



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

ganbari

As a people, Canadians commit themselves to the building of a society that ensures equality and justice for all, regardless of race or ethnic origin.

En tant que peuple, les Canadiens s'engagent à bâtir une société qui respecte les principes d'égalité et de justice pour tous ses membres sans égard à leurs origines culturelles ou raciales.

During and after World War II, Canadians of Japanese ancestry, the majority of whom were citizens, suffered unprecedented actions taken by the Government of Canada against their community.

Pendant et après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, des Canadiens d'origine japonaise, citoyens de notre pays pour la plupart, ont eu à souffrir de mesures sans précédent prises par le gouvernement du Canada et dirigées contre leur communauté.

reclaiming our home

Despite perceived military threats, the removal and internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and their deportation and expulsion following the war, was unjust. In retrospect, government policies of disenfranchisement, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, expulsion, deportation and restriction of movement, which continued after the war, were influenced by discriminatory attitudes. Japanese Canadians who were interned had their property liquidated and the proceeds of sale were used to pay for their own internment.

Malgré les craintes de menaces militaires, l'enlèvement et l'internement des Canadiens japonais pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, ainsi que leur déportation et leur expulsion au lendemain de celle-ci, étaient injustifiables. On se rend compte aujourd'hui que les mesures gouvernementales de privation des droits civiques, de détention, de confiscation et de vente de biens personnels et communautaires, ainsi que la restriction de mouvement, qui ont continué après la guerre, ont été influencées par des attitudes discriminatoires. Les Canadiens japonais qui ont été internés ont vu leurs biens liquidés et les produits de la vente ont été utilisés pour payer leur propre internement.

The acknowledgement of these injustices serves notice to Canadians that the excesses of the past are condemned and that the principles of justice and equality in Canada are reaffirmed.

Therefore, the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, does hereby:

- 1) acknowledge that the treatment of Japanese Canadians during and after World War II was unjust and violated principles of human rights as they are understood today;
- 2) pledge to ensure, to the full extent that its powers permit, that such events will not happen again; and
- 3) recognize, with great respect, the fortitude and determination of Japanese Canadians who, despite government actions and hardship, retain their commitment and loyalty to Canada and contribute so richly to the development of the Canadian nation.



Paul Martin

Prime Minister of Canada

Le Premier ministre du Canada



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPEAL

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un chez-soi retrouvé

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Pendant et après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, des Canadiens d'origine japonaise, citoyens de notre pays pour la plupart, ont eu à souffrir de mesures sans précédent prises par le gouvernement du Canada et dirigées contre leur communauté.

Despite perceived military necessities, the forced removal and internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and their deportation and expulsion following the war, was unjust. In retrospect, government policies of disenfranchisement, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, expulsion, deportation and restriction of movement, which continued after the war, were influenced by discriminatory attitudes. Japanese Canadians who were interned had their property liquidated and the proceeds of sale were used to pay for their own internment.

Malgré des raisons militaires perçues, l'expulsion, la déportation et l'incarcération de Canadiens japonais au cours de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, ainsi que leur déportation et leur expulsion au lendemain de celle-ci, étaient injustifiables. On se rend compte aujourd'hui que les mesures gouvernementales de privation des droits civiques, de détention, de confiscation et de vente des biens privés ainsi que de restriction de mouvement, qui ont continué après la guerre, ont été influencées par des attitudes discriminatoires.

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Young women's activities of all sorts abounded just after the war in Montreal

Young Nisei gathering for one of their many socials in the immediate post-war era (*Kadowaki family*)



Montreal Bowling Club, another post-war activity (*Kadowaki family*)

immediate problem was finding a place to live, not a job. During the war, Montreal had experienced a critical housing shortage. To lease a room or apartment, landlords were demanding "key money," a large sum of money over and above the rental amount (up to \$1,000 in some instances). As housing was so scarce, the extra money was simply handed over, and in some cases lessees were forced to buy the dilapidated furniture present in the apartment at inflated prices as well.

Some Japanese Canadians were dissuaded from renting rooms in many parts of the city by landlords who simply claimed there were "no vacancies;" more likely, these landlords were not eager to have the newcomers living in their buildings. For

the most part, Japanese Canadians settled in the poorer downtown areas, with their countless rooming houses, where the landlords' only concern was the colour of money.

Education

In 1899, the first Japanese Canadian graduated from McGill. However, in October 1944, McGill University's Senate voted to bar Japanese Canadians from studying at McGill. The Senate argued that since Japanese Canadians were not eligible for either service in the armed forces or placement in defense plants where university training was required, educating them in wartime was a waste of McGill's facilities.

Student groups from other Canadian universities and many church groups urged McGill's Senate to reconsider its decision, condemning its members for their bigotry. The McGill ban was finally revoked in September 1945.

The other universities in Montreal, Sir George Williams (now Concordia University) and Université de Montréal, had no such exclusionary policies and continued to admit Japanese Canadians throughout the war.

Attitudes and perceptions

Most Montrealers had few pre-conceived notions about Japanese Canadians, since there were fewer than 50 Japanese Canadians living in Montreal at

the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. With the gradual influx of new arrivals from British Columbia, the reactions of Montrealers varied greatly, depending on individual situations and experiences.

Even if these recent Montrealers solved their housing and employment problems, many still had to contend with being called names while walking down the street, and being refused service in some stores. However, this was the experience of many individuals from the city's various cultural communities.

Because their experiences in British Columbia had prepared them to expect bigotry, Japanese Canadians felt that when they did encounter ignorance, such as name-calling, it was best to downplay the incident or pretend it was not there at all. The prevailing feeling among Japanese Canadians was that Montreal was far more accepting and tolerant than Vancouver had been.

Despite the fact that Japanese Canadians felt relatively at ease in their new city, the political climate of the country was rife with racial intolerance. Until 1949, they had to obtain authorization from the Department of Labour, as well as get an RCMP travel permit, to leave the city and had to obtain a permit from the Department of Labour if they wished to purchase property.



Mother St-Peter of the Sisters of Christ the King and St-Raphael's House. St-Raphael's House and the Sisters of Christ the King became a haven for many young Japanese Canadians (K. Nakashima)

Support for the new Montrealers

The Powles

For 25 years, Reverend Canon P.S.C. Powles, and his wife Ruth, worked as Anglican missionaries in Japan, while raising their six children. Hearing news of an impending war, they returned to Canada in 1941. Because of their familiarity with the Japanese people and its language and culture, the Powles family immediately set out to help the newly arrived Japanese Canadians settle into Montreal life.

Young Japanese Canadians were often met at the train station by one of the Powles and then taken to the family home. Every Sunday, the Powles residence became a place for young Japanese Canadians to socialize and, on occasion, talk

about their experiences. The Powles also actively helped the young Japanese Canadians find jobs and places to live.

As chair of the Montreal Committee on Canadian Citizenship, Reverend Powles and his son Cyril organized a protest against the deportation of Japanese Canadians to Japan. The Powles daughter, Joy, mobilized the Students' Society to pressure McGill University to lift its ban on Japanese Canadian students, which it finally did in 1945.

The Powles returned to Japan in 1946, but finally settled in Canada in 1956. Three years later, Reverend Powles died. Ruth Powles passed away in 1979.

Mother St-Peter

From 1945 to the 1950s, Mother

St-Peter and the Sisters of Christ the King ran St-Raphael's House, a hostel for Japanese Canadian girls and women.

The Sisters had been active in some of the internment camps. Therefore, many of the young women who arrived in Montreal knew the address of the hostel and went there directly from the train station. For the young women arriving alone, in an unfamiliar city, after years in the camps, the supportive atmosphere at St-Raphael's was warm and comforting.

The Sisters lived in a building adjacent to the hostel, and took turns preparing meals for the residents, who paid a token weekly fee. Some of the young women stayed at the hostel for months, others for years.

Mother St-Peter conducted evening French lessons, and held get-togethers for the residents and their friends. Youth

groups such as the Pre-Teen Club, the Nisei Youth Organization and the Girls' Athletic Club, met at St. Raphael's. In fact, the hostel was used as a meeting place for several community groups until the community centre on Sherbrooke Street became the hub of activity.

Eventually Mother St-Peter left the order of the Sisters of Christ the King and married.

Father J. Claude Labrècque

Father Labrècque had spent two years as a Catholic missionary in Japan, so he was naturally drawn to the Japanese Canadian community when he returned to Montreal in June 1950. Well-liked by the community, in 1951 Father Labrècque became chaplain of St-Raphael's House.

One of the community's most pressing needs was for a kindergarten, which Father

Labrècque opened in September 1951, in an old barn on Sherbrooke Street. The Montreal Catholic School Commission helped pay its rent and the teachers' wages.

In 1953, Father Labrècque obtained a \$25,000 donation from Bishop Emile Léger, the Archbishop of Montreal (later Cardinal Léger), and purchased a building to house the kindergarten at 175 Sherbrooke Street East.

Father Labrècque also thought that the community needed a centre where all Japanese Canadians could meet, whether they were Buddhist, Catholic, or Protestant. About 20 other community groups eventually used the premises on Sherbrooke Street for meetings, activities, and film screenings.

Father Guy Leduc

The present Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre at 8155 Rousselot, in the north end of Montreal, was built due to the efforts of Father Leduc, who had returned to Montreal, also from Japan, in 1960 to replace Father Labrècque. Father Leduc sought out funds from the diocese, and in 1962, the much-larger Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre of Montreal was built with the help of a gift of \$45,000 from Bishop Léger.

He also oversaw the planning and construction of the St. Paul Ibaraki Mission, housed under the same roof as the Cultural Centre, so that it would be ready that fall for the kindergarten class.

Father Leduc and a kindergarten class (*Kadowaki family*)





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RECONNAISSANCE

En tant que nation, les Canadiens se sont engagés à édifier une société qui respecte les principes d'égalité et de justice pour tous ses membres sans égard à leurs origines culturelles ou raciales.

Pendant et après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, des Canadiens d'origine japonaise, citoyens de notre pays pour la plupart, ont eu à souffrir de mesures sans précédent prises par le gouvernement du Canada et dirigées contre leur communauté.

En dépit des besoins militaires perçus à l'époque, le déplacement forcé et l'internement de Canadiens japonais au cours de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, ainsi que leur déportation et leur expulsion au lendemain de celle-ci, étaient injustifiables. On se rend compte aujourd'hui que les mesures gouvernementales de privation des droits civiques, de détention, de confiscation et de vente des biens personnels et communautaires, ainsi que d'expulsion, de déportation et de restriction des déplacements, qui ont été maintenues après la guerre, découlaient d'attitudes discriminatoires. Les Canadiens japonais internés ont vu leurs biens liquidés, le produit de la vente de ceux-ci servant à payer leur propre internement.

En reconnaissant ces injustices, nous voulons signifier à tous les Canadiens que nous condamnons les abus commis dans le passé et que nous reconfirmons pour le Canada les principes de justice et d'égalité.

En conséquence, le gouvernement du Canada, au nom de tous les Canadiens :

- 1) reconnaît que les mesures prises à l'encontre des Canadiens japonais pendant et après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale étaient injustes et constituaient une violation des principes des droits de la personne, tels qu'ils sont compris aujourd'hui;
- 2) s'engage à faire tout en son pouvoir pour que de tels agissements ne se reproduisent plus jamais;
- 3) salue, avec grand respect, la force d'âme et la détermination des Canadiens japonais qui, en dépit d'épreuves et de souffrances considérables, ont conservé envers le Canada leur dévouement et leur loyauté, contribuant grandement à l'épanouissement de la nation canadienne.

Prime Minister of Canada

Le Premier ministre du Canada

part two

Starting Over in Montreal

In the wake of the federal government's internment and dispersal plan,

Japanese Canadians began trickling into Montreal between 1942 and 1945. In increasingly larger numbers, they arrived from the internment and work camps, the ghost towns, and sugarbeet farms of British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario.

The Montreal experience

By June 1943, over 200 Japanese Canadians were scattered throughout the city among the more than one million Montrealers of various ethnic origins. As a new visible minority in the city, many were relieved to discover a tolerance for different races—something they had rarely experienced in

Vancouver.

However, individual reactions and experiences varied greatly. Some of the new Montrealers described incidents of hostility that were less than welcoming.

In 1945, Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis announced that his government was opposed to accepting any more Japanese Canadians from British Columbia and threatened to take action to prevent their permanent settlement in Quebec. He also made it clear that their religious beliefs would not be tolerated, refusing throughout his term of office, to recognize Buddhism as a religion.

Employment

Owing to arrangements made by the British Columbia

Security Commission, some Japanese Canadians who came to Montreal had jobs waiting for them as domestics; it was compulsory that those working as domestics remain with their assigned family for at least one year. Jobs in nursing, in restaurants and in offices were not easy to get, discouraging those who were eager to work.

The clothing industry, however, was an exception. Many Jewish factory owners identified with the persecution experienced by the Japanese Canadians. Today, many Japanese Canadians affirm that Montreal's Jewish business and factory population was the first to offer the newcomers jobs.

Housing

For many of the new arrivals, who were mostly Nisei, the