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CANADIAN

BUSINESS



JULY

1942

THE QUEST FOR MISSING METALS

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Japanese Round-Up

Removing the Japanese from the Pacific coastal areas and settling them in construction camps, farms, or in ghost towns of the Rockies, has been one of Canada's toughest wartime assignments. Tactfully but firmly handled, this mass migration is virtually complete. Now British Columbia residents are wondering who will harvest many of the crops, replace the Japanese in industry

By CHARLES L. SHAW

BRITISH COLUMBIA, frontier province in the ever-spreading war of the Pacific, faced last spring a wartime task dwarfing in some respects all others—the evacuation of nearly 25,000 Japanese from the coastal area.

This security measure, representing one of the greatest compulsory mass migrations in Canada's history and at one time threatening seriously to dislocate several of British Columbia's most vital industries, is now well in hand. It is still a long way from being completed, because it is anything but easy to transplant thousands of families without bewildering complications.

But thanks to capable direction and an admirable measure of co-operation on the part of all concerned, the evacuation program has been proceeding according to schedule and with a minimum of economic disturbance.

Most of the Japanese have accepted the situation philosophically. Take the case of Mr. Fujii, whose parents came to this country long ago. He was educated in the schools of British Columbia and built up a prosperous business. The war has forced him to sell out and leave the city where he has lived for years.

"It is too bad, but it is logical," said Mr. Fujii. "You are protecting

yourselves and you are protecting us too. There may be Fifth Columnists among us; I don't know. And there may be a few excitable people among you, only too ready to cause violence to law-abiding Japanese should we stay here. This is the only way."

It was indeed too bad for Mr. Fujii, the naturalized, university-trained merchant. It was too bad for Suzuki the gardener, who had never bothered to take out citizenship papers even though he could trim the straightest hedge in Vancouver. It was too bad for Omaki the salmon fisherman who had come to Canada many, many years ago to find his fortune in the prolific sockeye run of the Fraser river and who had raised a family of six at Stevenson, a community more Japanese than Canadian.

But as they took their departure for various designated places far removed from the defence zone, British Columbians, aroused out of the complacency that might have prevailed a few short months ago, did not feel sorry. They felt like saying: "So long Mr. Fujii, Mr. Suzuki and Mr. Omaki—and don't hurry back." And they might have impulsively whistled, had they been musically inclined, a few notes from

the plaintive song *I'll Get Along without You Very Well*.

Because, for all their association with the Japanese since the turn of the century, British Columbians never have liked them. They have never completely trusted them; never felt the easy-going tolerance towards them that they have felt towards the Chinese, friendlier and more easily understood.

Attitude Towards the Japanese

British Columbians, who had been helpless to stem immigration of Orientals despite warnings to Ottawa, watched with misgiving the growth of closely knit, nationalistic Japanese colonies up and down the west coast; watched Japanese crowd white men and women from industrial and mercantile occupations because of their lower living standards; saw their bright-eyed and usually very clever children leave Canadian public schools and go obediently to late-session Japanese language schools for drilling in the Nipponese idiom, history and attitudes.

Long before war began British Columbia had its worries over the Japanese problem—worries economic, political and sociological. Farmers, fishermen, merchants and labour

organizations had carried intermittent campaigns against encroachment of Japanese, with limited effect. There was that could be done to increase monopoly of in the production of small hothouse vegetables, not to glehold on the wholesale distribution of some of modities of their fertile across the Fraser Valley and elsewhere Vancouver, efforts were a few aldermen to restrict access to Orientals, but usually were frustrated on the grounds such action would be discriminatory and in restraint of trade. Restrictive measures by the Government, Japanese come till only a few weeks ago the racial group engaged in so most important branches fishing industry.

Unlike the Chinese, who give a hoot about politics, generation Japanese were a group, rebelling against British Columbia's longstanding disment of Asiatics. They even delegation to the House

With their possessions packed Japanese, looking very nonchalant



A black and white photograph showing a group of men on what appears to be the deck of a ship. In the foreground, a man in a light-colored jacket and a dark scarf is leaning over a metal railing, looking towards the camera. Behind him, another man in a dark suit and tie stands next to a black suitcase that has "K. TAMURA" written on it in white letters. Several other men in suits are visible in the background, some standing and others partially obscured. The ship's structure, including railings and a large white funnel or structure, is visible on the right side of the image. The overall scene suggests a formal or official gathering on a maritime vessel.

**NOTICE TO ALL
JAPANESE
SINGLE MALES**

Compulsory registration of all single Japanese males was one of the first steps taken by the B.C. Security Commission in their evacuation program

mons to argue their case, but the issue was referred back to the British Columbia legislature, which remained adamant in its refusal to extend the vote, fearing creation of dangerous Japanese-dominated political blocs.

With their possessions packed into suitcases and neat bundles, but no firearms, cameras, or radio equipment allowed, youthful Japanese, looking very nonchalant, are boarding the steamer which will take them on the first lap of their journey from Vancouver Island to the interior

A new controversy developed soon after outbreak of hostilities in Europe, when Japan initiated its policy of reducing imports from Canada except in respect to such commodities as wood pulp and metals that could be used in the manufacture of war materials. Not until a few months before we declared war on Japan did we establish an absolute embargo on exports of this nature—and the Japanese were very angry about it.

Canada east of the Rockies was only vaguely aware of these problems that had been almost exclusively British Columbia's for a generation, for more than 90 per cent of all the Japanese who entered Canada strayed in British Columbia, where they apparently found their heart's desire. Technically, these elements of friction were national in their scope and might have been treated as such, but eastern Canada and even the prairies were only mildly interested.

After Pearl Harbour

British Columbia had grown a little impatient with its role as halfway house between the West and the

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Orient, but when war blazed in the Pacific, British Columbia knew well from past experience what the far-reaching implications would be. Overnight, the concentration of Japanese along the coast had become, instead of merely a recurring headache, a potential menace to the nation's safety.

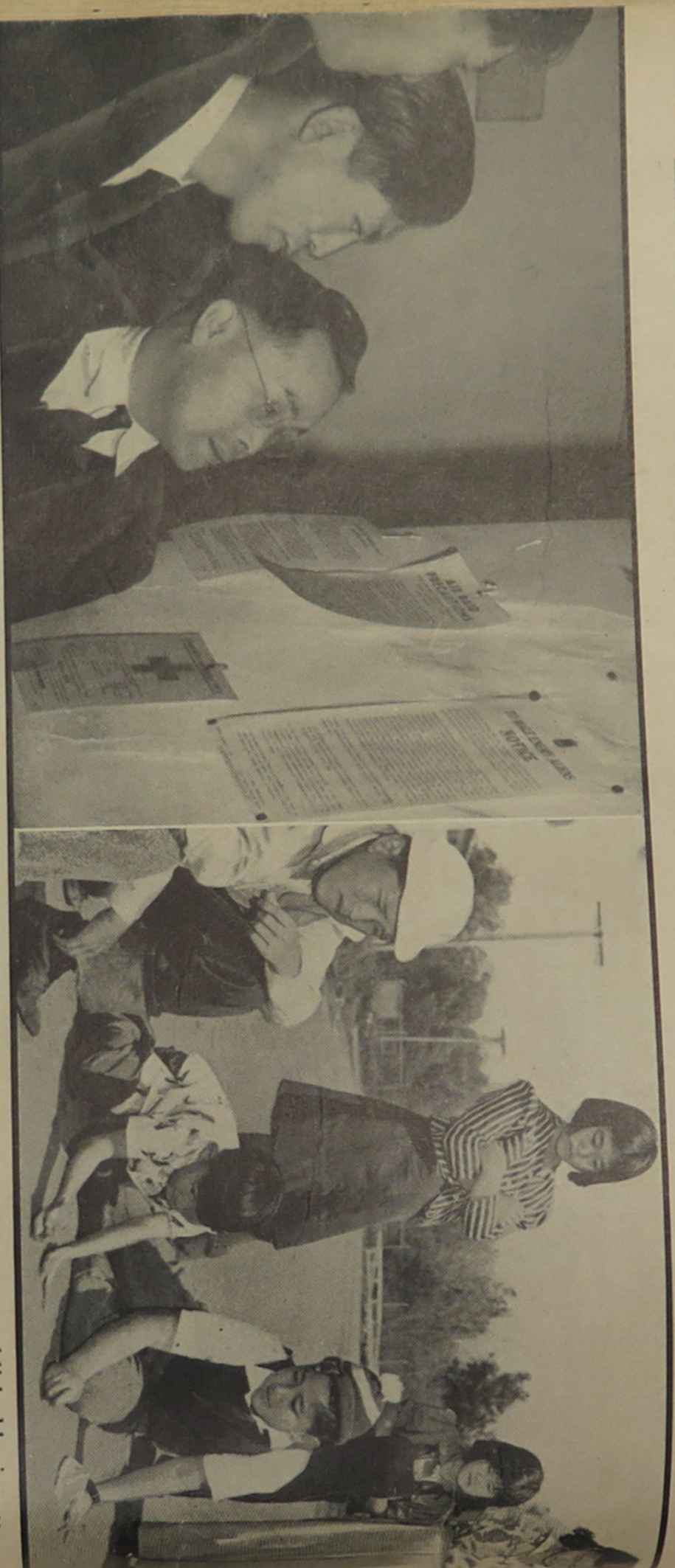
With Japanese conquering the Southwest Pacific and the air filled with rumours of imminent attack on the west coast, it wasn't comforting to know that British Columbia already had within its borders a sufficient number of alien Japanese males to man half a dozen battalions,

necessary, for there has been a total lack of hysteria in British Columbia's wartime handling of the Japanese situation. In the last war, when the *Lusitania* was sunk, hundreds of people in phlegmatic, dignified Victoria took part in anti-German demonstrations that destroyed thousands of dollars worth of property. But there was no violence on the streets of British Columbia cities when Hongkong or Singapore fell.

During the first month or so of war with Japan, Ottawa may have seemed painfully slow in arriving at a decision, but most reasonable people realized that it was a problem

supreme court judge, a naval commander and a co-operative Japanese of established loyalty. Their job, which is still continuing, has been gradually to dispose of the boats—some of them of cruiser size—to white men at prices which provide for reasonable compensation of the former owners.

Even before the fishing vessels were immobilized, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, on the basis of information collected for several years, promptly placed in custody and fingerprinted all Japanese whose record was even remotely suspect. But all this did not begin to solve



(Left) Typical Japanese residents are reading the evacuation order, which, to many of them, meant selling established businesses, settling down in construction camps, or making new homes far away from the dangerous areas. (Right) These bright-eyed, healthy looking Japanese children dress like Canadians, go to Canadian schools, but are carefully trained in the Nipponese idiom, history, and attitudes in late-session Japanese language classes

apart altogether from Japanese of other categories. For the first time, the Japanese problem had become a matter for federal concern and action rather than a remote provincial issue.

Coast newspapers began to demand drastic action to restrict all Japanese activities. Some authorities, reading how Fifth Columnists had helped in the destruction at Pearl Harbour, favoured wholesale internment. The Japanese consul at Vancouver locked the doors of his Shaughnessy Heights home and issued a statement pleading for tolerance and fair play.

As subsequent events have demonstrated, the plea was unne-

cessary, for there has been a total lack of hysteria in British Columbia's wartime handling of the Japanese situation. In the last war, when the *Lusitania* was sunk, hundreds of people in phlegmatic, dignified Victoria took part in anti-German demonstrations that destroyed thousands of dollars worth of property. But there was no violence on the streets of British Columbia cities when Hongkong or Singapore fell.

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the major problem created by the presence of thousands of Japanese—men, women and children, alien and naturalized, along the broad coastal area of British Columbia. Probably it was only a coincidence, but most of the Japanese were congregated at places of greatest strategic significance, some in fishing villages close to naval and air bases, some in logging camps near vital power stations, some on farms within a long stone's throw of aircraft factories. When the Canadian Government eventually declared its policy—to move all Japanese from "dangerous" areas—British Columbians breathed easier. Here was all-out action at last.

Canadian Business

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To direct the job, Ottawa called on the services of hard-hitting Major Austin C. Taylor, a man of rare organizing and executive talent, who before the war had shown an aptitude for managing large-scale operations and who in the past couple of years has been conspicuously successful in handling a series of extremely tough assignments. He's taken them all in his stride—as west coast director of Canada's cargo ship program, as director of Boeing's big aircraft plant, as top man in the organization of two Victory Loan drives—and now as chairman of the British Columbia Security Commission, charged with the evacuation of the Japanese.

Taylor, supported by Assistant Commissioner F. J. Mead of the Mounties and Assistant Commissioner John Shirras of the provincial police, lost no time in tackling this undertaking, for which there was no blueprint and no chart to follow.

"We'll just have to make decisions as we go along," said Taylor, to whom Ottawa had given sweeping authority. "But we're counting on the good sense of British Columbians and on their sense of fair play. We're going to do the job in the British way." And so thoroughly has the task been done that Major Taylor will retire from his post on August 1st, by which time all Japanese, it is expected, will have been moved from the coastal area.

Taylor's program, broadly, fell into three phases: 1. Evacuation of the Japanese of all ages and categories from strategic areas; 2. Their transportation from their home communities; 3. Their settlement and provision of employment wherever a place could be found for them in safe territory. By June 1st, 12,000 of the 24,000 Japanese in B.C. had already been moved.

One of the first considerations was to deprive the Japanese of all paraphernalia that might conceivably be used for sabotage. Some of the preliminary measures had already been carried out by the police, and the Japanese had been required to surrender all firearms and explosives. Now they were ordered to dispose of

their automobiles, cameras and radio equipment. If they could sell their cars privately before the specified deadline, all right; otherwise they were subject to seizure by police for the enemy property custodian.

Another essential was to find a way of maintaining a close check on Japanese activities, to keep them where they could be watched and controlled. Within a few days of the commission's appointment, all Japanese in the scattered coastal settlements from as far north as Portland Canal near the Alaska boundary had been congregated in the lower mainland near Vancouver,



A Japanese farmer displays fine cabbages grown in the fertile soil of the Fraser Valley. Increasing Japanese monopoly in the production of small fruits and vegetables has worried B.C. folk for some time

where close police surveillance was possible.

The grounds and buildings of the Vancouver Exhibition at Hastings Park were taken over and converted into a vast concentration base, but only after the authorities had made careful preparation so as to maintain high standards of sanitation. Recreation facilities were provided, too, and for some of the Japanese quartered there the living conditions represented considerable improvement over those to which they had been accustomed.

There were separate buildings for men and women, and Japanese me-

dical men were in attendance at all times. For the Japanese of school age special educational arrangements were made, with regular classrooms operating under competent instructors.

Transfer Begun

The general policy has been to congregate all the Japanese in the Vancouver district until plans are completed for their transfer to other regions for the war's duration. The scattered communities of Japanese in isolated up-coast areas, for instance, have disappeared completely, their population having been transferred temporarily to Vancouver or else moved eastward. Physically fit male Japanese have been moved to farms, interior construction camps, or to jobs in other provinces, particularly in the woods camps and sugar beet fields of Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario. The plan is to transfer most of the elderly Japanese and the families to revived "ghost towns" in the foothills of the Rockies, where elaborate preparations for their accommodation have been made.

Japanese given work in construction camps in the interior are paid at the rate of 25 cents an hour and required to pay for their board. So far as can be ascertained, those employed in this way are well satisfied. Yoshi Higashi, who used to run a Japanese paper in Vancouver, inspected one of the work camps and reported:

"Tents aren't to be compared with brick houses so far as warmth and coziness are concerned, but they provide adequate shelter. No one need shiver in his sleep. Food seems to have been one worry of the workers and apparently some wild stories have been circulated, saying that the first arrivals were practically starving. One young man came stocked with tins of pork and beans, tinned fruit and cocoa. It wasn't necessary. The food, on the whole, has been plentiful and satisfactory."

"Typical menu of the day consists of flapjacks, cereal or eggs with bacon or ham for breakfast; either a roast or a steak for dinner and supper with vegetables. As for the

[Continued on page 94]

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Japanese Round-Up

[Continued from page 53]

amount, it's comparable to that served in Powell Street cafes. Fish is served two or three times a week. For those who have been used to 'nihon shoku' the prospect of eating 'yoshaku' three times a day seven days a week may seem rather dismal. But rice is on its way up. "Some of the more enterprising and

far-sighted Japanese moved into the interior of British Columbia as soon as they realized that compulsory evacuation was inevitable. This led to alarm in some districts such as the Okanagan valley, where white fruit growers feared widespread, unregulated Japanese colonization. But the Security Commission soon assumed control over all Japanese migration and established the policy that Japanese would be permitted to settle only in areas willing to tolerate them. As spring advanced, new

road camps were established; arrangements were made to send 3,000 men to the Ontario pulp mills and there was expectation that others would be employed on the sugar beet fields of southern Alberta as well as in other sections of the prairies. The federal labour department has no doubt that it will be able to absorb them in one place or another without dislocation.

Loss of Japanese Labour

Withdrawal of thousands of hard-working Japanese from British Columbia industry created another dilemma. The Japanese were an important factor in fisheries production and disposal of many of their boats underscored the labour shortage in that industry, but relaxation of fishing regulations and more intensive operation by available white fishermen is expected to take care of that situation.

The pulp and paper mills of the west coast had employed nearly a thousand Japanese, most of them at jobs usually shunned by white men. Japanese also worked in a number of small logging camps. Just how the forest industries will lick this problem, the experience of the next few months will demonstrate, but mill operators expect to take it in their stride as they have a succession of other wartime complications.

Who will operate the berry farms vacated by the Japanese in the Fraser Valley and gather the crops is still a matter for speculation, for there was a critical shortage of farm labour in British Columbia even before alien evacuation was ordered. Campaigns are now being organized to mobilize white women and school children for harvesting. Fortunately for British Columbia, the Japanese never played as vital a role in crop production as in the neighbouring state of Washington and also in California. Washington has far fewer Japanese, but they have grown most of the vegetables there and will be difficult to replace. Removal of California's Japanese truck gardens may disrupt the multi-million-dollar tomato and other foodstuffs industries in the Golden State.

Canadian Business



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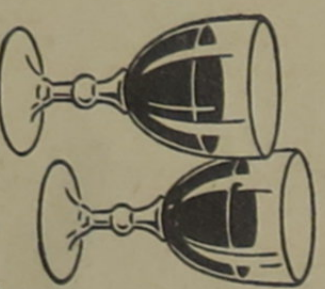
British Columbia cities will miss the Japanese even though they may not deplore their absence. The west coast as we have known it for a generation won't seem the same. Vancouver's once-populous Japanese section, down in the blocks east of Main Street along Powell, will soon find a more appropriate name than that which it has borne for many years—"Little Tokyo". Its once crowded lodging houses and hotels are all but empty. The Fuji Chop Suey House, long a popular rendezvous for Japanese of the district for all its specialization in Chinese-cooked foods, was closed soon after Canada's policy towards the Japanese was settled, and along with many other Japanese business houses it has been taken over by the enemy property custodian.

All through Vancouver, Victoria and other west coast cities, scores of Japanese grocery stores, cleaning and dyeing establishments—all the little businesses in which the Japanese have applied their technique of peaceful penetration to the construction of white competitors, have suffered a similar fate. Many of the places are still carrying on, but their windows bear new legends in large characters—"This Place Now Operated by White Canadians". This is an age of retribution for many little white storekeepers who were crowded to the wall during the past decade or so by the ruinous competition of the little brown men and women who managed to give the dollar a three-way stretch by living in the backroom and doing business from sunrise until well into the night.

Chinese storekeepers—there are almost as many Chinese as Japanese in British Columbia—have been prospering from the war situation ever since Tokyo lined up with the Axis; indeed, grocery trade has been swinging their way ever since Japanese armies started their march of conquest across China. Long before Canada went to war with Japan, customers of Oriental stores in west coast cities, unable to distinguish a Chinese from a Japanese by a mere glance, acquired the habit of looking first for the card of identity invariably displayed conspicuously by the shrewd Chinese.

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What will happen after the war? He who attempts to forecast the status of the Japanese in Canada then would be a daring and rather reckless prophet. Canada must continue to trade with the Orient, for that is one of this country's great potential markets. British Columbians are ready to give credit to the Japanese, too, as industrious and capable in many callings. But the war has only confirmed a fact which most British Columbians had learned long ago—that the Japanese cannot be assimilated. There will have to be a far tighter control over immigration than Canada was ready to adopt in the years of peace. But that is a problem for the future. For the time being British Columbia has its hands full with other matters. Austin Taylor and his Security Commission certainly have.

It's been a tough job from the beginning—this business of shifting the Japanese—and one that has taxed ingenuity and resourcefulness to the limit. But it has been carried out with almost total disregard for red tape and no serious "squawks" from anyone.

"You've got the problem licked," announced Canada's new Minister of Labour, Humphrey Mitchell, after a first-hand survey. And this statement strengthened an impression already held by a majority of British Columbians—that by prompt and effective handling of the Japanese within its borders, the west coast province has gone a long way towards buttressing Canada's defence on the Pacific.

Canadian Business