When Britain took military action in Suez in 1956 I am sure that many members of the British foreign service considered resigning in order to dissociate themselves from what they considered to be a criminally stupid action. By not resigning they were able to speed up the process of restoring sanity to British foreign policy.

I cannot speak from personal experience about what a diplomat should do if called upon to perform unclean or indecent acts because I was never called upon in my career in the Canadian foreign service to perform such acts though I was, of course, called upon to perform unpleasant or embarrassing tasks and acts which I considered unwise.

I do recall two actions of the Canadian government which I was involved in, which were not clean or decent, which were indeed, in my opinion, evil, but my involvement in them did not, so far as I can judge, require me to do anything which was not clean and decent. Indeed, my involvement made it possible for me to try to do something to make the policy less unclean and less indecent.

The first incident had to do with the application of the Canadian immigration laws and regulations to Jews in Europe who were, in 1939 and 1940, in danger from the Nazis and who had relatives in the United States who were prepared to support them if they were admitted to Canada. I was, at the time, a member of the Canadian legation in Washington.

The case that sticks in my mind is that of two women in Vienna who were aunts of Mr. Justice Frankfurter of the Supreme Court of the United States. Frankfurter was an old friend of the Canadian minister to Washington, Loring Christie. He asked Christie to try to get his aunts admitted to Canada. He promised he would finance them for the rest of their lives. Loring Christie asked me to call on Frankfurter to get the full details of the story and to do the despatch to Ottawa. I wrote as persuasive a despatch as possible for Christie to sign. Christie was turned down. The aunts, I suppose, were murdered by the Nazis.

During 1939 and 1940, I transmitted a number of similar requests from Jews in the United States that Canada give refuge to their relatives in Europe. These Jews were prepared to put up any kind of financial bonds that were necessary in order to convince the

Canadian authorities that their relatives, if admitted, would never become public charges. As I recall it, all these applications were turned down.

I argued in my communications to Ottawa that this policy was not only heartless but that at a time when we needed all the United States dollars we could get to help us finance our war effort, we were depriving ourselves of a source of United States dollars. I ask my conscience today, "Could I, should I, have done more?"

Another evil act of the Canadian government which I felt at the time defiled me was the treatment of Japanese-Canadians in British Columbia after Pearl Harbor.

I was, at the time, a member of the American and Far Eastern Division of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, and I was asked by the head of the division, Hugh Keenleyside, to attend, shortly after Pearl Harbor, an inter-departmental meeting which he had organized to discuss with a delegation from British Columbia what further steps it might be necessary to take in the national interest in respect of Japanese-Canadians in British Columbia. Hugh Keenleyside wanted to do his best to protect the Japanese-Canadians from the demands of politicians in British Columbia that they be rounded up into internment camps. At the meeting, the RCMP reported that the few potentially subversive Japanese-Canadians had already been interned and no further internments were necessary. The armed forces reported that the situation was under control as far as they were concerned. The representatives of economic agencies reported that it was in the interests of the war effort that the Japanese-Canadian fishermen should continue to fish.

At this point the delegates from British Columbia intervened in the discussions. They argued that no Japanese could be trusted. They must, therefore, be driven out of their jobs in British Columbia. They must all be interned. They spoke of the Japanese-Canadians in the way that the Nazis would have spoken about Jewish-Germans. When they spoke, I felt in that committee room the physical presence of evil. Four years later General Maurice Pope, who had represented the Canadian Army at the meeting, said to me, "I came away from that meeting feeling dirty all over".[2]

I took part in the discussion at that meeting. My contribution was so blunt that I stung one of the delegates from British Columbia into an outburst of anger.

The civil servants were united in their advice to the government that the Japanese-Canadians not be interned. The British Columbia politicians who were present at the meeting were united that they should be. The politicians appealed to the Prime Minister against the civil servants. The politicians won and Canada committed an evil act. Should the civil servants have resigned over the issue? Did our failure to resign mean that our moral sensibilities had been quelled?

If I had been a Canadian ambassador abroad at the time I might conceivably have received a telegram from Ottawa instructing me to explain to the government to which I was accredited the reasons why the Canadian government had interned the Japanese-Canadians. This would certainly have been a distasteful task, but would it have been an immoral act?

When an ambassador, in confidential discussions with ministers or officials of the government to which he is accredited, is transmitting a message from his own government, he is acting as a mouthpiece of his government. He is not expressing his own views. Indeed if his views differ from those of his government he must not succumb to the temptation to indicate explicitly or by the tone of his voice that he does not agree with the views which he is expressing on behalf of his government.

There is, of course, a point at which an ambassador is in such profound disagreement with his government that he can no longer tolerate being its mouthpiece even in private confidential discussions with other governments. In that case he resigns.

For me this breaking point never arose.

Whether it would have if I had had to express in public at the United Nations views of which I strongly disapproved on an issue which I considered important I do not know. It does, however, seem to me that there is a difference for an ambassador between advocacy

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[1]General Pope gives an account of the meeting in his memoirs, "Soldiers and Politicians", University of Toronto Press, 1962, pp. 176-8.

in private to a foreign minister or a senior official in a foreign office and advocacy in public at a meeting of the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations. That is, indeed, what makes the role of an ambassador to the United Nations especially difficult.

The difference lies in the nature of the audience. A foreign minister does not believe that an ambassador is necessarily expressing his own views when he expresses the views of his government. On the other hand the audience for an address to the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations is not just the audience immediately in front of the speaker, an audience composed, for the most part, of professional politicians and diplomats who know that the task of speakers is to express their government's views, not their own. His audience is also the general public and the general public does not realize that an ambassador to the United Nations, when he talks in the United Nations, is not necessarily expressing his own views.

A professional diplomat is not likely to be offered the post of ambassador to the United Nations unless he is a senior member of his foreign service and is in a position to decline an appointment. It seems to me that a diplomat should decline an appointment as ambassador to the United Nations, even though this may damage his career, if he knows that he will have to defend in public at the United Nations policies which he considers to be most unwise on issues which he considers important.

* * * *

I do not, of course, maintain that life in a diplomatic service enables a man to preserve a fugitive and cloistered virtue. Nor does life in business or university or in any walk of life where one touches power. All power tends to corrupt. It tends to corrupt the lecturer on public affairs, the businessman, the engineer, the broadcaster, the college principal, just as it tends to corrupt the diplomat and the politician. Because they touch power, they all contract what the prayer for the dying calls defilements.

the fortunes of war. With us it was different. Anything short of perfection was tantamount to mortal sin for which there could be no valid excuse or explanation.

Yet the position could hardly have been otherwise. I have already drawn attention to the fact that our small Permanent Force, the elementary unit training of which was doubtless good enough, was but a minute leavening in the mass of our citizen army. Our city units trained at local headquarters only a few days in the year. Some of their numbers went to camp for a holiday week-end. But parades in home armouries and a day or so in camp do not constitute adequate training for war. Our rural units did go to camp each year but apart from learning to drill and the use of their weapons their tactical training was limited in scope and had to be re-learned each season. Thus on mobilization, when units were brought up to strength, the Army command was presented with the truly colossal task of whipping almost completely raw material into shape and during this same time officers and N.C.O.'s had much to teach themselves. This to some extent they were able to do but only up to a certain point for the final and most essential part of the experience which will result in an acceptable degree of effectiveness comes only in the theatres of operations.

I am not here considering whether or not greater provision for defence should have been made in peace-time even though a reasonably good case could be argued that we should have done so. On the contrary, what I am trying to make clear is that the units we sent to Hong Kong were about as fit as could have been expected. They had been mobilized for over a year. They were among the best we had available, and if they might have been more proficient than they actually were then our military system as a whole and not the staff of the moment or the troops themselves must bear the responsibility. In business circles there is a saying that one gets no more than one pays for. The adage holds good in defence as well.

Pearl Harbor was a great shock to us at N.D.H.Q. Not less was its effect on British Columbia. Shortly after that black day Hugh Keenleyside rang me up from External Affairs to say that Ian Mackenzie was shortly to preside over a conference with a delegation from the coast as to the action that should be taken in respect of the Japanese living in that province. Would I attend to represent the Army? I immediately agreed and asked Ken Stuart, who a fortnight or so previously had been appointed C.G.S. (and I, V.C.G.S. with the long awaited rank

of Major General), what view I should express at the conference, adding that to my mind the question was not one we need be concerned about. At no time during the war, or before it, had I worried about the presence of the Japanese, fellow citizens or otherwise, on our Pacific Coast. And I had been strengthened in this conviction when at a meeting about a month previously I had heard a R.C.M.P. representative say that of the 20,000 or more Japanese in British Columbia, there were only some thirty or so who the police thought would bear watching in the event of war. In reply to my question Stuart replied, "I could not care less. From the Army point of view, I cannot see that they constitute the slightest menace to national security." Needless to say, I was delighted to receive such instructions.

The meeting was duly convened. The British Columbia delegation comprised, amongst others, the late MacGregor MacIntosh, who was serving in the Princess Patricias when I was G.S.O. at Esquimalt, and a N.P.A.M. officer from Victoria whose name I now forget. I did not envy Ian Mackenzie his role as Chairman, which was a difficult one, for while I think he took a cool enough view of the general situation, the delegation confronting him were breathing fire and they were, to all intents and purposes, his constituents. The meeting began with the R.C.M.P. representative also taking a cool view of the situation; he expressed no concern. Then followed "Rastus" Reid for the Navy who cheerfully stated that they had no problem, for on the day of Pearl Harbor they had cleared every one of our Japanese fishermen off the sea. Then Ian Mackenzie genially invited me to give the Army view. Quite briefly, I said that while I certainly could not speak on behalf of the R.C.M.P., I could say that if they were in no way perturbed by the presence of the Japanese in British Columbia, neither was the Army, and as a consequence, we had no recommendation whatever to offer. Then all hell broke loose. I thought for a moment that my former friends might charge across the table to man-handle me. Their rage was a sight to behold. The meeting was soon adjourned, but before we separated I had an interesting conversation with one of the delegation's political members. Sadly he said that for years his people had been telling themselves that war with Japan would afford them a Heaven-sent opportunity to rid themselves of the Japanese *economic* menace for ever more. And now after a period of some weeks nothing had been done. Not a word did he say about national security. This was enough for me. *

Toronto: U of T Press, 1962.

But this meeting did not end the story. Earlier that week N.D.H.Q. had received word from the Coast that some military action should be taken in respect of the Japanese community at Steveston, namely, to protect them lest they be maltreated *by the white population.* Doubtless after the meeting had been adjourned my Western friends must have got busy on the telephone, for several days later we received an urgent message from the Pacific Command recommending positive action against the Japanese in the interests of national security. With the receipt of this message, completely reversing the Command's previous stand, Mr. Ralston was anything but pleased.

And so the Japanese were expelled from their homes at a time when Canadians were priding themselves that they were fighting for freedom. Fear is a poor counsellor, and groundless fear even worse. It had, however, brought public opinion in British Columbia to fever heat and, consequently, the Government, even if the move was entirely against its will, was bound to take some action. More and more did this incident convince me that, under our form of representative government, the government of the day can do no more, and certainly no less, than give expression to the public opinion of the time.

I continued to think back to this episode. A year or so later, when in Washington, I was intensely interested, on more than one occasion, to come across articles written by liberal-minded editors of practically unknown newspapers in the interior of the United States, expressing their uneasiness at the harsh treatment that had befallen their Japanese fellow citizens in California and elsewhere. In the intervening years I have been much abroad and so I may easily have missed many an article in the same strain published at home. As it is, it was not until the year 1958, in the Ottawa *Journal*, that I first found a similar expression of concern from a Canadian source.

In *Six Years of War*, Stacey writes amusingly of the "Battle of Los Angeles," when the anti-aircraft defences of that area fired 1440 rounds against raiders who appear to have existed "only in the defenders' imagination."* In Washington a few months later George Walsh told me a delightful story of this, or a similar, episode. At the time of Pearl Harbor the R.C.A.F. made haste to send their available long-distance reconnaissance Stranraer flying boats to the Pacific Coast. As it was winter these aircraft could not be sent by the direct route as our lakes and rivers were frozen over. It was therefore necessary to

*C. P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), p. 170.

take the longer way and to fly them round the perimeter of the United States. When, in due course, these aircraft were proceeding peacefully northwards up the Californian coast they came into the view of the local coast watchers, who having spotted them as being other than U.S. craft, immediately sounded the alarm. In these days of radio, "flash" news spreads round the world with the speed of light and within seconds Vancouver was apprised of the flap which had seized Los Angeles and San Francisco. Without a moment's delay for reflection, the Vancouver alert was sounded and I remember chuckling to myself that afternoon when a C.P. dispatch came through quoting a local commander saying, "The situation is indeed serious. We may be attacked at any moment." It was much as if Manchester had taken alarm at a report of enemy aircraft hovering over Gibraltar.

Our men, and our women too, have more than once abundantly proved that they could readily adapt themselves to the exigencies of war abroad. But it seems to have been otherwise at home. Our favourable geographical position has for so long allowed us to live a sheltered existence that even an extremely remote threat of war being brought to our shores was enough to cause many of our people to lose their usual sense of proportion. Writing with the moderation of an Official Historian, Stacey, when referring to the losses incurred by merchant shipping in the Strait of Belle Isle, the Gulf, and the River, observes, "Inevitably, the population of the adjacent shores was alarmed." At that time, British waters were infested with German submarines, but all the while the people of Great Britain calmly went about their usual avocations. They had more serious things to worry about. At times I almost hoped that the Japanese would attempt a raid of some kind, for this would have been repulsed and, most assuredly, our people would have recovered their balance.

But fears once aroused are not easily allayed. Some time in January, 1942, Ken Stuart went off to the Coast in an attempt to calm the fears out West that seemed to grow and grow. In his absence I found myself acting C.G.S., in which capacity I had to meet with the Minister each morning to discuss the business of the day. George Currie, the Deputy Minister, also attended. As he came in one morning, Mr. Ralston said that he was much worried over the rifle situation. This remark took me quite by surprise and I rejoined, perhaps a little lamely, that I was unaware of any shortage of rifles in the Active Force. "I mean in the Reserve Army," said Mr. Ralston. At this I exploded and allowed