

Miss Margaret Boos, Secretary,
Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Miss Boos:

We have been advised by our representatives that the Co-operative Committee is of the view that its work on evacuation losses should terminate with the payment of awards for claims filed with the royal commission on evacuation losses. We understand, moreover, that the Committee is of the opinion that additional representations to the government, if any, regarding economic losses should be made by the National JCCA alone.

As the representatives of Toronto claimants, we feel that we must question the advisability of pursuing such a policy. We state our reasons as follows:

- (1) Although the Co-operative Committee at the present time divides evacuation losses into two distinct categories, namely, those coming within the terms of reference of the Bird Inquiry, and those not covered by the Inquiry; these two groups were considered as part and parcel of one strategy when economic losses were first investigated by the JCCD and the JCCA and brought before the Co-operative Committee.
- (2) When the terms of reference of the royal commission were announced in their final form, a large number of persons in Toronto still considered them too exclusive, and advocated a complete boycott. Mr. Brewin, however, argued at that time in favour of filing claims on the contention that the findings of the royal commission could be used as "concrete proof of loss" when making subsequent representations to the government in order to have the terms of inquiry extended to cover forced sales, depreciation before sale by the Custodian, etc. It was on this advice, directed through the National JCCA, that these persons decided to submit their claims to the royal commission, despite the inadequate coverage of the inquiry.
- (3) Now that the government, in agreeing to pay the losses recommended by the royal commission, recognizes the "concrete proof of loss", every effort should be made to follow the course of action on which a large number of evacuees have been depending by carrying out the original plan of strategy. To do otherwise would be highly unfair; it would mean that the Co-operative Committee had first influenced a group of people to accept the terms of reference conditionally, then had abandoned them merely because a portion of the group were about to receive some compensation, without having fulfilled the condition.

- (4) Despite the fact that the Co-operative Committee may consider the losses of evacuees outside the terms of reference as a separate issue, it is apparent that the government does not share this view. Insofar as the government is concerned, they are trying to end the whole matter of economic losses with the payment of awards recommended by the royal commission.

There remains, however, an almost inescapable duty on the part of the Co-operative Committee and the National JCCA to see that all evacuation losses are fully compensated. They owe a duty to the evacuees, who, while realizing that their losses were outside the terms of reference of the Bird Inquiry, nevertheless, went along with the advice of the counsel of the Co-operative Committee, in order to conform with the plan of strategy described above.

We wish, therefore, to recommend that the Co-operative Committee do everything possible to see that the issue of evacuation losses is not closed with the payment of awards announced by the government. In order that this be done effectively, vigorous representations should now be made to the government on the basis of the losses disclosed by the Bird Inquiry and accepted by the government, to provide the means whereby all economic losses arising out of the evacuation may be thoroughly investigated.

As the Toronto Claimants Committee, we are fully aware of the views of evacuees whose losses were excluded from the inquiry, should the Co-operative Committee decide to discontinue its work on economic losses. As a committee having representation on the Co-operative Committee, and as claimants under the Bird Inquiry, we have some responsibility to see that these evacuees are also compensated for their economic losses.

We would appreciate a reply from the Co-operative Committee with a statement of their decision and course of action.

Yours very truly,

Toronto Claimants Committee,

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