Growing Collection of Japanese Canadian Redress Materials at the University of Toronto Libraries

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Outline

- Historical background of Japanese Canadian internment
- Highlight the differences of Japanese American and Japanese Canadian internment experiences
- Decades of fight for redress
- Some examples of the materials from the Japanese Canadian Redress Collection at the University of Toronto Libraries
Japanese Canadian Interment

- **War Measures Act**
  - Invoked during a crisis of wartime
  - “for the security, defense, order and welfare of Canada”
  - Transferred the powers of Parliament to the Cabinet

- **Problem?**
  - National security was used as an excuse to put forward a political agenda
Racism in Canada

- Politicians in British Columbia used **FEAR**: economy, social disruption, national security
- **Ian Mackenzie**, BC Liberal MP
  - “No Japs from the Rockies to the Seas”
- Another politician (private conversation)
  - “... War with Japan had been a ‘heaven-sent opportunity’ to rid the Japanese economic menace forever”

Image from Library and Archives Canada: [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images)
The Uprooting

1942: 22,000 people of Japanese ancestry (75% naturalized or Canadian-born citizens)

Image from Library and Archives Canada: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images

Hide Shimizu fonds (University of Toronto)

Order-in-Council P.C 117: March 1941. Required registration and fingerprinting of all Japanese Canadians over the age of 16.
The Uprooting

- People were given 24-hour notices and were uprooted from their homes
- Japanese newspapers were shut down, fishing boats were impounded
- Stigma of being “enemy aliens” – abuse of War Measures Act and violation of human rights

Breaking up the Families

- Men were shipped off to road camps
- Women and children were forced to live in livestock buildings until transferred to ghost towns
- July 1, 1942, the BC Security Commission instituted the policy of family re-unification

Images from Library and Archives Canada: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images
Confiscation/Dispossession

- Order in Council PC 469
  - Custodian of Enemy Property the power to sell, without the owner’s consent, properties which had initially been held in “trust”
- The government used the revenue from the sales to pay for the Japanese Canadians internment
Confiscation/Dispossession
Bird Commission

- Set up on July 18, 1947
  - Demonstrated government’s accountability, but no desire to provide adequate compensation
- Japanese Cooperative Committee for Democracy (JCCD) initiated the work to seek for compensation;
- National Japanese Canadians Citizens Association (NJCCA) continued the efforts
- Survey indicated $15 million by some 2,000 claimants
- After two years, government settlement offer was $1.25 million global compensation
- Required to sign a waiver; no further claims against the government
Bird Commission

- NJCCA refuses to accept the insulting offer
- Restricted to economic losses from the sale of properties in the care of the Custodian of Enemy Property
- Excluded:
  - Loss of income
  - Disruption of education
  - Emotional and psychological traumas
  - Violation of human rights
# JC vs JA Interment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese Canadians</th>
<th>Japanese Americans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22,000 uprooted from 100-mile coastal zone</td>
<td>120,000 uprooted from the west coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government confiscated and sold properties</td>
<td>No Sales of properties by the US government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paid for their own interment with sales of properties</td>
<td>Housing and food provided by US government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families were separated</td>
<td>Families were moved together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No legislated protection of human rights, even for Canadian-born</td>
<td>Constitution provided American citizens could not be held without just cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to return after 1949</td>
<td>American citizens began returning to the coast in January 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy of exile and dispersal eastward, continuing until 1949</td>
<td>No similar policy of exile and dispersal after WWII</td>
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What is redress?
In general terms, redress is defined as “an act of setting right a wrong.”

For Japanese Canadians, “redress” means that all members of our community who were unjustly treated during the war years should now receive some form of compensation.”

--Japanese Canadian Centennial Project (JCCP), Redress Committee
Redress Movement

- NJCCA remained dormant until 1977 with the Centennial celebrations; it was renamed National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) in 1980. The NAJC Redress Committee was chaired by George Imai

- George Imai chaired the National Redress Committee
  - Advocated for group compensation
  - Bilateral negotiations with federal government
  - 103,000 grant to conduct telephone poll and survey
Community Divided

- JCCP Redress Committee (west coast) was advocating individual compensation
- Sodan-Kai: TORONTO-based group formed by nisei and sansei in late 1982 to promote awareness of redress
  - Information meetings started in people’s homes (i.e., Stan Hiraki, Wes Fujiwara); increasing popularity led to public meetings with over 300 people concerned with the matters of redress

- Prince Hotel Crisis (1983) A motion to establish the National Redress Council passed prompting George Imai to resign
Redress: the process

- NAJC became the body to represent all Canadians; Art Miki was the president

- NAJC’s position on Redress:
  - An apology for the injustices
  - Measures to prevent a recurrence of the injustices
  - Compensation in both individual and community form

- Series of Ministers of Multiculturalism offering the government’s settlement:
  - David Collenette: 5 million / no individual compensation
  - Jack Murta: 6 million / no individual compensation
  - Otto Jelinek: 10 million / no individual compensation
  - David Crombie Crombie: 12 million community fund
  - Gerry Weiner
Redress: The Process

- Media coverage (Canadian and American newspapers)
- Increasing support from Canadians other than Japanese Canadians
- In Sep 1987, the House of Representatives in the US ratified redress for Japanese Americans
Redress: The Settlement

- Gerry Weiner under Brian Mulroney (PM) settled the negotiations
- $21,000 for individual compensation
- $15 million to establish a community fund
- Pardons, upon application, for those who were convicted under the War Measures Act
- Citizenship to those who had lost it through deportation

Acknowledgement

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

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

Despite perceived military necessities at the time, the forced removal and internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and their deportation and expulsion following the war were unjust. In retrospect, government policies of disinheritance, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, exclusion, 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.

The acknowledgement of these injustices serves notice to all 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, do 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 in honour, to the full extent that its powers allow, that such events will not happen again; and
3. recognize, with great respect, the fortitude and determination of Japanese Canadians who, despite great stress and hardship, continued their commitment and loyalty to Canada and contribute so nobly to the development of the Canadian nation.

Prime Minister of Canada

Image from: http://www.najc.ca/thenandnow/renewal6b.php
Community Outreach

1. Hana Kim, Fabiano Rocha, Stan Hiraki, Van Hori, Anne Dondertman

2. Mike Murakami, Aiko Murakami, Joan Fujiwara

3. Fabiano Rocha, Stan Hiraki, Sharon Okuno, Mika Fukuma
Hide Shimizu

Order-in-Council P.C 117: March 1941.
Required registration and fingerprinting of all Japanese Canadians over the age of 16.

Birth Certificate
Hide Shimizu (nee Hyodo)
Schools During Internment

Hastings Park.

Our home is at Hastings Park now.
We live in the Women's
our school in the Annex Building.
Hide Shimizu Awards

A Letter of Appreciation

With utmost devotion you have invariably rendered distinguished and conspicuous service to your community in the context of address to Japanese Canadians.

We therefore express our feelings of appreciation and deepest gratitude.

February, 1990
Toronto Chapter, NAC

Hide Shimizu
Stan Hiraki

Stan Hiraki and Wes Fujiwara fonds (University of Toronto)
Ottawa Rally

Shirley Yamada fonds (University of Toronto)
Ottawa Rally

Shirley Yamada fonds (University of Toronto)
Ottawa Rally
Terry Watada
Terry Watada

Terry Watada Special Collection
Some materials for Redress
“Set in the internment camps of the British Columbia interior during World War II, Terry Watada's *Daruma Days* captures the Japanese Canadian experience of imprisonment. Watada draws on the accounts of people who lived through the camps, often speaking with the voices of the issei and nisei, to portray the camps as haunted by demonic forces, the inhabitants caught between two worlds: the cultures of Japan and Canada.”
Tsuji Communications

- Local production company
- Finished masters and raw footage ca. 1980-2001
- “Hello Japan”
  - Produced/hosted by Susan Tsuji
  - Interviews, musical performances
  - Visiting dignitaries (Prince and Princess of Japan)
- Coverage of Redress
Documents of the Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property, Vancouver Branch

Consists of

Correspondence

Reports (assorted, unpublished, Bird Commission)

Deep Bay Logging Company (claims)
Interconnectivity

Redress

- Hide Shimizu
  - Photographs, documents, personal diaries

- Stan Hiraki
  - Audio cassettes, Meeting minutes

- Wes Fujiwara
  - Audio cassettes, Textual records

- Government Documents
  - Government documents

- Terry Watada
  - Manuscripts (fiction), activism through music

- Shirley Yamada
  - Photographs

- Future donations...
Sources Consulted

Questions? & Thank you!