

D. O.  
1947

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UNTIL  
1978

ASIATICS IN CANADA

Treatment of Orientals in Canada ✓

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Eskimo nearer to the Canadian conscience and in many ways care for their future is now being demonstrated. The Indians, who are at present scattered in numerous reserves throughout most of the Provinces, present a depressing problem with their declining population, lack of initiative and low standard of life. A Parliamentary Committee has, however, been set up to examine the situation fully and to make recommendations. One small point of interest may be noted: the Family Allowance Scheme applies to Eskimos and Indians, and what would be a normal amount in the ordinary household must appear as a vast and welcome addition in the huts of Caughnewaga and the igloos of Baffin Island.

The Negro population of Canada is small, though there are some settlements of descendants of fugitive slaves from the United States. They present no more than the ordinary problems and there is little intolerance of the Negro as such in Canada. Indeed it was remarkable that there was a national outburst of indignation recently when a bridge club in Toronto, acting under the orders of the parent United States body, refused to permit a (West Indian) Negro member to play.

There remains one racial problem to be mentioned and that is the treatment of the Jews. The proportion of Jews in most of Canada is not large, but there is a considerable concentration in Montreal. The situation in most of the other Provinces calls for no comment, but there is a marked degree of anti-Semitism in the Province of Quebec which takes practical effect in the exclusion of Jews from clubs, hotels and other institutions. Indeed some holiday resort advertisements, making it clear that only Christians need apply, are almost reminiscent of Continental treatment of the problem. It may be mentioned that the Social Credit party, which is a curious combination of 'Douglas' economics and aggressive Imperialism, is openly

/anti-Semitic

There is also growing a general consciousness that in the past the interests of (i.e.) Red Indians have been seriously neglected. The opening up of the North has done much to bring the fate of the Eskimo nearer to the Canadian conscience and in many ways care for their future is now being demonstrated. The Indians, who are at present scattered in numerous reserves throughout most of the Provinces, present a depressing problem with their declining population, lack of initiative and low standard of life. A Parliamentary Committee has, however, been set up to examine the situation fully and to make recommendations. One small point of interest may be noted: the Family Allowance Scheme applies to Eskimos and Indians, and what would be a normal amount in the ordinary household must appear as a vast and welcome addition in the huts of Caughnewaga and the igloos of Baffin Island.

anti-Semitic, and it may be more than a coincidence that this party has recently shown some signs of making headway in Quebec. On the other side it should be said that there is a strong body of liberal opinion outside Quebec which would favour much wider admission of "refugees" into Canada, but this is complicated by the difficulties in evolving an immigration policy, and so far the Government have shown few signs that they are prepared for any large scale contribution to the problem.

Ottawa,  
31st March, 1947

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APPENDIX

Racial origins of the population 1941 census

<u>Racial Origin</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
British Isles Races	5,700,000	49%
French	3,500,000	30%
* Other European Races	2,000,000	19%
Chinese	34,000	{ all under 1%
Japanese	23,000	
Indians	16,000	
Indian and Eskimo	125,000	1%
Negro	22,000	under 1%

\* The only other European races with more than 1% are German (4%), Ukrainian (2%), Dutch (nearly 2%), Jewish (1½%), and Polish (1½%).

1. Rep. Canada — despatch 100 — 3/3/47 <sup>2</sup>

Mr. Aice <sup>Mr. Tait</sup> } to see  
Sir C. Dixon }  
? Dupl. to Mr. J. P. Gibson (India Office)  
Mr. J. W. Hamilton (Foreign Office)

AC 12/4

Mr. Tait

I think that this would be well worth circulation  
as a B.C.A. plant - though I suggest that  
the passage in square brackets in the  
covering letter should be omitted

- 1) You will send dupl, must amended, to FO.  
for copies of B.C.A. printing
- 2) Mr. Tait to see

CRP 12/4

open, and will act as indicated in (1) of  
Mr. Tait's minute.

AC 14/4

See also 7 25-31/4, below

J. Gait

15/4

CRP 15/4/47

AC 17/4/47  
at once.

Dupl. to I.O. (as above). Then put by  
with  
23/4 at once

2. Go: I.O. (Mr. J.P. Gibson) w/c (1) w/enc:  
comps. — 25.4.47.

CRP

Given B.C.A date 19/5. for 63180/4.

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Printed and circulated by the Foreign Office in agreement with the Dominions Office

CONFIDENTIAL

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS  
(CANADA)  
April 8, 1947  
Section 1

W 2811/13/68.

Copy No. 037

TREATMENT OF RACES IN CANADA

Mr. Garner to Viscount Addison. (Received in Dominions Office 8th April)

(No. 100) Ottawa,  
My Lord, 31st March, 1947

Recent communications from this post have dealt with various questions relating to the treatment of orientals in Canada.

2. It is thought that a short note on the treatment of races in Canada might be of interest in giving the general background, and I have the honour to enclose herewith a memorandum which has been prepared with this purpose in view.

I have, &c.  
J. J. S. GARNER,  
Deputy High Commissioner.

Enclosure.

Races in Canada

It is well known that the Canadian people stem from two main stocks—British and French. It is frequently forgotten, however, that, though Canadians of British stock still form by far the largest group, they number to-day just less than one-half of the total population, the French making up about one-third. The remainder include large numbers from the continent of Europe, a dwindling number of surviving Indians and Eskimos, and relatively small but politically embarrassing sprinklings of orientals. Like the United States, therefore, Canada had been peopled by immigrants from a great variety of countries. Unlike the United States, which is a traditional melting pot, Canadians of foreign origin have not been so rapidly or completely assimilated, and still tend to create pockets of separate racial groups. An appendix is attached showing the racial composition of the population at the 1941 census.

The largest racial minority is, of course, the French. Of them it can be said that they have, in the main, worked out their own destiny in their own province of Quebec without ever being "assimilated." But they have to-day stretched far beyond the borders of Quebec and there are

numerous settlements of French-speaking Canadians in nearly every province. Indeed, the rapid increase in the French-speaking population, which is openly encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church, has already given rise to fear of ultimate domination. The French-speaking elements themselves are fully conscious of the possible long-term effects of their rapidly growing population, and openly hope for what they picturesquely refer to as "the revenge of the cradles." It is for this reason that they are so bitterly opposed to any plans for mass migration which might redress the balance. The problems of Anglo-French relations are too vast for the compass of this small essay, but suffice it to say in general that, while relations are not as close and harmonious as is often pictured, a reasonably satisfactory *modus vivendi* has been worked out.

Large numbers of settlers from the continent of Europe, and particularly from the Slav countries and from Germany and Scandinavia, have settled in the farming lands of the prairies. On the whole, with some exceptions, these have been absorbed into the community and present no special problems. The exceptions have been furnished by sects who have endeavoured to put their curious religious beliefs into the practice of everyday life. The colourful activities of the Doukhabours, whose penchant for undressing in public was not diminished by the frigid winter temperatures, are notorious. The Hutterites, whose practical application of communistic ideals does not prevent them from showing shrewd business sense, have proved such successful farmers that they have aroused some antipathy in Alberta, and there is at present talk of action to prevent their acquiring further land. Some of these sects, too, ran into difficulties during the war over their objections, on grounds of conscience, to military service. But all these difficulties are temporary and are being overcome as succeeding generations grow up.

The most serious racial problem that arises in Canada concerns the orientals. During the beginning of this century large numbers of labourers were brought in from the Far East and many of them settled in Canada, mostly in British Columbia. The present numbers are approximately 35,000 Chinese, 24,000 Japanese, and 16,000 Indians. The immigration of orientals reached such a pitch by the second decade of this century that it was feared that they were becoming a threat to the white man's economic position. Accordingly steps were taken to prevent any further immigration from the orient and there has been virtually none since the early 1920's. The action taken in each case differed. A gentleman's agreement was reached with the Japanese Government whereby the latter undertook to ensure that no Japanese would migrate to Canada. The susceptibilities of the Chinese were, however, not so tactfully considered and in 1923 legislation was passed excluding the immigration of all Chinese (with the exception of diplomats, merchants and students). The solution of the Indian problem was perhaps the neatest of all: amongst other restrictive measures, an order-in-council directed that all immigrants from India must travel direct from India to Canada; there was not, and never has been, any direct travel service from India to Canada.

One of the further disabilities from which orientals have suffered was the refusal of the Parliament of British Columbia, where virtually all the orientals had settled, to grant them the franchise; as the Federal franchise is based on the provincial electoral lists, this virtually excluded orientals from any vote either in provincial or Federal elections.

In addition to the statutory restrictions there is no doubt that in practice orientals in British Columbia were subjected to a number of other social and economic disadvantages. Their low standard of living was seen as a threat to the labour of the white man and it was feared that these early arrivals might only be the first waves of a flood that would swamp the country. The "yellow peril" was easily invoked and, as a result, orientals in British Columbia were seldom given a square deal.

Very recently, however, a marked change has come over Canadian thinking in its treatment of orientals. This was first noticeable when the Government sought extraordinary powers to deport Japanese Canadians (even including Canadian-born) after the end of hostilities. Outside British Columbia a wave of liberal opinion made

itself felt and there was a striking demonstration of the almost unanimous feeling that racial discrimination could no longer be tolerated in Canada. Another factor in stirring the public conscience has undoubtedly been the charge that any form of racial discrimination was contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, and, when the issue of the Indians in South Africa came up at the General Assembly meeting in 1946, Canadians felt constrained to look at the mote in their own eye. As far as the Indians and Chinese were concerned, too, the part played by those two countries in the war was not without effect and Canadians have been moved by the pointed anomaly of their taking restrictive steps against the members of one of the Big Five countries and of a member of the Commonwealth.

Recently, therefore, steps have been proposed to remove some of the more glaring examples of discrimination. The Government have pledged themselves to remove the statutory exclusion of Chinese (though the legislation they have so far introduced does not go very far in this direction). The orders-in-council relating to the deportation of Japanese have been repealed. A committee of the British Columbia Parliament has recommended that the vote should be granted to Chinese and Indians of Canadian citizenship. These steps, if fully implemented, will go some way to giving an appearance "for the record," but of course there is no question of allowing further immigration of orientals and the lot of those now resident here will not be vastly affected by a theoretical removal of restrictions, many of which may be expected to remain in practice under some other guise.

There is also growing a general consciousness that in the past the interests of Eskimos and Indians (*i.e.*, Red Indians) have been tragically neglected. The opening up of the North has done much to bring the fate of the Eskimo nearer to the Canadian conscience and in many ways care for their future is now being demonstrated. The Indians, who are at present scattered in numerous reserves throughout most of the provinces, present a depressing problem with their declining population, lack of initiative and low standard of life. A parliamentary committee has, however, been set up to examine the situation fully and to make recommendations. One small point of interest may be noted: the Family Allowance Scheme applies to Eskimos and Indians, and what would be a normal amount in the ordinary household must

appear as a vast and welcome addition in the huts of Caughnewaga and the igloos of Baffin Island.

The negro population of Canada is small, though there are some settlements of descendants of fugitive slaves from the United States. They present no more than the ordinary problems and there is little intolerance of the negro as such in Canada. Indeed it was remarkable that there was a national outburst of indignation recently when a bridge club in Toronto, acting under the orders of the parent United States body, refused to permit a (West Indian) negro member to play.

There remains one racial problem to be mentioned and that is the treatment of the Jews. The proportion of Jews in most of Canada is not large, but there is a considerable concentration in Montreal. The situation in most of the other provinces calls for no comment, but there is a marked degree of anti-Semitism in the Province of Quebec which takes practical effect in the exclusion of Jews from clubs, hotels and other institutions. Indeed, some holiday resort advertisements, making it clear that only Christians need apply, are almost reminiscent of continental treatment of the problem. It may be mentioned that the Social Credit Party, which is a curious combination of "Douglas" economics and

aggressive imperialism, is openly anti-Semitic, and it may be more than a coincidence that this party has recently shown some signs of making headway in Quebec. On the other side it should be said that there is a strong body of liberal opinion outside Quebec which would favour much wider admission of "refugees" into Canada, but this is complicated by the difficulties in evolving an immigration policy, and so far the Government have shown few signs that they are prepared for any large-scale contribution to the problem.

Ottawa,

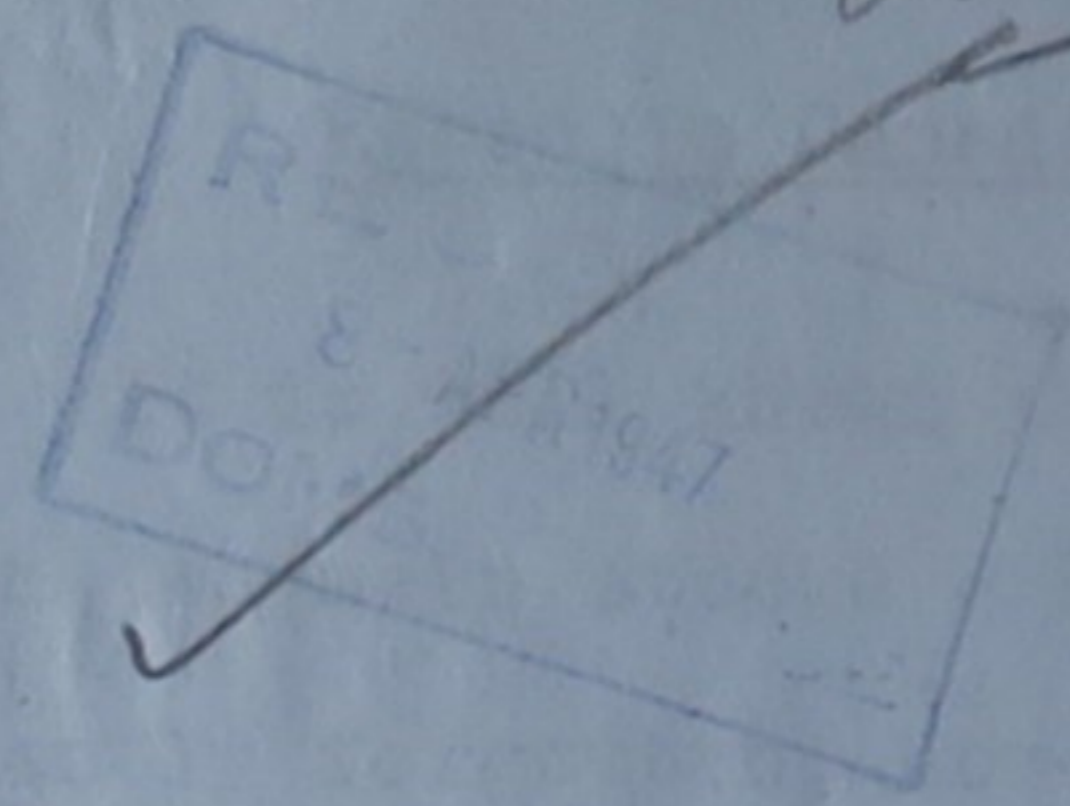
31st March, 1947.

#### Appendix

##### Racial Origins of the Population, 1941 Census

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French	3,500,000	30
Other European races <sup>(1)</sup>	2,000,000	19
Chinese	34,000	all under 1
Japanese	23,000	
Indians	16,000	1
Indian and Eskimo	125,000	
Negro	22,000	under 1

<sup>(1)</sup> The only other European races with more than 1 per cent. are German (4 per cent.), Ukrainian (2 per cent.), Dutch (nearly 2 per cent.), Jewish (1½ per cent.) and Polish (1½ per cent.).



OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER  
FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
Earncliffe,  
OTTAWA.

6/

No. 100

31st March, 1947.

My Lord,

Recent communications from this post have dealt with various questions relating to the treatment of Orientals in Canada. [In particular,

*3 on C. 3189/5  
Chinese Immigration Act (Refugee)*

I would refer to the High Commissioner's despatch No. 95 of the 27th March about the Chinese, my -/2 despatch No. 36 of the 12th February about the Japanese, and the letter to Sir Eric Machtig of -/3 the 4th March about Indians.]

[ ]  
*over*

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I have the honour to be,  
My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient  
humble servant,

*L. L. Fox*

The Right Honourable Viscount Addison, K.G.,  
Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs,  
London.

LM





No. 100

1947, March 1st

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My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

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Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs,  
London.

LM

Races in Canada

It is well known that the Canadian people stem from two main stocks - British and French. It is frequently forgotten, however, that, though Canadians of British stock still form by far the largest group, they number today just less than one half of the total population, the French making up about one third. The remainder include large numbers from the Continent of Europe, a dwindling number of surviving Indians and Eskimos, and relatively small but politically embarrassing sprinklings of Orientals. Like the United States, therefore, Canada had been peopled by immigrants from a great variety of countries. Unlike the United States, which is a traditional melting pot, Canadians of foreign origin have not been so rapidly or completely assimilated, and still tend to create pockets of separate racial groups. An appendix is attached showing the racial composition of the population at the 1941 census.

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The most serious racial problem that arises in Canada concerns the Orientals. During the beginning of this century large numbers of labourers were brought in from the Far East and many of them settled in Canada, mostly in British Columbia. The present numbers are approximately 35,000 Chinese, 24,000 Japanese, and 16,000 Indians. The immigration of Orientals reached such a pitch by the second decade of this century that it was feared that they were becoming a threat to the white man's economic position.

/Accordingly

It is well known that the Canadian people stem from two main stocks - British and French. It is frequently forgotten, however, that, though the British stock still forms by far the largest group, they number only just less than one half of the total population, the French making up about one third. The remainder include large numbers from the Continent of Europe, a dwindling number of surviving Indians and Eskimos, and relatively small but politically embarrassing contingents of Orientals. Like the United States, therefore, Canada has been peopled by immigrants from a great variety of countries. Unlike the United States, which is a traditional melting pot, Canadian immigrants have not been so rapidly or completely assimilated and still tend to create pockets of separate racial groups. An appendix is attached showing the racial composition of the population at the last census. The largest racial minority is, of course, the French. Of them it can be said that they have, in the main, worked out their own destiny in their own "backyard" without ever being "assimilated". But they have today stretched far beyond the borders of Quebec and there are numerous settlements of French-speaking Canadians in nearly every province. Indeed, the rapid increase in the French-speaking population, which is openly encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church, has already given rise to fear of ultimate domination. The French-speaking elements themselves are fully conscious of the possible long-term effects of their rapidly growing population, and openly hope for what they pictorially refer to as "the ..."

Accordingly steps were taken to prevent any further immigration from the Orient and there has been virtually none since the early 1920s. The action taken in each case differed. A gentleman's agreement was reached with the Japanese Government whereby the latter undertook to ensure that no Japanese would migrate to Canada. The susceptibilities of the Chinese were, however, not so tactfully considered and in 1923 legislation was passed excluding the immigration of all Chinese (with the exception of diplomats, merchants and students). The solution of the Indian problem was perhaps the neatest of all; amongst other restrictive measures, an Order-in-Council directed that all immigrants from India must travel direct from India to Canada; there was not, and never has been, any direct travel service from India to Canada.

One of the further disabilities from which Orientals have suffered was the refusal of the Parliament of British Columbia, where virtually all the Orientals had settled, to grant them the franchise; as the Federal franchise is based on the Provincial electoral lists this virtually excluded Orientals from any vote either in Provincial or Federal elections.

In addition to the statutory restrictions there is no doubt that in practice Orientals in British Columbia were subjected to a number of other social and economic disadvantages. Their low standard of living was seen as a threat to the labour of the white man and it was feared that these early arrivals might only be the first waves of a flood that would swamp the country. The "yellow peril" was easily invoked and, as a result, Orientals in British Columbia were seldom given a square deal.

Very recently, however, a marked change has come over Canadian thinking in its treatment of Orientals. This was first noticeable when the Government sought extraordinary powers to deport Japanese Canadians (even including Canadian-born) after the end of hostilities.

/Outside

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Outside British Columbia a wave of liberal opinion made itself felt and there was a striking demonstration of the almost unanimous feeling that racial discrimination could no longer be tolerated in Canada. Another factor in stirring the public conscience has undoubtedly been the charge that any form of racial discrimination was contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, and, when the issue of the Indians in South Africa came up at the General Assembly meeting in 1946, Canadians felt constrained to look at the mote in their own eye. As far as the Indians and Chinese were concerned, too, the part played by those two countries in the war was not without effect and Canadians have been moved by the pointed anomaly of their taking restrictive steps against the members of one of the Big Five countries and of a member of the Commonwealth.

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