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Report on Oriental Situation.

presented to the
General Ministerial Association, Vancouver, B.C.
and adopted
Monday, January 9, 1922

Committee:

Revs. W.Lashley Hall (chairman), Prof.H.R.Trumpour, Marcellus Ely,
with Revs. Dr. S.S.Osterhout and H.Lascelles Ward (advisory).

Your Committee beg to submit the following report:

Oriental population.

The Oriental population in British Columbia is found massed very largely in the Coast cities, Vancouver being the principal centre, with Victoria coming second. Until the census returns are issued present population cannot be given. The situation in British Columbia is part and parcel of a larger question, which affects not only Canada and this continent, but both hemispheres. For this reason any intelligent understanding of the question must go beyond the local purview.

(I) With regard to Orientals in our midst,
certain things are to be recognised:

- (a) Orientals in Canada who have complied with the requirements of the law cannot be deported except for cause. Any attitude that looks to indiscriminate ejection is indefensible.
- (b) Chinese immigrants in Canada have contributed millions of dollars (head tax) to the treasury, the amount being divided equally between the Federal and Provincial government (See Section 32, Chinese Immigration Act, corrected to August 1, 1920). Statistics following are issued by the Immigration Department (Facts & Figures, ~~1920~~ 1920):

(See next page)

The Report on the Oriental Situation (1922)

Revenue from Chinese head tax (Facts and Figures, 1920)

1905-6	\$11,000	1912-14	\$2,637,000
1906-7 (nine mos.)	\$45,500	1914-15	\$577,500
1907-8	\$741,000	1915-16	\$10,000
1908-9	\$705,500	1916-17	\$136,000
1909-10	\$807,000	1917-18	\$325,000
1910-11	\$2,257,500	1918-19	\$2,033,000
1911-12	\$3,041,500	1919-20	\$181,500
1912-13	\$3,539,000	1920-21 (?)	

Making total Head Tax received for 15 years to Mch 31, 1920,
in all Seventeen Millions, Forty-eight Thousand \$17,048,000

N.B. This does not take account of additional amounts for fines, etc., nor does it allow for refunds to Chinese returning to China.

It is to be noted that a head tax (of \$50) was first imposed in 1885, being increased in 1901 to \$100, and in 1904 to \$500. Note the enormous revenues, advancing by leaps and bounds, following the increased head tax, which, instead of proving a deterrent, served rather to stimulate immigration. Checked during the war the influx began again immediately after, continuing until further immigration was restricted by order in council, dated June 9, 1919, which barred both skilled and unskilled labor. Notwithstanding, as indicated below, immigration did not wholly cease. Diminishing revenues consequent on restricted immigration reacted on the Provincial exchequer, into which and allied economic questions, ~~and~~, this report does not enter.

(c) In return for the immense revenues received from Chinese immigration by the government, little or nothing has been done in the way of Canadianisation, except that, in common with others, Oriental children are admitted to public school. This of course does not take cognizance of missionary efforts. Mingling of Oriental children in the public schools raises other questions, to be referred to later. It is to be noted that whereas Chinese immigration has been curtailed, since the war, frequent evasions have obtained under the clause admitting students, at times, it is believed, to an alarming extent.

- (d) Japanese immigration (the second large factor in the Oriental population) is now controlled under the so-called 'Gentlemen's Agreement', limiting from the Japan side the number of Japanese coming to Canada to 400 per annum. Government statistics, however, shew this number to have been greatly exceeded. The last big influx of Japanese was in 1907-8, when over seven thousand came in one year, most of whom presumably remained in British Columbia. Following restricted immigration, during the next three years, the number of Japanese coming to Canada was in all 1,203, or roughly 400 a year, average. In 1911 the number rose to 765, in 1912...724, 1913...856, 1914...592, 1915...401, 1916...648, 1917...883, 1918...1,178, 1919...711; or an average of 750 a year for the nine years from 1911 to 1920. There is ground therefore for the claim that evasions have occurred. It should be remembered that students, merchants and missionaries have special recognition as regards rights of travel and residence.
- (e) Sikhs, or Hindus, as they are commonly called, the third group of Oriental extraction in British Columbia, represent a small diminishing body, numbering, now, it is believed, less than two thousand in all. Since immigration was stopped in 1908, more than half of the original number have returned to India or gone elsewhere, probably some three thousand or more, carrying with them in some cases disaffected feelings on the score of their treatment. It is to be borne in mind that not only further contingents of males, but Sikh or Hindu women, including wives, were barred admission, by the nature of the conditions imposed, making compliance practically impossible. It is true that an attempt was made during the war to break through the restrictions, by chartering a Japanese boat, the Kamagata Maru, which reached Vancouver; but apart from the political bearings the effort failed. Some change has been made, within the

past two or three years, in the regulations, as regards the admission of women, but the practical effect has been nil. Into this question we do not now enter beyond calling attention to the fact that it is one which, on account of its bearings on India, was and is of significance for the whole Empire.

(f) For reasons of their own, racial and economic, Orientals in British Columbia are found, for the most part, living by themselves in distinctive communities. It is to be said that, apart from individual instances, among the Chinese there is no family life, which, under the conditions, is possible only for the few, the head tax as applied to women making it otherwise prohibitive. It is notorious that, in given cases, resident Chinese have plural wives. Further it is affirmed that women, represented as merchants' wives, are brought in from time to time for immoral purposes, the law being circumvented

(g) Among the Japanese family life is quite common. Here a new phase has developed. Japanese in Vancouver are now occupying homes in high class districts heretofore thought to be restricted to whites. In the country, similarly, Japanese now ~~have~~^{own} farms and fruit ranches in the midst of white neighbors. Due to these conditions, at Maple Ridge, for example, there is a Japanese day school to accommodate Japanese children. Maple Ridge is a fruit-raising district about 25 miles from Vancouver, much favored for better-class country homes, one of the choicest locations in British Columbia. A similar process is in evidence on Lulu Island, at the mouth of the Fraser, in places transforming the character of the constituency.

(In parentheses it may be stated that Oriental children, Chinese and Japanese, in Vancouver, are being taught out of school hours by native teachers, whose aim is to keep the rising generation in their ancestral faith, namely Confucianism and Buddhism. This fact has grave significance for the future!)

(h) From the foregoing references to conditions it is evident that there is work to be done by the Oriental in British Columbia. Chinese, at

a given number, at a given time, of any outside peoples. Her own citizens naturally claim first consideration. This position will be seen at once to be both reasonable and just. Any rearrangements called for, therefore, in regard to any class of immigrants, should be capable of adjustment on the basis of a sympathetic understanding of conditions, and good will; in consonance with the new spirit now stirring the world, which finds embodiment in ^{the historic} ~~Western~~ Conference ^{and new} ~~in session at the Transatlantic~~ on the opposite Seaboard, as well as its historic predecessor.

(III) Recommendations.

With full recognition of the right of Canada to control its own immigration we respectfully submit the following recommendations:

- (1) Removing offensive discriminations, Oriental immigration should as far as possible be brought under a common policy. The Chinese head tax should be discontinued, both as having proven ineffective for the purpose originally in view (which statistics demonstrate), and because of its indignity to a great people. In lieu thereof arrangements should be entered into limiting the number, whether Chinese, Japanese or others, to be admitted yearly, if any are to be admitted, on given qualifications to be determined. Should any government not be in a position to give guarantees, then admission must be controlled from Canada, and transportation companies notified. It is suggested that such immigration, if permitted, be put on a per-centage basis, according to the number of nationals in the country at a given time, relative to the total population. In putting China on a footing with Japan, as regards immigration, the cause of much heart-burning, it is believed, would be removed. On the other hand it might very well be maintained that further Oriental immigration at the present time is undesirable.

N.B. Not only from the Orient, but further immigration from ~~other~~ given Occidental countries can be shown to be highly undesirable. This whole question of selected immigration is one of the gravest problems, in our judgment, which Canada has to face. If British institutions are to prevail it is highly desirable that British immigration, of the right sort, should be encouraged.

- (2) It follows that Orientals admitted to Canada, and Orientals in Canada, must comply with all requirements demanded of her own citizens. As regards housing conditions, for example, it is intolerable that in Vancouver or elsewhere conditions should be allowed to grow up which are a menace to the health and morals of the community. Nor is it to be regarded as a light matter that individuals who may develop infectious diseases should be at large. Tuberculosis and other germs are no respecter of persons.
- (3) Admission of women being granted, making family life possible, materially aiding law enforcement, effective steps should be taken to prevent the importation of women for immoral purposes. Equally unallowable is any system of plural wives or concubinage.
- (4) For the proper carrying out of immigration requirements a white interpreter is indispensable. Widespread evasion of the law will be likely to obtain so long as the authorities are dependent wholly on native interpreters. It is therefore recommended that competent and trustworthy white interpreters, with adequate remuneration, be added to the immigration staff.
- (5) In the interests of civic and national wellbeing, no less than that of the Chinese themselves, it is recommended that in consideration of the revenues received a Chinese community centre be established, ~~without delay~~ in Vancouver, for educational, social and recreational purposes. In the judgment of your committee conditions impose a distinct obligation upon the government, Federal and Provincial, in this behalf; to whom it seems to us we are justified in looking to take the initiative, and in providing material aid. The establishment of such a centre offers the most practical and hopeful

way, it would seem, of doing the necessary work of Canadianisation urgently called for, and which, we respectfully suggest, cannot longer be delayed except at the peril of the country. In this work of Canadianisation the friendly cooperation of missionary boards should be secured. To be effective it goes without saying that the community ~~community~~ centre proposed must be on an adequate scale. It is to be added, of course, that it is of the highest consequence that the administration of such a centre be assured of independence in its functioning, and be safeguarded from interference in the fulfilment of its purpose.

N.B. In this connection your committee has had communication with the Chinese Y.M.C.A. in San Francisco, and has also had consultation with the Chinese consul in Vancouver. Both attest the importance of the step proposed, in the financing of which, it is stated, we may look for practical help, at the right time, from the Chinese merchants, through the cooperation of the Chinese consulate.

(6) Without waiting for the community centre to be established active steps should at once be taken looking to the suppression of open gambling and vice, as commonly advertised in the Chinese quarter. At the same time it may be said that much of the gambling and vice that goes on results from the lack of just such a community centre. Orientals are excluded from the better class theatres and restaurants and have nowhere to go. On this and other points conversation with the Chinese consul was especially illuminating.

(As an aside it may be stated that not long ago a Japanese gentleman with a distinguished educational record, a resident of Vancouver for many years, was refused admission to a popular theatre on occasion of the visit of Miss Helen Keller, causing him deep embarrassment and disappointment).

(7) In conclusion we recommend that a copy of this report be forwarded to the government, Federal and Provincial, with the Ministerial endorsement, and that a copy be also sent to the Social Service Council of Canada.

Further Report on the Oriental Problem §

Submitted to the General Ministerial Association
Vancouver, B.C. Jan. 9, 1922.

Supplementing the report on 'The Oriental Situation' the following report was submitted by the Rev. W. Lascelles Ward:

The Oriental Problem
(by Rev. W. Lascelles Ward)

Before we can build up any sort of an argument for or against the Orientals in British Columbia, we must agree upon certain assumptions, and particularly three.

The first assumption is that the Orientals are human beings, not animals; that they have bodies, souls and spirits just as we have; that they have a right to be alive and happy, and develop their own personalities, just as much as any other nation or tribe upon this planet. The second assumption is that their souls are just as precious in the sight of God as are our own. And the third assumption is that they were originally encouraged to come to this country, for the opening of mines and the building of railways; they did not force their way here.

With these three assumptions in mind we are bold to meet the members of the Asiatic Exclusion League, and say: 'If you exist merely for the sake of forbidding any more Chinese and Japanese from entering this country, then perhaps we may consider throwing in our lot with you. But if you wish not only to exclude the Chinese and Japanese, but also to persecute those who are here, then we shall have nothing to do with you'. This land of Canada is our own country, and there is nothing un-British or un-Christian in saying who are to enter and who are not. On the other hand if it is wrong for Orientals to own and lease property, in Canada, they should have been told so in the first place. They certainly should not have been encouraged to come, buy farms, ranches, orchards and

real estate for the space of thirty or forty years or more, and then have us turn around and endeavor to dispossess them of their holdings. And yet this is the attitude of the Asiatic Exclusion League. Consequently the Christian forces in British Columbia cannot possibly throw in their lot with them.

The Oriental Problem in British Columbia may be considered under six distinct aspects:

(1) Biological aspect. By the term biological aspect is meant the problem of getting diverse races to mix and intermarry. This problem is at the root of the whole attitude maintained by the Asiatic Exclusion League. When Frenchmen, Italians, and even Germans come to British Columbia it is only a question of time before they are absorbed into the Canadian commonwealth. Not so with the Japanese and Chinese, who are a Mongolian, Yellow, Asiatic and non-Christian people. The only way by which they can be absorbed is by intermarriage; and such an idea is repugnant to English-speaking people, whose forefathers came from England, Scotland, Ireland, or Europe. If it be denied that it is repugnant, the pertinent question may be asked: 'Would you like your sister to marry a Chinaman or a Japanese?' If you would not like to call a Chinaman your 'brother-in-law', why maintain it is 'quite all right' for others to do so? This is the acid test, and the crux of the whole question.

(Surely God does not expect that we should call anybody and everybody a brother-in-law! He has given us free-will, free-choice, our own likes and dislikes. We meet with people every day in business, on the streets, on the steamers, in the shops and stores; all kinds of people; and yet we do not expect to call them 'brothers-in-law' or 'sisters-in-law'. At the same time we treat them respectfully, courteously, fairly, justly and with every show of politeness. Why cannot we do the same to the Japanese and Chinese in our midst?)

(2) Educational aspect. By this is meant the manner in which the whole tone and standing of a community is affected by the presence of Japanese and Chinese, as for instance in our public schools; and

also by the conflict of ideals which must inevitably come into play when some of the scholars are Confucianist and Buddhist in their outlook, and the rest are distinctively British and Christian. In one of the public schools of Vancouver there are as many as four to five hundred Oriental children! Some of these do not know much English, others are much older in years than white children in the same class. Is it unreasonable to maintain that all these considerations taken together do not tend to retard the progress of the white children in the public schools?

Furthermore, when the Oriental children have finished studying in our public schools in the morning and afternoon, many of them go to Oriental schools of their own in the evenings. There are three such Chinese schools in Vancouver and two in Victoria, maintained for the purpose of teaching the Chinese language to Chinese children attending Canadian public schools. These schools are inculcating anti-Christian ideas, and are staffed by teachers sent out purposely from China. In the morning the Chinese student will receive impressions and ideals from the historians, poets and scholars of Christian civilisation; and in the evening he will be saturated with ideals from Confucius, Gautama and Lao-tze. Here takes place the conflict of ideals; and what is turned out eventually is a hybrid, mongrel and Eurasian intellect, at cross-purposes with its own concepts. It is not fair to the child to do this.

- (3) Trilingual aspect. As against the bi-lingual question of Ontario and Quebec, here in British Columbia the problem is tri-lingual. Assuming there are some 19,000 Japanese and 30,000 Chinese in British Columbia, these two groups have not only their own schools, where their own language is taught; but they have their own clubs, theatres, debating societies, banks, and above all their own daily

newspapers. It is possible for a Chinese and Japanese to live in Vancouver and never be expected to use the English language in engaging a room at a hotel, ordering a taxi, going into a barber shop for a hair-cut, buying a ticket for his own theatre, or a ticket for a first-class passage on an Empress boat to the Orient. He can, if he wishes, live in a world of his own, and speak his own language, and yet never go out of Vancouver. Should he die, he can have a Chinese or Japanese Buddhist funeral, be buried in an Oriental cemetery, and have only Oriental script on his tombstone. Not only so, but if he is arrested and brought before magistrate or judge, he need utter no word of English. There is always the official Chinese or Japanese interpreter.

The trilingual problem is intensified when it is realised that in Vancouver and Victoria there are daily newspapers which are edited and printed by the Chinese and Japanese themselves. During the last two years of the war Chinese newspapers used to be pro-British one day and pro-German the next, and the Japanese doubtless were the same. Even now articles appear in the Chinese papers which speak disrespectfully of Canadian civilisation, British rule in India, the tour of His Royal Highness, and the motives of the British in Egypt. These things should not be. They are permitted only because they are not known. As far as known there is no Canadian police official or Immigration officer who is able to read, write and speak Chinese or Japanese. There is no newspaper censor looking over the Chinese and Japanese dailies, and no Canadian official who can interpret in the court-house, be the case never so important!

It is respectfully suggested that the new government at Ottawa be approached, at an opportune time, with a view to sending a number of suitable High School boys to Canton and to Tokio, to study the

language; that they be brought back eventually as well-qualified young men, and appointed as interpreters, censors, translators, customs inspectors and detectives, with appropriate salaries, to guard against the temptation of bribery.

- (4) Religious aspect. By this is meant the question: 'What is to be the future religion of British Columbia?' Is it to be Confucianist, Buddhist or Christian? There are Chinese joss-houses, Japanese Buddhist temples and Sikh (Hindu) temples in nearly every city on the Western Seaboard, Canadian and American. In Vancouver alone there are three Japanese Buddhist temples, three Chinese joss-houses, and a Hindu Sikh temple.

Unless the Christian churches of British Columbia rise up in earnest to convert these Oriental peoples in their midst, the history of the North African church will be repeated, and Christianity will be wiped out by an Oriental wave of theosophic Buddhist thought... Unless we christianise the Chinese and Japanese in our midst, the day may come when there will be Buddhist and Shinto temples on Shaughnessy Heights and Rockland Avenue, and a temple erected to Confucius where now stands the cathedral of the Holy Rosary! It can only be averted if we, in our present day and generation, remain faithful to the trust committed unto us of spreading abroad the doctrine of the Life and the Light which is in Christ Jesus.

- (5) Economic aspect. It is in connection with this aspect that the Labour Party of Canada are chiefly concerned. And it is no wonder! The labouring man in B.C. cannot compete with the Oriental, who can work for longer hours, employ cheaper help, and maintain a lower standard of everyday living and general expenses. At the same time it must be said, in fairness to the Oriental labourer, that the Oriental is willing to do certain types of work which the white man does not specially favor, such as market-gardening, truck farming, and housework as domestic servants, hotel boys and waiters.

If the Orientals confined themselves to these humbler occupations there would be less ill-feeling against them. But Orientals are buying

extensive ranches and fruit-farms in the Okanagan and Fraser valleys. They are establishing extensive wholesale houses in Vancouver and Victoria, and Import and Export establishments operating between Canada and Hong Kong. Vancouver and Victoria have many Oriental shops and stores competing with white merchants. At a time like this, when there is so much unemployment, and when the whole of Canada is suffering financially, it is most embittering for the rank and file of the unemployed to see Orientals working in the best hotels, clubs and residences, and more Orientals, and still more, coming in on every Express boat that docks at Vancouver. This phase, however, will doubtless be felt to be less acute with economic and industrial readjustment in Canada and throughout the world.

- (6) Social aspect. After the biological, the social is perhaps the second most important aspect of the Oriental problem. By the social aspect is meant those questions which specially interest the Social Service Council of Canada- the housing question, the white slave traffic, the drug traffic, the open gambling-houses, as well as questions of hygiene and sanitation and the spread of contagious diseases... Suffice it to say that these conditions could largely be remedied by proper enforcement of law. Meanwhile the existence in British Columbia of some fifteen to twenty 'Chinatowns', big and little, with unsanitary housing conditions and openly advertised gambling dens, is a menace to the social and moral welfare of the Province. Here is a challenge to the Social Service machinery of all the communions concerned. Will they act; or are they 'asleep at the switch'?

One important phase of the Oriental question in British Columbia, not explicitly referred to in this or the preceding report, concerns the fishing industry, which, apart from the canneries, has passed largely into the hands of the Japanese.

Another important phase touches the modus operandi of the importation of Chinese, in which Chinese syndicates and tyees have a hand, who advance the necessary money for the payment of passage and head tax. In such cases it is believed the newcomers are bound, in Chinese fashion, for a term of years, until the debt, greatly augmented above the actual money advanced, is paid off. The acquisition of land by individual Chinese is procured in much the same way. The condition of the Chinese concerned during the term of years in which they are working off the debt, entailing long hours from early dawn to late at night, is hard to distinguish from slavery.