citizens and Aliens from the Minister of Labour, to which Major General LaFleche referred this morning. This letter was approved by Council.

2. The Conference cannot disregard the reports from those of its members who have recently come from British Columbia about the existing state of public apprehension. It may, however, be useful to analyse this apprehension into its component parts as follows:

- (a) Well-founded apprehension about security shared by the Departments of National Defence and the R.C.M.P.;
- (b) Probably not well-founded, but excusable, apprehension about security, based in part on reasonable public doubt as to whether the Departments of National Defence and the R.C.M.P. have properly gauged the situation;
- (c) Definitely not well-founded, but understandable, apprehension about security, reflecting an excusable state of public nervousness;
- (d) Apprehension about security being deliberately fostered and intended to arouse latent race prejudice, partly by misguided individuals with good intentions, partly by other individuals for ulterior purposes.

Each of the four elements mentioned above calls for a different type of action by the Government, somewhat as follows:

- (a) Presumably, the steps already taken and now actively under contemplation will remove any basis for well-founded apprehension;
- (b) Perhaps it would be not unreasonable for the Government to take more than the minimum steps necessary to remove well-founded apprehension in consideration of the excusable apprehension mentioned in (b) above.

(over)

(c) The Government should undertake a positive campaign of education as is presumably planned to allay the apprehension of the kind mentioned in (c) above;

(d) The Government must also take positive steps to discourage, and if necessary suppress, all efforts to foster apprehension, whether from misguided but good intentions or for ulterior purposes, because these efforts will not only impair the effectiveness of our present war effort and complicate our relations with the United States Government, but also lead to increasing disunity in Canada by stimulating unjust discrimination against other unpopular minority groups, including even the French Canadians.

Mr. Couper.

3 copies sent
with 10 e.g. 1
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