

The Evacuation of the Japanese Canadians, 1942: A Realist Critique of the Received Version

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The popularly accepted version of the evacuation of the Japanese Canadians from the Pacific Coast in 1941-1942 and the background to it runs roughly like this. The white population of British Columbia had long cherished resentments against the Asians who lived among them, and most particularly against the Japanese Canadians. Much of this sprang from envy of the Japanese Canadians' hard-work and industry, much at the substantial share held by Japanese Canadians of the fishing, market gardening and lumbering industry. Moreover, white British Columbians (and Canadians generally) had long had fears that the Japanese Canadians were unassimilable into Canadian society and, beginning early in this century and intensifying as the interwar period wore on, that many might secretly be acting as agents of their original homeland, now an aggressive and expansionist Japan. Liberal and Conservative politicians at the federal, provincial and municipal levels played upon the racist fears of the majority for their own political purposes. Thus when the Second World War began in September 1939, and when its early course ran disastrously against the Allies, there was already substantial fear about "aliens" in British Columbia (and elsewhere) and a desire to ensure that Japanese Canadians would be exempted from military training and service. The federal government concurred in this, despite the desire of many young Japanese Canadians to show their loyalty to Canada by enlisting.

After 7 December 1941 and the beginning of the Pacific War, public and political pressures upon the Japanese Canadians increased exponentially. Suspected subversives were rounded up by the RCMP in the first hours of the war, and over the next ten weeks a variety of actions took place that resulted in the seizure of fishing vessels, arms, cars, cameras, radio transmitters and short-wave receivers owned by Japanese Canadians, and then escalated through the evacuation from the coast of male Japanese nationals between the ages of 18 and 45 to the removal of all Japanese, whether Canadian citizens by birth or naturalization and regardless of age or sex, into the interior. The legalized theft of the property of these Japanese Canadians then followed, and even before the war ended the government moved to deport large numbers to Japan. These events occurred despite the facts that the RCMP and Canada's senior military officers considered the removal of the Japanese from the coast unnecessary, there being no credible military or security threat; that the responsible politicians in Ottawa, and particularly Ian Mackenzie, BC's representative in the Cabinet, knew that the Japanese Canadians posed no threat to national security and acted out of a desire to pander to the bigotry of some whites or for political motives relating to the conduct of the war at home.

This bald summary is based on such books as Ken Adachi's *The Enemy that Never Was* (Toronto, 1976), the second volume of Hugh Keenleyside's *Memoirs* (Toronto, 1982), and Ann Gomer Sunahara's *The Politics of Racism* (Toronto, 1981), as well as on the National Association of Japanese Canadians' brief to the federal government, *Democracy Betrayed: The Case for Redress* (1985). There are variations of emphasis in these accounts, naturally enough, but the received version is a composite that does not pay much attention to these differences.

That Canadians should be interested in the events of 1942 is understandable. That they should attempt to fix blame for the events of those days is no less so, and historians, whose trade obliges them to rummage with more or less science through the past, have not been immune from this tendency. It is the responsibility of historians, however, to try to put themselves back into the circumstances of the past and, while never becoming apologists for the horrors of those times, to seek to understand why people acted as they did. This paper is an attempt to do precisely that, and to look afresh at some points which are

encompassed in the received version of the 1942 evacuation and open for examination and some which are not.

The Intelligence Services

The first question that must be raised, and one that has not been asked before, is this: what resources did Ottawa's civil, military and police authorities have on the West Coast before the outbreak of war to secure information about the 22,000 Japanese Canadians living in British Columbia? The answer is readily available.

The responsibility for internal security rested with the RCMP, assisted as necessary by the armed forces.¹ In July 1941, five months before the outbreak of war with Japan, the RCMP's "E" Division responsible for the Pacific Coast had on its staff three persons concerned with gathering intelligence on the Japanese Canadians in British Columbia: a sergeant who did not speak Japanese, a constable who did, and a civilian translator. These three were in charge of the "active personnel intelligence work on enemy and potential enemy aliens and agents." There was, in addition, a lieutenant-commander at Naval Headquarters in Esquimalt charged with intelligence duties who was "greatly interested in the Japanese problem generally," but who had many other tasks. The Royal Canadian Air Force's intelligence section in the province, which like the Royal Canadian Navy's had a wide range of duties over and above collecting information on Japanese Canadians, consisted of two officers, both of whom had lived in Japan and spoke Japanese. The senior officer, a Squadron Leader Wynd, however, could read Japanese only with difficulty; whether his colleague was any more fluent is uncertain. The army's intelligence on the coast was in the hands of two very busy officers, neither of whom spoke Japanese. In addition, the British Columbia Provincial Police had four officers working in the Japanese-Canadian community. Cooperation between the various services was hampered by RCMP regulations that forbade the Mounties to share information with their colleagues without first securing permission from Ottawa headquarters. Even so, the West Coast Joint Intelligence Committee had been created to coordinate the information collected by the military and police.² There is one additional point worth mentioning: the British intelligence services had some representation on the West Coast, and there exists in RCMP files one very long (and very inflammatory) report on "Japanese Activities in British Columbia," prepared by someone unnamed for William Stephenson's British Security Coordination.³

This intelligence presence did not amount to very much. As Hugh Keenleyside of the Department of External Affairs, a British Columbian who had served in the Legation in Japan and who was genuinely sympathetic to the Japanese Canadians, wrote in June 1940, there was a danger of subversive activities on the part of some elements in the Japanese community. "The police," he went on, "are not in a position to ferret out the dangerous Japanese as they have done with the Germans and Italians; they have lines on a few Japanese who might be expected to take part in attempts at sabotage.... But that would not really solve the problem."⁴ Even, therefore, in the view of someone in a position to know (and understand), the intelligence information gathered on the Japanese Canadians was strictly limited, the officers involved pathetically few in number and largely baffled by the impenetrability of the Japanese language and the tendency of the Japanese Canadians to stay together, separate, and (with good historical reasons) not to trust whites.

The discussion thus far has said nothing about the quality of the information gathered. The available intelligence evidence on the Japanese Canadians is very slim (and the Privacy Act prevents us from seeing whatever else there might be), but we can state with confidence that when the RCMP looked at Communist questions, towards which it had a definite *idée fixe*, or the activities of suspected Nazis in this period, its work was far from competent.⁵ In November 1939, J.W. Pickersgill of the prime minister's office complained that the force could not distinguish between facts and hearsay, or discriminate between legitimate social and political criticism and subversive doctrine. There was, moreover, "no suggestion that there is any co-ordination with Military Intelligence, or with the Immigration authorities, or with the Department of External Affairs, or even with the Censorship." More disturbing still to Pickersgill was "the evidence of a total lack of the capacity, education and training required for real intelligence work...."⁶ Whether the RCMP's efforts on the Japanese Canadians were any better remains speculative, at least until all the files are open to research; the existing documents offer no grounds for optimism.

There is little more information available on the quality of military intelligence gathered. But as the regular forces before the war were tiny and as military intelligence, a skill requiring years of preparation, was not among the best-developed areas of the permanent forces, there is no reason to believe that the army, navy or air force by 1941 were any less clumsy or more sophisticated in their ability to gather and assess

information on the Japanese Canadians than the RCMP. Evidence for this conclusion is suggested by the efforts of the Examination Unit, a secret operation of External Affairs and National Defence set up under the shelter of the National Research Council, among other things to attempt to decipher Japanese diplomatic and military wireless messages in response to a British request before Pearl Harbor. As the just declassified manuscript history of the Examination Unit notes, two people were engaged for this purpose in August 1941, a Mr. and Mrs. T.L. Colton. "It was hoped that Mrs. Colton, who was very well educated in Japanese but could not handle translation into English, might be able to explain the contents of messages to her husband who could then write them out in English. This system," the history notes dryly, "did not prove very satisfactory" and the Coltons were replaced in April 1942.⁷

In this atmosphere of improvisation and amateurism, many of the available reports by the RCMP and the military on the Japanese Canadians tended to focus on investigations of alleged "unlawful drilling [with weapons]" by male Japanese Canadians, reports of caches of Japanese rifles and ammunition, and accounts of suspicious fishing parties of well-dressed Japanese who did not appear to be fishermen. Rumours, plain and fanciful.⁸ On the other hand, there were just as many assertions offered with great confidence that 95 percent of Japanese Canadians were law abiding and satisfied with their lot in Canada and that "No fear of sabotage need be expected from the Japanese in Canada." That last statement by Assistant Commissioner Frederick J. Mead of the RCMP, one of the Mounties' specialists in security matters and Communist subversion, was, he added, "broad [but] at the same time I know it to be true."⁹

Mead was soon a member of the British Columbia Security Commission where, activist *Nisei* (or second generation Canadian Japanese) correctly believed, he depended on intelligence from Etsuji Morii, a man suspected of blackmailing other Japanese Canadians and a notorious underworld figure. Morii was in turn the Commission's appointed chairman of the "Japanese Liaison Committee," whose mandate was to convey news and information in 1942 to the community.¹⁰ As Mead was the senior RCMP official on the coast early in 1942, he was almost certainly the main source for RCMP Commissioner S.T. Wood's defence of Morii and his assertion to William Stephenson (in response to the British Security Coordination report mentioned earlier) in August 1942 that "we have searched without let-

up for evidence detrimental to the interests of the state and we feel that our coverage has been good, but to date no such evidence has been uncovered.”¹¹ The RCMP’s firmly-stated position may have been correct, but again the small size of its resources and the lack of sophistication of all its operations in this period tend to raise doubts. From 45 years distance, the fairest thing that can be said is that the RCMP had uncovered relatively little hard information about possible subversion among the Japanese Canadians before 7 December 1941, if there were indeed subversive intentions within the community, because it lacked the competence and skills to do so. Moreover, much of the information that the RCMP had before and after that date came from sources that even many Japanese Canadians considered self-interested and tainted.

The Role of the Japanese Consulate

Such intelligence information as there was tended to agree that the Japanese Consulate in Vancouver was the focus of Japanese nationalism, propaganda and possible subversive activities in BC. One RCMP report surveying the general activities of the Japanese Canadians noted that the Consul and his staff regularly visited areas where Japanese Canadians lived to deliver speeches and to talk privately with individuals about the Tokyo government’s views of world events. One RCAF intelligence officer was sufficiently alarmed by these activities to tell his superior that he considered British Columbia’s Japanese Canadians to be “directly under the control of the Japanese Government through their consul at Vancouver.”¹² The Consul was also thought to exercise considerable influence on the local Japanese language schools and press. Roles of these sorts, of course, were well within the bounds of diplomatic niceties. And since, under Japanese law, *Nisei* born abroad before 1924 were considered as Imperial subjects, while those born abroad after that date could register at Japanese consulates and secure Japanese citizenship in addition to their status as British subjects, the Consul in Vancouver had substantial work to do in dealing with the approximately 7,200 Japanese nationals, 2,400 naturalized British subjects, and the unknown (but very large) number of Japanese Canadians holding dual citizenship in the BC community.¹³ A military intelligence paper surveying the situation on the coast added that the Consul “through his agents, and through the Japanese schoolmasters, and the Japanese patriotic societies cultivates a strong Japanese spirit and a consciousness among the BC Japanese of being ‘sons of Japan

abroad' rather than Canadian citizens."¹⁴ That was no different than the role of the Italian and German consuls in this pre-war period.

There were, however, grounds for believing that in this instance the Japanese Consulate's officials had duties of a more dangerous kind. On 28 February 1941, Vincent Massey, the high commissioner in London, reported to Prime Minister Mackenzie King that "reliable information of a most secret character" had revealed that "official Japanese circles" were taking great interest in the British Columbia Coast. "Reference is also made to large number of Japanese settled in British Columbia and on Western Coast of United States, who are all said to have their duties,"¹⁵ an ominous phrase.

The source of that information was possibly Britain's Government Code & Cypher School which had been reading some Japanese military and diplomatic messages since the 1920s,¹⁶ or more probably "Magic," the name given by the Americans to their armed forces' decryption operation that in January 1941 had cracked the "Purple" code used for the most secret Japanese diplomatic traffic. Britain and the United States soon started to cooperate in reading Japanese codes, and by the spring of 1941 the two countries had pooled their intelligence.¹⁷ The Americans also began reading their hitherto unbroken files of Japanese messages back to 1938.

The decryption team had intercepted important telegrams from the Foreign Office in Tokyo to the Japanese Embassy in Washington dated 30 January 1941, which gave the *Gaimusho's* orders to its officials in North America to de-emphasize propaganda and to strengthen intelligence gathering. Special reference was made to "Utilization of our 'Second Generations' [Nisei] and our resident nationals" and to the necessity for great caution so as not to bring persecution down on their heads. Those messages were copied to Ottawa and Vancouver as "Minister's orders" — instructions, in other words, that were to be carried out in Canada just as in the United States. The Consulate's success in carrying out these orders remains unknown.

A further message from Tokyo to Washington, dated 15 February 1941, was also sent to Ottawa and Vancouver as a "Minister's instruction." In this telegram, the Foreign Ministry specified the "information we particularly desire with regard to intelligence involving US and Canada," especially the strengthening of Pacific Coast defences, ship and aircraft movements. In a telegram the day before, the

Consulate in Vancouver was instructed to pay special attention to paragraph 10 of the order to Washington: "General outlooks on Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, with particular stress on items involving plane movements and shipment of military supplies to those localities." The next month, the Consulate was asked to report on RCN ship movements. Whether these particular telegrams were the basis for Massey's despatch to Ottawa is unclear.¹⁸

A thorough search of the "Magic" intercepts in the United States National Archives makes clear that at least as early as 1939 intelligence and counter-intelligence work was carried on from the Vancouver Consulate, exactly as was taking place in the Japanese Consulates all over the United States and throughout the Western Hemisphere. As we have seen, the 1941 telegrams also stress efforts to involve the resident nationals and the second generation *Nisei*, at whom radio broadcasts from Tokyo had been deliberately aimed for some years. How much, if anything, Ottawa knew of all this, beyond the RCMP's suspicions and the information conveyed in the Massey telegram, is still indeterminate. But surely there was ample justification in the light of the Massey telegram for the government to have increased surveillance on the Consulate and the Japanese-Canadian community. There is no sign that it did so.¹⁹

One contemporary assessment of the Canadian situation by an RCAF intelligence officer noted that "espionage and subversive activity is largely carried on by a few key Japanese working under the Consul and *seriously* involves only a few — say 60 at most — Japanese individuals." This same officer then tried to assess the response of Japanese Canadians in the event of war, particularly if the Japanese authorities instructed them to engage in sabotage, and if such orders were reinforced by "disorderly demonstrations of white antipathy." His answer was that "No one knows; but no one in his senses would take a chance on Japanese loyalty under those circumstances."²⁰

The Pre-War Pro-Japan Actions of Japanese Canadians

If that sounds harsh, there were reasons why it should not. Throughout the 1930s and especially after 1937, Japan had aggressively expanded its influences in northern China, and the Imperial Japanese Army had campaigned with great brutality in that country. The Japanese government, naturally enough, tried to put the best face possible on its actions, and it encouraged the creation and spread of

propaganda on its behalf abroad, something in which Japanese Canadians directly assisted by writing and distributing leaflets. The most widely distributed pamphlet, dated 1 October 1937 and published by the Canadian Japanese Association, the largest Japanese-Canadian association with over 3,000 members, was "Sino-Japanese Conflict Elucidated," a far from unbiased examination of the struggle in China, despite its claim to be circulated "in the interests of truth, to meet unfair and untrue propaganda." Moreover, money, comforts for the troops, medical supplies and tin foil were collected for Japan by first generation *Issei* and second generation *Nisei* groups.²¹ There was, of course, nothing remotely improper about this, and other ethnic groups in Canada at that time (Italians, say, during the Italo-Ethiopian war) and more recently (Jews during the Arab-Israeli wars, for example) have acted similarly in comparable circumstances.

But the wholly justifiable outrage in Canada over such incidents as the brutal rape of Nanking, with its estimated 200,000 or more dead (and Japanese army assaults on Canadian missionaries stationed there) led many Canadians to boycott Japanese products and to call upon the federal government to take steps to cease strategic metal exports to Japan. Such measures were eventually taken.²² And the *New Canadian*, the newspaper of British Columbia's *Nisei*, began publication in late 1938, noted its founder, Edward Ouchi, the General Secretary of the main *Nisei* organization, the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League, to counter the "vicious" anti-Japanese propaganda of North American Chinese that was hurting Japanese-Canadian businesses. Although the newspaper did not offer frequent support for Japan's war in China in its pages, it did give close and favourable coverage to the activities of the Consul in Vancouver and even ran an occasional rotogravure section of propagandistic photographs on life in Japan.²³

Inevitably Japanese-Canadian support for Japan's war on China focussed much attention upon the *Issei* and *Nisei*. As Professor Henry Angus of the University of British Columbia wrote in October 1940:

The young Japanese understand the position well enough. At first they (in all good faith I think) distributed a good deal of pro-Japanese, anti-Chinese propaganda. Now they say, "we are not responsible for what Japan may do." I tell them that they have unfortunately made people feel that they are identified with Japan by their action in distributing propaganda, and that it is very difficult to find a way of removing this impression.²⁴

Angus was always very sympathetic to the Japanese Canadians (and after he had joined External Affairs, he and Hugh Keenleyside would find themselves under attack in Parliament because of the vigor of their resistance to the evacuation in January and February 1942),²⁵ but he was surely correct in his assessment. Even such supportive British Columbia politicians as CCF Member of Parliament Angus MacInnis agreed.²⁶ The Japanese Canadians by their support for Japan "impaired [their] standing with those circles most disposed to press [their] cause," Professor Angus lamented.²⁷

We can say today that Canadians should have understood the difficulties that a small minority would have faced in not supporting its belligerent mother country in those days in the late 1930s and early 1940s. But after the Pearl Harbor attack and the fall of Hong Kong, British Columbians, already predisposed to expect the worst of the Japanese Canadians and motivated by deep-rooted racism against them, and Canadians generally could not reasonably have been expected to make such judgements. Many Japanese Canadians had supported Japan against China before 7 December and few, if any, had opposed her; after Pearl Harbor, China was an ally and Japan an enemy. Therefore, the supporters of Japan before 7 December were now supporters of Canada's enemy and possibly (or probably) disloyal, particularly as there seemed no way of distinguishing the active few from the passive majority. The syllogism was flawed (and certainly the vast majority of German and Italian Canadians had been treated far differently in the comparable circumstances of September 1939 and June 1940), but few were prepared to challenge its logic.

Norman Robertson, the under secretary of state for external affairs, a British Columbian and no bigot, expressed something of the same reasoning when he told Pierrepoint Moffat, the American minister to Canada, on 8 December 1941 that "the Government had hoped not to have to intern all Japanese. However, this might be very difficult in view of the treacherous nature of the Japanese attack, [and] the evidences of premeditation..."²⁸ Robertson's description of the attack mirrored the public's response: "In the wake of Pearl Harbor, the single word favoured by Americans as best characterizing the Japanese people," John Dower has noted, "was 'treacherous'"²⁹

The Attitudes of Japanese Canadians After 7 December

In August 1944, Prime Minister King told the House of Commons that "no person of Japanese race born in Canada has been charged with any act of sabotage or disloyalty during the years of war." In his account, Ken Adachi added that "no alien Japanese or naturalized citizen had ever been found guilty of the same crime."³⁰ Those statements are undoubtedly true, but they do not tell the whole story.

Thirty-seven or 38 Japanese nationals were arrested and interned by the RCMP at the outbreak of the war, presumably because they were thought to be engaged in espionage or subversive activities. None of the standard accounts offers any detailed information on the allegations against or the fate of these people.³¹

More important, it seems certain that support for Japan remained strong among some Japanese Canadians after the war began. The *Issei* Takeo Nakano, in his book *Within the Barbed Wire Fence*, notes that "We Japanese, largely working-class immigrants, were, generally speaking, not given to sophisticated political thinking. Rather we had in common a blind faith in Japan's eventual victory." John J. Stephan's study, *Hawaii Under the Rising Sun*, cites the conclusions of Japanese historians Nobuhiro Adachi and Hidehiko Ushijima that most first-generation Japanese in Hawaii remained loyal to Japan: "even among those who considered the Pearl Harbor attack a betrayal were many who believed in and hoped for an ultimate Japanese victory.... Radio reports of Japanese advances ... confirmed for many their motherland's invincibility." Nakano's book demonstrates that the same response existed in British Columbia, and even Sunahara notes that the Japanese vice-consul encouraged some Japanese Canadians to seek internment as a gesture of support for Japan.³² Those of Japanese origin, of course, formed a greater proportion of the Hawaiian population (about 35 percent) than did the Japanese Canadians in British Columbia (about three percent). Moreover, at this point it is impossible to determine if the links between the Japanese Canadians and Japan were stronger or weaker than those between Hawaiian Japanese and the mother country. These two factors could certainly have affected the situation.

Nakano also underlines the presence in the Japanese-Canadian community of a substantial number of hard-liners or *gambariya*, "best described as rebels against the treatment they were receiving in time of war. The *Nisei gambariya* were protesting such unjust treatment of

Canadian citizens," he continues, an understandable response. He goes on, however, to note that "the *Issei gambariya* firmly believed in Japan's eventual victory and looked forward to the Canadian government's enforced compensation to them."³³ That attitude is less understandable if the revised version is to be accepted. More than 750 *gambariya*, a fairly substantial number of the approximately 9,000 adult males over the age of sixteen in a BC community of 22,000, were interned at Angler in Northern Ontario, and Nakano, in part as a result of misunderstanding, he says, ended up there as well. Nakano's story is stylistically elliptical, but it rings true. None of the historical accounts make much mention of the *gambariya*, other than to skirt the evidence by saying that there were some who refused to have anything to do with the evacuation or to cooperate with the Canadian authorities.

Perhaps a last word here should belong to Stephan, whose study of Hawaii is an exemplary and sensitive one. "It has been common to write about Hawaii's Japanese before and during the Second World War as if their 'loyalty' were a self-evident, quantifiable phenomenon," he said. "In the justifiable impulse to indict the relocation of West Coast Japanese and Japanese Americans ... writers have in many cases dealt simplistically with what is full of complex nuances and ambiguities."³⁴ Those comments apply with equal force to the Canadian accounts, almost all of which have been remarkably one-dimensional.

The Role of the Military in the Evacuation

There is no doubt that senior officers of the armed forces and the RCMP in Ottawa were remarkably unperturbed by the presence of large numbers of Japanese Canadians in British Columbia.³⁵ General Maurice Pope, the vice chief of the General Staff, attended the Conference on the Japanese Problem in British Columbia in Ottawa on 8-9 January 1942, which brought together representatives from British Columbia, the federal bureaucracy, and political figures, and his memoir provides the standard account. The navy, he wrote, had no fears, now that the Japanese-Canadian fishing fleet was in secure hands; the RCMP expressed no concern, and Pope himself, offering the army position, said that if the RCMP was not perturbed, "neither was the Army." Pope adds that several days after the meeting adjourned, the angry and frightened British Columbians who had attended "must have got busy on the telephone" for "we received an urgent message from the [Army's] 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," the minister of national defence, Colonel J.L. Ralston, "was anything but pleased."³⁶

The evidence simply does not support Pope's account. While it is clear that the Department of National Defence's representatives on the Special Committee on Measures to be Taken in the Event of War With Japan agreed in mid-1941 with the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet that "the bulk of the Japanese population in Canada can continue its normal activities,"³⁷ and while it is equally certain in mid-December the Chiefs of Staff Committee told the Cabinet War Committee that fears of a Japanese assault on BC were unwarranted,³⁸ there is absolutely no doubt that the military commanders *in* British Columbia and the military members of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence were seriously concerned about the possible threat posed by the Japanese-Canadian population both before and after 7 December 1941. The real question that remains unanswered is why in this instance the generals, admirals and air marshals in Ottawa were so ready to ignore the advice of their commanders in the field.

Certainly the military advice from BC was completely unambiguous. The Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, the key coordinating military body that brought together the three service commanders in British Columbia, had prepared plans in July 1940 for preventive actions directed at the Japanese Canadians in the event of war with Japan.³⁹ The Committee also recommended on 17 June 1941 that "the Japanese population [of approximately 230] residing in the vicinity of the Royal Canadian Air Force Advanced Base at Ucluelet [on the West Coast of Vancouver Island] should, in the event of an emergency, be evacuated for reasons of security. It was felt that similar steps should be taken in connection with Japanese resident near other important defence areas, and particularly those established near air bases." There were about two hundred Japanese Canadians living at Port Alice near the Coal Harbour RCAF base and the same number in Prince Rupert near another air station. The Committee's recommendations had been forwarded to the Chiefs of Staff Committee in Ottawa no later than 20 September 1941.⁴⁰

In addition, the RCN on the coast had long been concerned with the fleet of up to 1,200 fishing vessels operated by Japanese Canadians. In 1937, for example, the Navy's staff officer (intelligence) at Esquimalt

had said that "The fact that there are a large number of Japanese fishermen operating in British Columbia waters ... and having a thorough and practical knowledge of the coast, is in itself a matter of some concern to the Naval authorities."⁴¹ In August 1941, the naval officer commanding on the coast asked Ottawa for authority to round up the fishing boats in the event of war. The Department of External Affairs refused to agree to this *in toto*, however, and in October orders were issued for seizure only of boats "owned and operated by Japanese nationals." "Vessels owned and operated by British subjects of Japanese origin," the RCN was told, "will only be interfered with where there are positive grounds for suspicion, comparable to those which would justify the internment of a British subject of Japanese origin."⁴² When war came five weeks later, those orders would be overridden in the urgency of the moment.

Furthermore, before the outbreak of war in the Pacific, both the Canadians and the Americans worried about the concentration of Japanese Americans and Canadians living along the common coastline. The Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, had urged Ottawa on 20 September 1941 to coordinate any actions with Washington. In its opinion, "inequality in the treatment of persons of Japanese race in the territories of the Dominion of Canada and the United States would be liable to prove a source of danger to the effective prosecution of such measures of control as may be ordered by either government and to furnish grounds for grievance by the persons immediately concerned."⁴³ The Permanent Joint Board on Defence at its meeting on 10-11 November at Montreal had also considered the question of the "population of Japanese racial origin." Just as the Joint Service Committee on the West Coast had urged, the Canadian and American members agreed that there should be consultation to produce "policies of a similar character in relation to these racial groups" if war with Japan broke out. The aim was "a practicable coincidence of policy."⁴⁴ That did not imply evacuation from the Pacific Coast, but it did suggest that there was a shared realization of a "problem." And as John Hickerson, the senior State Department official regularly concerned with Canadian affairs, noted after that PJBD meeting, it would "cause the Canadians considerable political difficulty in British Columbia if we adopted more rigid treatment of Japanese in California than that prescribed in British Columbia." That, he added, is why the Canadians suggest "that at the proper time there be consultation" between the two governments "with the view to adopting similar policies in Canada and in continental United States."⁴⁵

After Pearl Harbor, but before the Conference in Ottawa, the three senior officers on the coast wrote to Ottawa with their views. Major-General R.O. Alexander, the GOC of Pacific Command, told the chief of the General Staff on 30 December that he believed "internment of Japanese males between the ages of 18 and 45, their removal from the coast and their organization into paid units on public works ... would be advisable." Such action, Alexander added, "might prevent inter-racial riots and bloodshed, and will undoubtedly do a great deal to calm the local population." There is no doubt that General Pope saw this letter, because he sent a copy of it to Hugh Keenleyside of the Department of External Affairs and Keenleyside wrote back to him with suggestions on 3 January — before the "Japanese Problem" conference in Ottawa took place.⁴⁶

The senior RCAF officer in BC shared the view of his army colleague. Air Commodore L.F. Stevenson informed RCAF headquarters in Ottawa on 2 January that security "cannot rest on precarious discernment between those who would actively support Japan and those who might at present be apathetic." If the government had doubts about the wisdom of moving the Japanese out, Stevenson said, "I suggest a strong commission be appointed immediately to ... obtain the opinion of a good cross section of the BC public and the officers charged with the defence of the Pacific Coast." The senior naval officer agreed, Commodore W.J.R. Beech telling his headquarters on 27 December that "Public opinion is very much against the Japanese all over the Queen Charlotte Islands and in view of the strategic position of these Islands I would strongly recommend that all the Japanese be removed."⁴⁷

All three officers stressed public opinion at least as much as military needs, and it is reasonable to assume that their positions often put them in close contact with politicians and journalists likely to be pressing for stern action. But this does not alter the fact that the responsible military commanders in British Columbia, after 7 December and before the Ottawa conference, called for removal of the Japanese Canadians from all or part of the coastal region; so too had their staffs urged removal before 7 December from the vicinity of military bases and after Pearl Harbor from coastal areas of the province.⁴⁸ Moreover, on 13 February 1942, the Joint Services Committee, Pacific Coast, decided that in view of "the deterioration of the situation in the Pacific theatre of war ... the continued presence of enemy aliens and persons of Japanese racial origin [in the coastal areas] constitutes a serious danger and prejudices

the effective defence of the Pacific Coast of Canada.”⁴⁹ And as late as 26 February, the RCN commanding officer on the coast was advised by his security intelligence officer that “The removal of all Japanese from this coastal area would undoubtedly relieve what is becoming more and more a very dangerous situation from the point of view of sabotage and aid to the enemy as well as the great danger of development of inter-racial strife.”⁵⁰ Again, public opinion was given equal weight with the fear of sabotage, but it is significant that this advice was proffered after adult male Japanese citizens living on the coast had been ordered inland.

Even after the great majority of Japanese Canadians had been cleared from the government’s designated defence zone, moreover, substantial concern was expressed repeatedly by the American military and by the US members of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence on 26-27 May and 1 September 1942 at the relocation of Japanese Canadians inland to road camp sites near railway lines or other strategic points. Under pressure, the Canadian government then acted to resolve matters to reassure its ally. Similar concerns had been expressed in June 1942 in the British Security Coordination report.⁵¹

An additional factor that played an unquantifiable but important part in events in BC were the reports that Japanese living in Hawaii, Hong Kong and Malaya had helped the attacking Japanese forces.⁵² Undoubtedly the lurid tales of fifth column activities from Europe in 1940 also fed popular fears. The Hawaii stories eventually proved to be mere rumours, but their impact was great in the first months of 1942. In Hong Kong and particularly in Malaya, however, there was substantial truth to the reports in January and February that local Japanese had hidden arms and ammunition, planted explosive charges at military installations, docks and ships, and sniped at troops, as well as providing information to the invaders.⁵³ It is virtually immaterial if the stories were true; what is important is that they circulated widely among a generally anti-Japanese public and a fearful military that were prepared to believe them. As the *Vancouver Sun* put it on 2 January 1942, “we may expect Japanese civilians to do all in their power to assist the attacker.”⁵⁴

Finally, the stories, all too true, of the brutality of the Japanese victors towards captured Allied servicemen and civilians had substantial impact on both the public and political leaders. As early as 12 February, telegrams from London to Ottawa spoke of atrocities against captured

Hong Kong prisoners and of deplorable conditions in the POW camps. Within the week, Cabinet ministers in Ottawa were talking about the fate of the Hong Kong force with their intimates, and on 10 March, the widespread rumours were given official sanction by statements in Parliament in London and Ottawa. The "devilish" Japanese, or so M.J. Coldwell of the CCF said in the House of Commons, would be punished after the war for their atrocities. The Canadian Japanese, wholly innocent of the crimes of the Imperial Japanese Army, nonetheless were denied sympathy as a result.⁵⁵

Was There a Military Threat to the Coast?

Whether there was a direct military threat to the coast from the Imperial Japanese forces is also worth some consideration, if only because the received version denies any. In September 1941, RCAF headquarters in Ottawa had been confident that the United States Navy was the ultimate guarantor of the safety of the Pacific Coast: "Unless the United States Navy is seriously defeated or loses its northern bases," Air Vice Marshal G.M. Croil told his Minister, C.G. Power, all Canada had to do was remain in "watchful readiness" on the West Coast.⁵⁶ With that attitude in the ascendant, the coast of British Columbia was left "poorly defended," the words employed to describe matters by Robert Rossow, Jr., the American Vice-Consul in Vancouver, in August 1941.⁵⁷ After Pearl Harbor, however, the worst possible case seemed to have occurred, and Canada was largely unprepared. Certainly there were few modern aircraft, few ships and relatively few trained soldiers in the area until the outbreak of war,⁵⁸ and it took some time before more could be rushed to the coast.⁵⁹ That caused concern.

So too did the course of the war. The Japanese hit Pearl Harbor on 7 December and simultaneously attacked Malaya, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Wake and Midway Islands. On 8 December, Japan occupied Thailand, captured Guam on 13 December, Wake on 24 December, and Hong Kong on 25 December. Manila fell on 2 January, Singapore followed on 15 February, a staggering blow to the British position in Asia (and something that frightened British Columbia⁶⁰) and the Imperial Japanese Navy crushed an allied fleet in the Java Sea on 27 February, the date that the Canadian government's decision to move all Japanese Canadians inland was in the newspapers. Closer to home, a Japanese submarine had shelled Santa Barbara, California on 23 February, two days later the "Battle of Los Angeles" took place with

much ammunition expended against (apparently) imaginary targets, and there were submarine attacks on points in Oregon. (On 20 June a Japanese submarine shelled Estevan point on Vancouver Island.) The Dutch East Indies and most of Burma were then captured in March, capping an extraordinary four months of conquest.

At the beginning of June, the Japanese launched what H.P. Willmott, the leading historian of Pacific war strategy, called "their main endeavour, a twin offensive against the Aleutians," designed to draw the American fleet to battle to protect their territory, "and against the western Hawaiian Islands," intended to lead to an invasion once the Americans' Pacific Fleet had been destroyed. At least two plans for such an invasion existed before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and one plan saw the capture of Hawaii "as preparatory to strikes against the United States mainland."⁶¹ (Whether attacks against the Canadian Coast were intended remains unclear until such Japanese military records that survived the war are searched.) Dutch Harbor, Alaska was attacked by carrier-based aircraft on 3 June as part of this plan. Four days later Kiska and Attu in the Aleutian Islands were taken.

Although in retrospect the American naval victory at Midway in June, aided beyond measure by "Magic" intercepts, put an end to the Hawaiian adventure and truly marked the beginning of the end for Japanese imperial ambitions as a whole, its significance was not quite so apparent in mid-1942 as it has since become. Certainly the Canadian government did not slacken its defence efforts on the coast after the American victory. In mid-February 1942, a military appreciation prepared by the chiefs of staff for the minister of national defence's use at a secret session of Parliament noted that "probable" Japanese strategy included containing "North American forces in America" by raids on the North American Pacific seaboard. "Possible" enemy aims included an "invasion of the West Coast of North America," although the chiefs noted that "Under present conditions" such invasion was "not considered to be a practicable operation of war."⁶²

The next month, with the Japanese forces seemingly roaming at will throughout the Pacific and with the politicians anxious to satisfy the public clamour for stronger local defences in British Columbia, the chief of the General Staff in Ottawa was estimating the possible scale of a Japanese attack on the Pacific Coast to be two brigades strong (i.e., two Japanese regiments of three battalions each or approximately 5,200 to

6,000 men), and he was recommending the raising of new forces.⁶³ At the beginning of April, President Roosevelt used the occasion of the first meeting of the Pacific Council, made up of representatives of all the belligerent allies, to say that he had invited Canada because "he thought that Canada might do more than she was now doing."⁶⁴ That disturbed Ottawa, perhaps because it mirrored British Columbia public opinion so clearly, and Mackenzie King hastened to discuss the matter with the president.⁶⁵

Later that month, after Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle's B-25 bombers, launched from the carrier *Hornet*, had hit Tokyo, Canadian intelligence reports predicted that enemy aircraft carriers would launch retaliatory attacks against the West Coast in May.⁶⁶ By June, there were nineteen battalions on the coast, a response to Japan's invasion of the Aleutians and continued and growing public concern. Even so, the military commanders were far from satisfied. The Joint Canadian United States Services Committee at Prince Rupert believed that military strength in the area was "entirely inadequate against many types of attack that are possible and probable from the West."⁶⁷ The air officer commanding on the coast asked for sixteen squadrons to deal with the maximum scale of attack by battleships, cruisers and carrierborne aircraft. There were also blackouts and dimouts, and active plans underway in July and August 1942 for the evacuation of Vancouver Island and the lower mainland in the event of a Japanese attack.⁶⁸

The Cabinet War Committee was assured by the chief of the General Staff in late September that he saw "no reason to fear any invasion from the Pacific Coast at present time,"⁶⁹ but two months later the Combined Chiefs of Staff, the highest Allied military authority, determined that while "carrier-borne air attacks and sporadic naval bombardment" were the most probable form of attack, the possibility of "a small scale destructive raid cannot be ignored." By that, the British and American planners meant "a force comprising 10/15 fast merchant ships carrying up to two brigades."⁷⁰ And as late as March 1943, there was a flurry of reports of Japanese activity in North American waters that stirred fears about a possible attack of the precise sort the planners had anticipated.⁷¹ In other words, and contrary to the arguments of those who have argued that there was never any threat from Japan to the coast and hence no justification on grounds of national security for the evacuation of the Japanese Canadians, there *was* a credible — if limited — military threat into 1943.

The intent of this paper was to present some new and re-state some old evidence on several aspects of the Japanese-Canadian question. What has our account done to the received version? It has pointed to the gross weaknesses of and wishful thinking in RCMP and military intelligence about the Japanese Canadians. It has demonstrated irrefutably that the Japanese Consulate in Vancouver had orders from the Foreign Ministry to employ British Columbia *Nisei* in information collection or spying. It has called into question the advice of the military planners in Ottawa, brought forward once more the widespread concerns of the senior officers and staff planners of all three armed forces in British Columbia, and argued that there was a limited but credible military threat to North America from early 1942 into 1943 from the Imperial Japanese forces. It has noted that the attitudes of some Japanese Canadians by their support for Japan's war with China before 7 December 1941 raised understandable concerns on the part of British Columbians and Canadians generally. And although the attitudes of Japanese Canadians before and during the war have yet to be thoroughly studied despite all the work on the subject, Nakano's memoir is important for its account of the wartime attitudes and divisions in the community and especially so because of its resonance with Stephan's account of Hawaii. Finally, although little has been made of this here, it is certainly germane to recall that there was a war on and that Canada and its Allies were losing it at the beginning of 1942. As the civil libertarian and historian Arthur Lower wrote in October 1941, "The temper of the Canadian people seems to be becoming more and more arbitrary and we are fast losing whatever tolerance and magnanimity we once possessed."² That explains much that happened.

None of this alters the conclusion that the Japanese Canadians were victims of the racism of the society in which they lived and an uncaring government that failed to defend the ideals for which its leaders claimed to have taken Canada and Canadians to war. Even so, this paper does maintain that there were military and intelligence concerns that, in the face of the sudden attack at Pearl Harbor, could have provided Ottawa with a justification for the evacuation of the Japanese Canadians from the coast. The government in December 1941 was unaware of much of the data that has since emerged, and even if it had had it all, it simply lacked the assessment capability to put it together. If it had had the information and the intelligence capacity to appraise it properly, the arguments for evacuation would certainly have appeared far stronger than they already did.

However arguable this case, there is, of course, no necessary connection between the later confiscation of property and the still later effort to deport the Japanese Canadians and the reasons for the evacuation that seemed compelling to some in January and February 1942. The anger that persists at the evacuation might be misplaced; that at the confiscation of property and the attempt at deportation still seems wholly justifiable. In any case, this paper should demonstrate that there remains ample room for further work, broader interpretations and, perhaps, a changed emphasis in this area of research.

Notes

1. National Archives of Canada (NA), Department of National Defence Records, mf reel 5257, f. 8704, "Instructions for the Guidance of General Officers Commanding-in-Chief Atlantic and Pacific Commands," 26 February 1941
2. NA, Department of External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 2, "Report on the State of Intelligence on the Pacific Coast with Particular Reference to the Problem of the Japanese Minority," 27 July 1941; Department of National Defence Records, vol. 11913, "Japanese" file, Cmdr Hart to R.B.C. Mundy, 21 August 1940
3. PAC, RCMP Records, declassified report, "Japanese Activities in British Columbia" and attached correspondence. See also External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 2, "Report on the State...."
4. External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 1, Keenleyside to H.F. Angus, 28 June 1940. After the order to remove the Japanese from the coast, Keenleyside noted that American "control of enemy aliens seems to be rather more severe than ours while their action with regard to their own citizens is somewhat less severe than ours." *Ibid.*, Acc. 83-84/259, box 171, f. 2915-40, pt. 1, Keenleyside to Wrong, 14 March 1942
5. See, e.g., Robert H. Keyserlingk, "'Agents Within the Gates': The Search for Nazi Subversives in Canada During World War II," *Canadian Historical Review*, LXVI (June 1985), 216-17; J.L. Granatstein, *A Man of Influence* (Ottawa, 1981), pp. 81ff; Reg Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," *Labour/Le Travail*, XVII (Spring 1986), 137 and *passim*.
6. NA, W.L.M. King Papers, "Note on a War-Time Intelligence Service," 27 November 1939, f. C257903ff. We are indebted to Professor W.R. Young for this reference.
7. Department of National Defence Records, Declassified Examination Unit Files, memorandum for chairman, Supervisory Committee, 15 August 1941, Lt C.H. Little memorandum, 18 April 1942, Draft History, chapter VI, "Japanese Diplomatic Section," 1

8. The spy scares in British Columbia sound much the same as those in Britain before the Great War. See Christopher Andrew, *Secret Service* (London, 1985), 34ff.
9. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 11917, f. 5-1-128, 1938-9, RCMP report, 3 June 1938; *ibid.*, vol. 11913, "Japanese" file, "Vancouver" [an agent] to Cmdr Hart, 30 June and 13 July 1940; External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 2, RCMP report, 29 July 1941; Ann Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism* (Toronto, 1981), 23
10. See Roy Miki, ed., *This is My Own: Letters to Wes & Other Writings on Japanese Canadians, 1941-48* by Muriel Kitagawa (Vancouver, 1985), 98-9.
11. RCMP Records, declassified material, Commissioner S.T. Wood to Stephenson, 5 August 1942
12. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 3864, f. N.S.S. 1023-18-2, vol. 1, memorandum, F/L Wynd to senior air staff officer, 24 June 1940
13. External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, RCMP report, 29 July 1941. Under a Japanese law of 1899, Japanese men liable for military service did not lose Japanese nationality upon naturalization abroad unless they had performed their military service. After 1934, Canada would not accept Japanese for naturalization without certification that they had completed military service. See *ibid.*, Acc. 83-84/259, box 171, f. 2915-40, pt. 3, memorandum, "Postwar Treatment of Japanese in Canada," n.d.; John J. Stephan, *Hawaii Under the Rising Sun* (Honolulu, 1984), 24; and Ken Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was* (Toronto, 1976). Adachi, 175, says that in 1934 86 percent of *Nisei* were dual citizens. The population numbers used here are those in the *Report and Recommendations of the Special Committee on Orientals in British Columbia, December 1940* (copy in NA, Privy Council Office Records, vol. 1, f. C-10-3), not those of the 1941 Census which were, of course, not available at the time.
14. External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 2, "Report on the State...." See also the pamphlet by the Vancouver unit of the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order, "Canada's Japanese" (Vancouver [1942?]), 7-8, with its explanation of the role of the Consulate.
15. External Affairs Records, f. 28-C(s), Massey to prime minister, 28 February 1941. This telegram was discussed by the Cabinet War Committee, the key comment being that by Angus L. Macdonald, the minister of national defence (naval services), that there was "little danger of serious attack by Japan" on the Pacific Coast. Privy Council Office Records, Cabinet War Committee Minutes, 5 March 1941. This type of attitude presumably was responsible for the fact that, as late as July 1941, as we have seen above, the RCMP still had only three people responsible for Japanese- Canadian questions. For a plausible hypothesis on how the information might have reached Massey — from US under secretary of state, S. Welles, to the British ambassador, Halifax, to London and thence to Massey — see Ruth Harris, "The 'Magic' Leak of 1941 and Japanese-American Relations," *Pacific Historical Review*, L (1981), 83.

16. Andrew, 261, 353; Ronald Lewin, *The American Magic* (New York, 1982), 44ff
17. *Ibid.*, 45-6
18. United States National Archives (USNA), General Records of the Department of the Navy, RG 80, "Magic" Documents, box 56, Tokyo to Washington, 30 January 1941 (2 parts); *ibid.*, Tokyo to Washington, 15 February 1941; *ibid.*, Los Angeles to Tokyo, 9 May 1941; *ibid.*, Tokyo to Vancouver, March 1941. USNA, Records of the National Security Agency, RG 457, "Magic" Documents, SRH 018, SRDJ nos. 1233-4, 1246-9, 1370, 1525, Vancouver to Tokyo, 7, 14 July, 11, 19 August 1939. Some of this information is contained in *The "Magic" Background to Pearl Harbor* (Washington, 1977), I, no. 131, and especially no. 135, which is the Tokyo to Vancouver, 14 February 1941, telegram referred to. See also *New York Times*, 22 May 1983, and Gregory A. Johnson's doctoral research paper, "Mackenzie King and the Cancer in the Pacific" (York University, 1984).
19. Indeed, as late as 21 October 1941, and despite the Massey telegram referred to above, Hugh Keenleyside, the assistant under secretary of state for external affairs, told the under secretary that "While it might be possible to find Japanese nationals in British Columbia against whom some meagre suspicion exists, there is certainly no Japanese national at large in that Province or elsewhere in Canada against whom any really convincing case can be made out." That comment likely reflected both RCMP advice, which is suspect, and Keenleyside's own extensive knowledge. Whether his certainty was justified — in the light of the Consulate's activities — is another question. D.R. Murray, ed., *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. VIII: 1939-41, pt. 2 (Ottawa, 1976), 1169
20. External Affairs Records, vol. 2007, f. 1939-212, pt. 2, "Report on the State...." Cf. H.F. Angus' critique of this report in Department of National Defence Records, f. 212-39c, 15 August 1941, and his memorandum of an interview with the officer, F/O Neild, 15 August 1941. We are indebted to Professor Patricia Roy for the Angus critique. It is worth noting that even missionaries shared alarmist views. A United Church China missionary, in Vancouver in January 1941, wrote that "I have had too much experience with the Japanese to trust them ... there is a war in progress and we in Vancouver are in the front line. And the front line is no place for thousands of enemy citizens." United Church Archives, Board of Foreign Missions, Honan, box 11, f. 174, Stewart to Reverend Armstrong, 20 January 1942
21. Adachi, 184-5. Membership figures for the Canadian Japanese Association are in University of British Columbia Archives, Japanese Canadian Collection, Miyazaki Collection, f. 6-4. A copy of the pamphlet is in *ibid.*, P.H. Meadows, Japanese Farmers Association Papers.
22. Granatstein, 98ff; King Papers, f. C144716ff, contains petitions and other material on Canadian policy to Japan after 1937. See also Murray, 1203ff, for extensive documentation on metals export policy.
23. Ed Ouchi, ed., *'Til We See the Light of Hope* (Vernon, BC, 1982[?]), 70. *The New Canadian* is available in the UBC Archives. For support for the war, see the 20 October 1939 issue; on the consul, see, e.g., 8 September 1939. The rotogravure

section began in late 1939 and ran well into 1940. On the economic boycott launched by Chinese groups, see UBC Archives, *Chinese Times* translations for 1937.

24. NA, J.W. Dafoe Papers, Angus to Dafoe, 15 October 1940. Mackenzie King told the Japanese minister to Canada in January 1941 that Japanese Canadians would not be called up for NRMA service: "he must remember that Japan and China were at war and we might be encouraging a little civil war if we supply both Chinese and Japanese with rifles etc., in BC at this time. He laughed very heartily at that." King Papers, Diary, 8 January 1941
25. University of British Columbia, Special Collections, H.F. Angus Papers, vol. 1, folder 2, draft memoir, 320-1; H.L. Keenleyside, *Memoirs of Hugh L. Keenleyside*, vol. II: *On The Bridge of Time* (Toronto, 1982), 171
26. University of British Columbia Archives, Special Collections, MacInnis Papers, Box 54A, f. 8, MacInnis to the Canadian Japanese Association, 11 December 1937; *ibid.*, f. 12, MacInnis to T. Umezuki, 18 April 1939. The CCF did not live up to its ideals once the Pacific War started and the BC party supported removal of Japanese Canadians. See Werner Cohn, "The Persecution of Japanese Canadians and the Political Left in British Columbia, December 1941 — March 1942," *BC Studies*, LXVIII (Winter 1985-6), 3ff.
27. H.F. Angus, "The Effect of the War on Oriental Minorities in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, VII (November 1941), 508
28. Harvard University, J. Pierrepont Moffat Papers, "Memorandum of Conversations with Mr. Norman Robertson ...," 8 December 1941
29. John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York, 1986), 36. See also Christopher Thorne, *Racial Aspects of the Far Eastern War of 1941-1945* (London, 1982) and chapter II of his *The Issue of War* (London, 1985).
30. Canada, House of Commons *Debates*, 4 August 1944, 5948; Adachi, 276
31. RCMP Records, "Japanese Activities in British Columbia," Appendix 6, lists the names. Adachi, 199, says 38 were arrested. Sunahara, 28, agrees.
32. Takeo Nakano, *Within the Barbed Wire Fence* (Toronto, 1980), 8; Sunahara, 70; Stephan, 171
33. Nakano, 44-45. Sunahara, 69, says that many *Nisei gambariya* had been educated in Japan.
34. Stephan, 177
35. To what extent the post-7 December military response was a reflection of pre-war contempt for Japanese military capabilities remains unknown. Dower, 98ff, discusses the responses of the American and British military and civilians both before and after the outbreak of war.

36. Maurice Pope, *Soldiers and Politicians* (Toronto, 1962), 176-8. Escott Reid, who attended the Conference for the Department of External Affairs, later wrote that delegates from BC "spoke of the Japanese Canadians in a way that Nazis would have spoken about Jewish Germans. I felt in that room the physical presence of evil." "The Conscience of a Diplomat: A Personal Testament," *Queen's Quarterly*, LXXIV (Winter 1967), 6-8
37. External Affairs Records, Acc. 83-84/259, box 115, f. 1698-A-40, "Report of Special Committee ...," 28 July 1941. Ottawa had not always been so calm. The Joint Staff Committee at Defence Headquarters on 5 September 1936 had foreseen circumstances in which "the Western Coast of Canada will be within the area of hostilities and is likely to be attacked not only by Japanese naval and air forces, but, in the case of important shore objectives, by Japanese landing parties operating in some strength." An abridged version of the document is in James Eays, *In Defence of Canada*, vol. II: *Appeasement and Rearmament* (Toronto, 1965), 213ff. Two years later Defence Headquarters had concluded that "there was a problem of possible sabotage in wartime and recommended that Japanese Canadians not be allowed to purchase property adjacent to areas of military importance." Cited in John Saywell, "Canadian Political Dynamics and Canada-Japan Relations: Retrospect and Prospect," 26, a paper published in Japanese only ("Nikkakankei No Kaiko To Tembo," *Kokusai Seiji* (May 1985), 121-36)
38. W.A.B. Douglas, *The Creation of a National Air Force*, vol. II: *The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force* (Toronto, 1986), 405. The British and American planners meeting at the Arcadia conference later in December agreed. *Ibid.*, 410. On 29 December 1941, the chief of the General Staff told the Cabinet War Committee that he had just returned from the Pacific Coast where he found the military and police more concerned with the possibility of attacks on Japanese Canadians than with subversion. Cabinet War Committee Minutes, 29 December 1941. The enormous difficulties that the military would have faced in dealing with racist attacks on Japanese Canadians should not be underestimated: the limited number of trained troops in the area and the very real problem of using white troops against white British Columbians in defence of Japanese Canadians would have frightened any realistic commander.
39. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 2730, f. HQS-5199X, "Memorandum of the Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, on the matter of the Defences of the Pacific Coast of Canada," 12 July 1940
40. *Ibid.*, vol. 3864, f. N.S.S. 1023-18-2, vol. 1, N.A. Robertson to LCol K.S. MacLachlan, 14 August 1941; *ibid.*, vol. 2730, f. HQS-5199X, "Memorandum of the Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, on the Subject of Dealing With Persons of Japanese Origin in the Event of an Emergency," 20 September 1941. See Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever* (Montreal, 1978), 145, which notes that as early as June 1938, the military were thinking of widespread wartime internment of Japanese Canadians. The numbers near RCAF stations are from NA, Ian Mackenzie Papers, vol. 32, f. X-81, Commander Parsons to Attorney General Maitland, 17 February 1942.

41. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 3864, f. N.S.S. 1023-18-2, vol. 1, "Extract from Report on Japanese Activities on the West Coast of Canada," 10 March 1937. See also Privy Council Office Records, vol. 3, f. D-19-1 Pacific Area, for AVM Croil's "Appreciation of the Situation Likely to Arise on the West Coast ...," 11 September 1941.
42. External Affairs Records, Acc. 83-84/259, box 115, f. 1698-A-40, memorandum for Robertson, 21 October 1941. London soon urged that as many Japanese fishing vessels as possible be seized in the event of war. External Affairs Records, f. 28-C(s), secretary of state for dominion affairs to prime minister, 23 October 1941
43. National Defence Records, vol. 2688, f. HQS-5199-1, vol. 1, "Memorandum of the Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, on the Subject of Dealing with Persons of Japanese Origin in the Event of an Emergency," 20 September 1941
44. USNA, Department of State Records, RG 59, PJBD Records, box 14, meeting 12
45. *Ibid.*, 842.20 Defense/140 1/2, Hickerson to Hackworth, 2 December 1941. We are indebted to Professor Robert Bothwell for this reference.
46. RCMP Records, vol. 3564, f. C11-19-2-24, General Alexander to CGS, 30 December 1941; *ibid.*, Keenleyside to Pope, 3 January 1942
47. Mackenzie Papers, vol. 32, f. X-81, "Extracts from Secret Letters," 30, 27 December 1941. See also C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa, 1955), 169, and W.A.B. Douglas, "The RCAF and the Defence of the Pacific Coast, 1939-1945," an unpublished paper presented to the Western Studies Conference, Banff, Alberta, January 1981, 8.
48. Department of National Defence, Directorate of History, f. 193.009 (D3), Pacific Command, Joint Service Committee, minutes, 9 January 1942
49. Department of National Defence Records, Acc. 83-84/216, f. S-801-100-P5-1, minutes of Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, 13 February 1942
50. *Ibid.*, vol. 11767, f. PC019-2-7, P.A. Hoare to commanding officer, 26 February 1942. The Joint Service Committee recommended on 20 February that all aliens and all Japanese regardless of age and sex should be removed from certain areas on the coast, particularly those near defence installations and in isolated areas. Cited in Patricia Roy, "Why Did Canada Evacuate the Japanese?" unpublished paper, 6-7
51. USNA, Records of US Army Commands, RG 338, box 4, f. 291.2, contains ample evidence of US concern from April 1942; RCMP Records, declassified material, "Japanese Activities in British Columbia." See also Department of National Defence Records, mf. reel 5258, f. 8704-11, for indications of National Defence's concern about sabotage in August 1942 and especially the vice chief of the General Staff's fear that the RCMP lacked "a realistic appreciation of the present danger of sabotage." *Ibid.*, General Murchie to Ralston, 19 August 1942

52. Mackenzie papers, vol. 32, f. X-81, BC Police Commissioner T.W.S. Parsons to Attorney General Maitland, 17 February 1941: "With these people neither Canadian birth nor naturalization guarantees good faith. Something to remember in the case of invasion or planned sabotage."
53. On Pearl Harbor, see Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans in World War II* (New York, 1972), 36-8 and Gordon W. Prange, *Pearl Harbor: The Verdict of History* (New York, 1986), 348ff; on Hong Kong, see Stacey, 467, Oliver Lindsay, *The Lasting Honour* (London, 1978), 28, Carl Vincent, *No Reason Why* (Stittsville, 1981), 137, 139 and 146, and Ted Ferguson, *Desperate Siege: The Battle of Hong Kong* (Toronto, 1980), 57, 127-8, 137-9; on Malaya, see Ian Morrison, *Malayan Postscript* (London, 1942), 32-3, and the book by the British official historian of the war in Asia, General S. Woodburn Kirby, *Singapore: The Chain of Disaster* (New York, 1971), 30, 37, 152, 251, as well as the British Security Coordination report cited above from declassified RCMP records.
54. *Vancouver Sun*, 2 January 1942
55. External Affairs Records, Acc. 83-84/259, box 160, f. 2670-D-40, high commissioner in Great Britain to secretary of state for external affairs, 12 February 1942; Queen's University Archives, T.A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to J.W. Dafoe, 20 February 1942; *Montreal Gazette*, 11 March 1942. See also *Times* (London), 13 March 1942.
56. Privy Council Office Records, vol. 3, f. D-19-1, Pacific Area, memorandum, AVM Croil to minister for air, 11 September 1941
57. Department of State Records, 842.20 Defense/100, "Observations on the General Defense Status of the Province of British Columbia," 1 August 1941
58. See Stacey, 165ff, and Department of National Defence Records, vol. 2730, f. HQS-5199X, "Memorandum of the Joint Service Committee, Pacific Coast, on the Matter of the Defences of the Pacific Coast of Canada," 12 July 1940; Privy Council Office Records, vol. 3, f. D-19-1, Pacific Area, appreciations of 18 November 1941 and 10 December 1941.
59. See, e.g., Dafoe Papers, Bruce Hutchison to Dafoe, January 1942; Mackenzie Papers, vol. 30, chief of air staff to minister for air, 16 March 1942 and various memoranda.
60. Dower, 112, notes that, as the Japanese victories continued through early 1942, "Suddenly, instead of being treacherous and cunning, the Japanese had become monstrous and inhuman ... invested in the eyes of both civilians and soldiers with superhuman qualities."
61. The best accounts of Pacific war strategy are H.P. Willmott, *Empires in the Balance* (Annapolis, 1982) and *The Barrier and the Javelin* (Annapolis, 1983). On the Aleutian and Midway plans, see Willmott, *Barrier*, chapter 3; Stephan, chapters 6-7. Note, however, Willmott's cool assessment of the difficulties Japan would face in trying to take Hawaii. *Empires*, 437. The importance of the Aleutian

thrust was seen by the Americans' Special Branch, Military Intelligence Service, based on an analysis of "Magic" traffic. See USNA, RG 457, box 2, SRS-668, supplement to Magic summary, 30 July 1942, and on the Special Branch, Lewin, 141ff. One interesting assessment of the Japanese attack in the Aleutians was offered to Japanese Ambassador Oshima in Berlin by General von Boetticher, a former military attaché in Washington: "the Aleutian attack has closed the only practicable route for an attack on Japan and is a serious threat to Canada and the West Coast." *Ibid.*, box 1, SRS-640, Magic summary, 26 June 1942

62. NA, J.L. Ralston Papers, vol. 72, Secret Session file, chiefs of staff appreciation, 19 February 1942
63. Stacey, 171. See also Cabinet War Committee Minutes, 18 February 1942, and National Defence Records, vol. 2688, f. HQS-5159-1, vol. 2, "Report of Meeting Held at Headquarters, 13th Naval District Seattle, ... 6 March 1942," where Canadian and American commanders agreed with the Canadian estimates of scales of attack and suggested that "nuisance raids" were most likely. Additional information on defence preparations is in John F. Hilliker, ed., *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. IX: 1942-1943 (Ottawa, 1980), 1162ff. For a good example of hindsight 20/20 vision on the impossibilities of a Japanese attack on the coast, see Adachi, 207-8.
64. Privy Council Office Records, vol. 14, f. W-29-1, "First Meeting of the Pacific Council in Washington," n.d. [1 April 1942] and attached documents
65. *Ibid.*, "Memorandum re Prime Minister's Visit to Washington, April 14th to 17th, 1942"
66. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 11764, f. PC05-11-5, naval message to NOI/C, Vancouver and Prince Rupert, 29 April 1942
67. *Ibid.*, vol. 11764, f. PC010-9-18, memorandum, "Defence of the West Coast," 7 July 1942
68. See *Vancouver Sun*, 10 August 1942; *Vancouver Province*, 13 August 1942; documents on External Affairs Records, Acc. 83-84/259, box 216, f. 3942-40; Douglas, *Creation*, 354. We are indebted to Professor John Saywell for his recollections of this period on Vancouver Island and to his father's book, John F.T. Saywell, *Kaatza: The Chronicles of Cowichan Lake* (Sidney, BC, 1967), 197-8, which briefly details the role of the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers, a force largely of skilled woodsmen and hunters.
69. King Papers, f. C249469, memorandum for file, 25 September 1942. See also Cabinet War Committee Minutes, 25 September 1942, where the chief of the General Staff said he would be "surprised" if the Japanese attacked the coast.
70. USNA, RG 218, Records of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, mf. reel 10, f. 39322ff, Combined Chiefs of Staff, "Probable Maximum Scale of Attack on West Coast of North America," CCS 127, 29 November 1942. See also *ibid.*, f. A4024ff, CCS 127/1, "Probable Scale of Attack on the West Coast of North America," 16 January 1943. Not until August 1943 (in CCS 127/3) did the Combined Chiefs

declare the possibility of any serious attack on the coast "very unlikely." Douglas, *Creation*, 368-9. C.P. Stacey's comment in *Arms, Men and Governments* (Ottawa, 1970), 46, that "No informed and competent officer ever suggested that the Japanese were in a position to undertake anything more than nuisance raids" seems exaggerated in the light of the CCS papers. It is worth recalling that the Canadian raid on Dieppe involved about 5,000 men and was intended, among other purposes, to lead the Nazis to strengthen the French Coast at the expense of the Eastern front. The Japanese planners could (and should?) have been thinking similarly. Certainly a raid in force would have resulted in a massive public demand for the stationing of more troops on the coast; indeed, the simple prospect of such a raid did lead to the strengthening of defences.

71. Department of National Defence Records, vol. 11764, f. PC05-11-7, naval messages, 30-31 March 1943. This may have been based on false information. A secret US Federal Communications Commission project had reported on landing barges in the area; Washington discounted these reports but turned the information over to Canada, which sent them to the West Coast and then back into the American intelligence net where "they were believed to be authentic. Hence military action was ordered." See USNA, RG 457, SRMN-007, memorandum, 19 April 1943.
72. Lower to Frank Underhill, 15 October 1941, quoted in Doug Owrain, *The Government Generation* (Toronto, 1986), 263