

They Who Part the Grass:  
The Japanese Government and Early *Nikkei* Immigration to Canada, 1877–1908

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### **Abstract**

This paper provides an account of early Japanese immigration to Canada in the years between 1877 and 1908 from the point of view of the Japanese Imperial government of the time. Drawing on Japanese diplomatic correspondence uncovered by Toshiji Sasaki in his 1999 work 日本人カナダ移民史 and accounts from Japanese-language newspapers published in Vancouver during the period, I examine the Japanese experience in Canada and describe how Japanese officials and emigrants responded to Canadian efforts to restrict Japanese emigration to Canada, culminating in the Vancouver Riot of 1907. I show how, when faced with this diplomatic crisis, Japanese officials reacted only reluctantly and, for the most part, ineffectually to limit emigration to Canada. The result of such restrictions as ultimately were imposed on the emigration of Japanese workers was not the end of Japanese emigration but the beginning of permanent settlement by Japanese families in Canada.

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## Introduction

Although Japanese were present in British Columbia in small numbers from 1877, Japanese immigration to Canada can really be said to have got its start ten years later when the Canadian Pacific Steamship Line began a direct service between Japan and Vancouver in 1888 (Shimpo 1975: 11). In the first decades after immigration began, the newcomers were less settlers looking to put down roots in a new country than *dekasegi*, migrant workers hoping to “come home in glory” to their families in Japan after a few years’ work in Canada (Yamagishi 2005: 8). This changed decisively in 1907, when emigration restrictions imposed by the Japanese at the behest of the Canadian government had the paradoxical effect of creating permanent Japanese settlements in Canada. The present paper examines the history of these early “Nikkei pioneers,” the first generation of Japanese immigrants to Canada, between their first arrival in 1877 and 1908, when restrictions on emigration from Japan first went into effect. Their story is told with reference to the diplomatic correspondence between consular officials in Canada and their superiors in the Japanese Foreign Ministry, as well as to contemporary Japanese-language newspapers published in Canada.

Japanese workers first came to Canada in large numbers to supply labour to collieries on Vancouver Island. The mine owners saw the Japanese as having the potential to serve as cheap replacements for the Chinese, who were becoming difficult to hire due to the head tax and various forms of racist legislation attempting to restrict the types of work they could perform. As will be seen in Chapter 1, these early experiments in using Japanese *dekasegi* as contract workers soon came to an end, as greedy contractors, harsh working conditions, and economic depression forced the Japanese out of the mines and into other occupations, but not before their presence had prompted efforts by white workers to restrict

the use of Japanese labour.

Together with other Japanese immigrants, the former contract workers formed the nucleus of the first Japanese communities in Canada, as will be described in Chapter 2. The Japanese community grew slowly at first, reaching about 5,000 in 1907, but a decision by the United States in March of that year to prevent Japanese residents in Hawaii from travelling to the continental U.S. sparked a sudden increase in Japanese emigration from Hawaii to Canada, culminating in the arrival of the *Kumeric* in Vancouver on July 25, 1907, with over a thousand Japanese emigrants aboard. The *Kumeric*'s arrival was widely reported in Vancouver newspapers, prompting a rapid increase in anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast and the formation of the Asiatic-Exclusion League.

While earlier anti-Japanese sentiment had been largely a reflection of discriminatory wage scales that led white workers to fear replacement by more poorly-paid Japanese labour, the sudden arrival of Japanese in such unprecedented numbers sparked concerns regarding Japanese competition in the wider economic and even geopolitical spheres. As will be seen in Chapter 3, these fears were not entirely unjustified, as the Japanese government exhibited a somewhat paternalistic attitude to the members of the Japanese diaspora, tending to regard them as "Imperial subjects" who might be expected to serve the interests of the Imperial government. On September 7, 1907, increased anti-Asian sentiment was to be given expression in the Vancouver Riot. While a relatively minor incident in terms of damage to persons and property, the riot was to have diplomatic repercussions that ironically would end a period of Japanese immigration dominated by migrant workers and begin the formation of a settled Japanese-Canadian Community.

This paper draws on diplomatic correspondence between Japanese consular offi-

cials in Canada and Hawaii and their superiors in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published by Toshiji Sasaki in his 1999 work, 日本人カナダ移民史 (*The History of Japanese Immigrants in Canada*). Many of these telegrams and reports were previously unpublished and provide an important insight into the thinking and attitudes of Japanese officials of the period, revealing the paternalistic attitude of the Japanese Imperial government toward its citizens abroad and its hopes that emigration might serve the interest of the Japanese government at home. The information reported in the correspondence is not always reliable: although they were for the most part reporting their understanding of the situation as accurately as possible, the diplomats on the ground did not necessarily have access to all the facts, were prone to their own biases of race and class, and in some cases were following their own agendas. Future researchers in this field will owe a debt to Sasaki for his work in uncovering these documents. I am also obliged to Mitsuru Shimpo, whose work 石をもて追わるごとく (*Ishi wo mote owaruru gotoku*) draws heavily on Japanese-language primary sources in Canada. In Chapter 2 I also provide material from the *Tairiku Nippō*, a Japanese-language newspaper published in Vancouver from 1907, although unfortunately the earliest copies now available are from 1908 (equally regrettably, there are also no copies now available of an earlier Japanese-language newspaper, the *Kanada Shinpō*). To complete the picture of Japanese immigration to Canada in the period under study, I also refer to the Sessional Papers of the BC Legislature, and to a variety of secondary sources, including work by Howard Sugimoto and Patricia E. Roy.

## Chapter 1: Contract Workers

The first Japanese to emigrate to British Columbia arrived in 1877, but over the next twenty years the number of Japanese who followed were small: Japanese immigration did not begin in earnest until the mid-1890s (Ward, 1982: 4). The earliest immigrants seem to have arrived in Canada as individuals or small groups: sailors from stranded ships and deserters from sailing ships (Sasaki, 1999: 9). By 1884 no more than ten Japanese had landed in Canada, a population largely drawn from the approximately two hundred Japanese seamen whom the Hudson's Bay Company paid about thirty dollars a month to hunt sea otters and fur seals on the North Pacific coast, and who landed in Canada after the trade in sea-otter pelts entered a rapid decline (Shimpo 1975: 11). By 1887, the year in which the Canadian-Pacific Steamship Line began direct trans-Pacific service between Yokohama and Vancouver (Shimpo 1975:11), the number had only grown to about twenty; with the introduction of the steamship service, however, the rate of immigration began to increase (Sasaki 1999: 72; Tairiku Nippō Sha 1924:315).

Among the first to arrive after the start of the trans-Pacific service were immigrants from Shiga and Wakayama Prefectures: by 1892 a total of 38 immigrants had arrived from Shiga and another 28 from Wakayama (Sasaki 1999: 9). Between 1891 and 1892, the Kobe Imin Gaisha (Kobe Emigration Company) brokered the employment of two groups of Japanese contract labourers to work in the Union Colliery in Cumberland, on Vancouver Island: one group of 100 labourers recruited from Hiroshima Prefecture and another of 73 recruited from Fukuoka Prefecture, temporarily making these prefectures the top sources of Japanese immigrants to Canada (Sasaki 1999: 9). The miners were followed by more immigrants from Wakayama (143 in 1893 and 83 in 1894) and Shiga (174 in 1898, 92 in



1899, and 113 in 1900), making Shiga the main source of Japanese immigrants to Canada (Sasaki 1999: 9).

In 1891, the Union Colliery in Cumberland was owned by James Dunsmuir (who later went on to serve as lieutenant governor of British Columbia from 1906 to 1909; Shimpo 1975: 107). Through a broker in Portland, Oregon—one Shinzaburo Ban, formerly a clerk in the Japanese consulate in Hawaii—Dunsmuir hired one group of 100 Japanese contract labourers in October 1891 and a second group of 73 in 1892 (Shimpo 1975: 107–108). His motivation for doing so was presumably to reduce labour costs (Ayukawa 2008: 14). Formerly, Dunsmuir and his father Robert had employed Chinese workers for this purpose: while unskilled “white” drivers and pushers of European extraction commanded wages of between \$2.00 and \$3.50 a day, Chinese labour was available for a daily wage of from \$1.00 to \$1.25 (Ayukawa 2008: 14–15), and this may explain the fact that after the Union Mine opened in late 1888, the majority of its work force was Chinese (Roy 1989: 79). By 1890, however, the BC legislature was being pressured to amend the British Columbia Coal Mines Regulations Act to prohibit Chinese miners (Roy 1989: 79), largely in response to protests from white labourers who used race and language as excuses to exclude cheaper Chinese labour from the mines (Roy 1989: 78–79). This may have motivated the Dunsmuir family to hire Japanese contract workers for the Union Mine (Ayukawa 2008: 14–15), although antagonism to the Chinese was quickly extended to the new group (Roy 1989: 80). Japanese labourers were paid at the same rate as Chinese but were exempt from regulations that attempted to prevent mines employing Chinese underground as well as from the head tax (then \$50 a person) that the Dunsmuir family would have had to prepay to hire workers from China (Ayukawa 2008: 14–15; Roy 1989: 82–83).

James Dunsmuir's representative, Frank Casper Davidge of Victoria, contacted Frank Upton of the Upton Steamship Company of Portland, Oregon to make the required agreements (Sasaki 1999: 12). Frank Upton, an Englishman living in Kobe, Hyōgo Prefecture, had been looking to enter the burgeoning trade in wheat between Kobe and Portland; trans-Pacific trade was growing so rapidly that the Canadian Pacific Steamship Line had built three steamships the same year to expand their Asian shipping (Sasaki 1999: 12–13). Upton's ships (the *Zambezi*, of 3,000 tons, another of 2,600 tons whose name is transliterated in Japanese sources as *Kashigā*, and a third, the *Mascot*, then under construction) were strongly-built steel vessels with newer engines, capable of completing Pacific crossings in less time than the ships of other companies (Sasaki 1999: 12–13). In 1890, Upton had contracted with the Union Pacific Railway to provide monthly shipments of wheat between Kobe and Portland; after a delay opening the new route, shipments started in May, 1891 (Sasaki 1999:12–13). Realizing he would be facing direct competition from the Canadian Pacific Steamship Line, Upton decided to bolster his business by transporting workers in partnership with the Kobe Imin Gaisha (the Kobe Emigration Company), a supplier of contract labour formed by two *shizoku* (ex-samurai): Denkuro Ikumoto, from Okayama (Sasaki 1999: 24), and Einosuke Yamaguchi, from Kagoshima (Sasaki 1999:12–13, 25). The new partnership may have chosen Canada as the destination for their workers owing to regulations in effect in the continental United States prohibiting contract labour (i.e., workers from other countries who had signed a contract to work in the United States before emigrating and whose passage was paid by their employer; Ichioka 1988: 53) and regulations prohibiting private emigration companies from transporting labourers to Hawaii (Sasaki 1999: 20).

Between September and November 1891, four parties—Frank Casper Davidge, James Dunsmuir, the Upton Steamship Company, and the Kobe Imin Gaisha—drafted a series of agreements that ultimately resulted in a three-year contract for miners from Japan (Sasaki 1999: 20–21). The first of these agreements (Agreement A), was between Davidge and the Union Colliery, which stated that miners were to be paid \$1.25 for each eight-hour a day and “above-ground workers” \$1.00 for each ten hour day, and that Dunsmuir was to pay Davidge \$4.00 per month per worker, with a fine of \$1,000 should Dunsmuir fail to comply (Sasaki 1999: 21). The wages for miners and above-ground workers were the same as those received by Chinese labourers (and about half that paid to white workers), but there were no restrictions on employing Japanese labour underground, while by employing Japanese labour Dunsmuir would also be spared the necessity of pre-paying the head tax that applied to Chinese immigrants (Ayukawa 2008: 15–16; Roy 1989: 82–83). Dunsmuir was to be responsible for medical expenses for work-related injuries due to his company’s negligence, while any other medical expenses would be borne by Davidge, who presumably would charge them to the workers (Sasaki 1999: 22).

The second agreement (Agreement B) was between the Upton Steamship Company and the Kobe Imin Gaisha, represented by Yamaguchi in his capacity as company president, a director (Ninomiya), and an interpreter (Nomura; Sasaki 1999: 20–21). Clause 2 of this agreement put the wage the workers were to receive at \$32.50 a month, or \$1.25 per day for 26 working days (ignoring that some workers would in fact receive as little as \$1.00 per diem; Sasaki 1999: 27), while Clause 3 stated that the workers were to pay \$33.00 for transport: a certain amount up front and the remainder in monthly installments over 10 months (Sasaki 1999: 20–21). Agreement B altered Agreement A to remove all

mention of who was to pay medical and burial expenses for non–work-related injuries and deaths (expenses due to work-related injuries and deaths were however still to be borne by the employer), and a clause covering return fares was modified to state that workers were to bear half the cost of the return fare unless their return was necessitated by work-related injuries or the employer’s negligence, in which case the full fare of \$30.00 was to be paid by the employer (Sasaki 1999: 22).

The chief priority of Agreement C, between prospective employees and the Kobe Imin Gaisha (in the persons of Yamaguchi, Ninomiya, and Nomura, with the Portland immigration broker Shinzaburo Ban appearing as a company vice-president), seems to have been to maximize the profits of the Kobe Imin Gaisha, in that the fees charged by the Kobe Imin Gaisha were increased from \$9.50 a month to \$0.37 a day, or \$9.62 for a month of 26 working days (Sasaki 1999: 23). It however modified the clause regarding return fares to state that no portion would be borne by the employees on completing their contract; in addition, employees would no longer be charged for the cost of wood and coal used as fuel (Sasaki 1999: 22–23).

For its part, the Japanese government seemed eager to promote overseas emigration. In January 1891, the Japanese consul in Vancouver, Fukashi Sugimura, had written an article titled “カナダ移民に関する杉村領事の意見書” (“The Sugimura Memorandum on Emigration to Canada”) which was republished first in the “大阪朝日新聞” (*Ōsaka Asahi Shinbun*) in August and again in September by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Sasaki 1999: 16). The Kobe Imin Gaisha sent the first group of 100 contract workers to the Union Colliery aboard the *Zambezi*, which left Yokohama in November 1891 (Sasaki 1999: 25), Shinzaburo Ban having received a license from Japanese Ministry of Foreign

Affairs permitting the workers to emigrate (Sasaki 1999: 20) despite the fact that the Kobe Imin Gaisha had yet to formally apply for permission to recruit potential emigrants (Sasaki 1999: 25). When the company eventually did apply, a month after the first group of workers had left Japan, their application (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 24) stated that the company was formed to “農工業に従事する為海外に移住せんとし又海外に在りて本社に引き受けを請う者に事業を紹介す手数料を収むる” (“collect fees for finding employment for those who wish to relocate overseas in order *to farm* or who already live overseas”; my emphasis), and indeed the workers recruited from Hiroshima to work in the Union Colliery were for the most part farm labours with no mining experience (Sasaki 1999: 23–35).

At the end of April, 1892, Ninomiya returned to Japan to recruit a second group of immigrants for the Kobe Imin Gaisha (Sasaki 1999: 26). On May 3rd, he submitted a report, “北米英領コロンビア州出稼ぎ人実況報告書” (“A Report on the Current Condition of Migrant Labour in the Province of British Columbia, North America”) to emigration authorities via the government of Hyōgo Prefecture; a complete fabrication, this report seems to have been designed to please the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and gain the confidence of the Japanese government (Sasaki 1999: 26). Even at the higher prices charged at the mines, the report claimed, miners could expect to spend about \$3.00 on non-food necessities and \$7.00 on food; the report quoted prices of \$3.00 per month for vegetables, \$5.00 to \$6.00 for 100 pounds of rice—over two months’ supply—and \$0.15 per pound for beef and pork (Ayukawa 2008: 16; Sasaki 1999: 28). On this basis, the report claimed that workers could expect surpluses of \$12.00 to \$13.00 per month, of which \$5.00 could be deposited with the company and the remainder sent back to their families (Sasaki 1999: 28). In fact, once the company had claimed its fee of \$0.37 on the dollar, the workers were

left with a net income of as little as \$0.63 a day or \$16.38 a month (Sasaki 1999: 28). After deducting \$0.50 a month for rent and \$10.00 a month for other expenses, workers were left with only \$5.88, of which \$3.00 to \$5.00 might be deposited with company and \$2.88 to \$0.88 sent home to the workers' families (Sasaki 1999: 27–28).

In mid-May, changes were made to the fees charged by the Kobe Imin Gaisha under Agreement C: instead of \$0.37 a day, the company was to receive an amount equal to 37% of workers' daily earnings if the workers were paid by the ton rather than the day (Sasaki 1999: 29). In addition, \$0.50 a month were to be collected from each employee to cover medical and burial expenses, reducing the burden on the Kobe Imin Gaisha and increasing the burden on the workers (Sasaki 1999: 29). The harsh conditions, combined with the workers' lack of mining experience, prompted more than 50 of the first 100 contract workers to flee the mines before they were closed temporarily in June of 1892. Teijiro Kitō, the deputy Japanese consul in Vancouver, reported:

百人中集めて経歴のある者は僅かに五、六名に過ぎず他は寸毫の心得もなき輩たりき。然るに不幸此の一行は英語とては一丁字をも解せざれば之を白人の下に属せしめて仕事の方法を授けんと欲するも之を為すに由なく、止むを得ず去る二月以来漸次仕事を減少し、既に四月中旬に至りては百人中僅か三十人宛て交番を以て仕事に従事する事となり、一時殆ど糊口を凌ぐ由なき境遇に陥りたりなり。…当六月下旬更に他の経験ある壹百名の来着する迄徒食を防ぐ方法を設け置き、其の来着を俟って共に坑内の仕事に従事せしむるの議を整えたり。 [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 31–32]

No more than five or six out of the hundred [immigrants] have experience. The remainder, it seems, have almost none whatever, and what's more, none understand even a word of English, so that there is no way for them to learn their work under the guidance of white workers even if they wanted to, and

consequently there has been since last February no choice but to reduce the hours worked so that now, in the middle of April, thirty of the hundred are sharing work and are barely able to get by.... Steps must be taken to prevent these workers falling idle before the next group of one hundred experienced miners arrive at the end of June and to prepare them to work underground alongside their more experienced brethren.

By April only 30 of the workers were receiving at least \$26.00 a month (Sasaki 1999: 32); those earning less than the \$20.62 per month needed to clear the \$10.50 required for living expenses after the recruitment and medical fees of \$10.12 had been paid to the Kobe Imin Gaisha naturally had little incentive to remain on the job. In May Kitō visited the Union Colliery to request Dunsmuir to find work for the idle Japanese labourers; Dunsmuir promised work at other jobs at the mine or in lumber camps until they could be trained for underground work by experienced miners from Japan (Sasaki 1999: 32–33).

On June 13th, 1892, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepted an application from the Kobe Imin Gaisha for the transport of experienced miners to Canada. On June 21st, however, the Union Colliery closed due to a slump in the San Francisco coal market caused by a supply glut (Ayukawa 2008: 17). On learning of the closure on June 24th, Davidge sent a telegram to the Kobe Imin Gaisha (now the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha, or Japan Meiji Emigration Company; Sasaki 1999: 11) warning them not to send the next group of workers, but this and subsequent messages on June 27th and 29th and July 11th) went unheeded: by early July the company had already recruited 73 experienced, elite miners from the Japanese mining region of Fukuoka and submitted passport applications documenting their qualifications, and consequently was in no mood to cancel the enterprise despite having recruited less than their initial goal of 100 miners (Sasaki 1999: 33). By the time the consul's report reached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the miners had already

sailed aboard the *Mascot* (Sasaki 1999: 33). They arrived at the Union Colliery on August 9th accompanied only by two interpreters (Nomura and Morita) sent by the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha, the director, Ninomiya, having disappeared before the *Mascot* left Yokohama (Sasaki 1999: 33–34). As Ninomiya had left without distributing the blankets and clothes promised by the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha, the workers arrived with no more than the clothes on their backs, only to find that while they had expected to start work within the week, the mine had just closed (Sasaki 1999: 34).

The situation in Cumberland, already serious, was made worse by the arrival of the Fukuoka miners. Having been deceived by both the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha and the Union Colliery, the miners' representatives turned to Kitō for help finding work while some of the immigrants set out to find employment for themselves (Sasaki 1999: 34). By the end of August, only 33 of the first group of 100 workers from Hiroshima remained; after consulting with company vice-president Shinzaburo Ban and the interpreter Nomura, the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha and Kitō agreed that the company would provide these workers half of their food expenses (\$0.10 a day per person) until the mine reopened (Sasaki 1999: 35), although this already small amount was made even smaller by the percentage collected by Davidge under the terms of his contract (Sasaki 1999: 37–42). The workers were otherwise offered little protection by the Japanese government, in part because Kitō's reports of August 30th and October 12 happened to arrive at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo shortly after both the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Takeaki Enomoto) and the chief of the International Trade Bureau and Emigration Department (Taro Ando) had resigned (Sasaki 1999: 35–37; the Emigration Department itself would be abolished in October the following year). On October 1st, 1892, a representative submitted a petition on behalf of



58 of the Fukuoka miners and seven of the Hiroshima labourers requesting that the workers be returned to Japan, as there had been no work for five months and the loan promised by Ninomiya to defray the cost of bringing their families to Canada had not materialized (Sasaki 1999: 37). Despite the backing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was paying amounts in the order of \$600 a month for the workers' support and feared national embarrassment should poverty force them to flee the mine (a few Japanese miners had already been arrested for vagrancy and at least one had starved to death; Roy 1989: 83), the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha refused the miners' request due to the prohibitive costs, and the Japanese consulate in Vancouver found itself becoming increasingly involved in supplying money and aid (Sasaki 1999: 37–42).

As autumn progressed, the price of coal rose again in response to the decline in production (the closure had reduced coal production by 200,000 tons; Sasaki 1999: 53) and an increase in demand, and the mine gradually reopened (Sasaki 1999: 41–42). As the result of negotiations between Upton and Dunsmuir, an agreement was submitted to the consulate in Vancouver under which the Japanese workers would start back to work by November 7th at \$0.80 a day, with the amount claimed by the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha reduced by 30% to \$0.25 on the dollar (Sasaki 1999: 42–44). The agreement also gave the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha authority to terminate the Hiroshima worker's contracts as the majority of them had gone on to jobs in the logging industry; there was however little chance of these workers being returned to Japan (Sasaki 1999: 44). Of the 173 workers originally contracted by the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha, only 71 were still employed by the mine: 10 of the labourers from Hiroshima and 61 of the experienced miners from Fukuoka (Sasaki 1999: 44). Although the agreement went into effect on November 7th, the final decision to reopen the

mine was not made until November 12th and the mine did not reopen until November 21st, after having been closed for five months (Sasaki 1999: 46). By the 21st of November, all the men who had remained in the area had started work, although they frequently struck or protested to the Japanese consulate over unwarranted deductions for equipment, poor working conditions, and the lack of Japanese-style bath-houses (Sasaki 1999: 47–53).

In mid-May, a system had been introduced under which skilled miners were paid by the ton rather than the day (see page 10). After the mines reopened, competition escalated between white and Asian miners as skilled underground workers were now paid on the same scale, regardless of race (Roy 1989: 81, 82–83; Sasaki 1999: 53–54). In an attempt to protect their interests, the white miners argued that owing to their poor command of English, Japanese and Chinese workers were a threat to the safety of miners working underground (Roy 1989: 78; although Roy notes that due to the presence of French-, German-, and Flemish-speaking miners from Western Europe, who faced linguistic challenges similar to those of the Asian miners, the white miners eventually stopped attempting to justify their demands in terms of safety and simply call for the complete “abolishment” of Asian workers from the mines). A number of petitions were submitted to the BC legislature demanding the removal of Chinese and Japanese from underground work (BC Sessional Papers 1892: 465–475), including one in which the “miners and residents of the mining districts of Nanaimo, Wellington, and Comox” (the last named a district adjacent to Cumberland, where the Union Mine was located) petitioned the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia to “exclude Chinese and Japanese from working underground” on the grounds that their presence was “a source of grave danger to the lives of those who are employed underground in mining coal” (BC Sessional Papers 1892: 465). In total, the number of

signatures on these petitions may have actually exceeded the number of workers employed in the affected mines (Roy 1989: 80).

The arrival of large numbers of Japanese workers at the Union Colliery prompted anti-Japanese sentiment in the BC legislature as well (Roy 1989: 80), although tension between employers who appreciated the cheapness and lack of restrictions on Japanese labour on one hand, and workers who resented the competition on the other, prevented any effective legislative action for several years (Roy 1989: 80–81, 82). In January 1891, Sugimura informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo that the BC legislature had defeated a motion that would have subjected Japanese immigrants to the head tax then imposed on the Chinese (Sasaki 1999: 17). In 1892, Thomas Keith, M.L.A. for Nanaimo, brought a motion before the BC legislature prohibiting the employment of Japanese and Chinese workers underground, but the motion was defeated, as was a similar bill put before the legislature the following year (Roy 1989: 80–81). Finally in 1894 legislation was passed allowing miners to be excluded from underground work if they were a threat to safety, and in 1895 the Coal Mines Regulations Act was amended to allow any three workers to request an inspection of their mine should they judge their safety threatened by another miner's "want of understanding, knowledge or skill," on which grounds the workers no doubt hoped to be able to exclude Japanese and Chinese miners from underground work in the province (Roy 1989: 81).

By February 1893, the Union Colliery employed 2,309 white miners (80.7% of the total), 483 Chinese (17%) and 70 Japanese (2.5%; Sasaki 1999: 53–54). Of the Japanese workers, five or six were waiting to be invalided home to Japan (Sasaki 1999: 53). The majority of the miners from Fukuoka, meanwhile, had become disenchanted with working

conditions at the Union Mine and began to desert their employer when spring came, as had the miners from Hiroshima the year before, and by April 21st there were no more than ten remaining, all of whom were due to be invalided home (Sasaki 1999: 54). Kitō requested that the ten invalid workers be returned to Japan at the expense of the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha and that the company assume sole responsibility for all claims for compensation; the company was however exempt from any responsibility toward workers who had already left their employment without notice or whose contracts had already been legally terminated (Sasaki 1999:54).

In a report made in October 1893 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, Shimizu, a representative of the Japanese consulate in Vancouver, deplored the arrival of Japanese immigrants at a time when the BC economy was depressed and unemployment rampant, noting that the new arrivals were receiving the derogatory appellation “Green Japs” due to their lack of employable skills (Sasaki 1999: 66). The report lists the number of Japanese immigrants then out of work or living in poverty in British Columbia as between 150 and 180 (40–50 in Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, 50–60 in Victoria, and 60–70 in the Skeena River area, with an additional 300 in Washington State), and states:

然るに毎度報告したる如く加奈陀線及び北太平洋線の汽船にて毎便渡航する労働者の数は少なくとも五、六十名多きは百名以上に達せり、当地にて新渡航の者を「Green Japs」と称し諸事不熟練の為め平素にては需要少なく給金薄きを常とする事なるに、況んや目下の現状にては新渡航者の就業益困難なるべし、出稼ぎの為め新たに渡航せんとするものの熟考を要するの秋なり [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 67]

As I seem to repeat in every report, at least fifty to sixty and sometimes over a hundred workers arrive on every sailing of the Canadian and North Pacific steamship lines; these new arrivals, whom the locals call “Green Japs,” are

too inexperienced to be in much demand generally and are always poorly paid. It goes without saying that under current conditions new arrivals will have trouble getting well-paying jobs. Migrant workers would do well to think twice before coming here in the fall.

The consul referred to this situation as Japan's national shame. Consular reports like these, together with company's manifest greed, misrepresentation, corruption, and repeated breach of promise, sealed the fate of the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha's experiment in supplying contract labour (Sasaki 1999: 56–67). Far from proving profitable, the transport of contract workers for the Union Colliery had involved the company in a loss (Sasaki 1999: 52). After their contact in Portland, Shinzaburo Ban, had left the company, the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha decided to focus on transporting independent voyagers travelling to the United States and Canada aboard the vessels of the Upton Steamship Company (Sasaki 1999: 26, 56, 63). Before suspending operations in September 1894 (Sasaki 1999: 11), the company brought a total of 402 Japanese workers to Canada (see Table 1.1). The company's reputation was however damaged by consular and newspaper reports of the San Francisco incident, in which passengers were refused permission to disembark in San Francisco (Ichioka 1988: 53), and its business suffered from a general decline in the North Pacific shipping industry (Sasaki 1999: 67). As the result of a scandal involving the transport of immigrants to Hawaii, the company was denied permission to renew its license to operate in July 1894 and closed its doors in September of the same year (Sasaki 1999: 67).

Of the contract workers brought from Hiroshima and Fukuoka by the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha, many broke their contract and found their way into fishing communities in mainland British Columbia or "Japan Town" along Powell Street in Vancouver (Shimpo 1975: 107–108). In company with independent immigrants from Japan, they found work

in the fishery or as farm workers, opened stores, or worked in the Cariboo digging ditches and building roads (Roy 1989: 83). Others returned to Japan (Shimpo 1975: 107–108; Roy 1989: 83).

**Table 1.1.** *Independent Japanese emigrants to Canada under the auspices of the Nihon Meiji Imin Gaisha in 1894 (compiled from Sasaki 1999: 57–67)*

<b>Sailing date</b>	<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Number of immigrants</b>
January 7	<i>Francia</i>	2
February 3	<i>Tacoma</i>	36
March 25	<i>Mogul</i>	34
April 12	<i>Victoria</i>	25
May 13	<i>Tacoma</i>	75
June 4	<i>Mogul</i>	41
June 24	<i>Victoria</i>	61
July 29	<i>Tacoma</i>	88
September	Not recorded	40
<b>Total:</b>		402

## **Chapter 2: From Gastown to the Vancouver Riot**

### **2.1 The Formation of Vancouver’s Japanese Community, 1895–1907**

The nucleus of Vancouver’s “Little Tokyo” had already formed in the late 1880s (Shimpo 1975: 12). Prior to the construction of the Hastings Mill in 1885, Vancouver (then known as Gastown) was a small village of Native Canadians and a scant few dozen non-natives, whose settlement consisted of little more than a saloon, a temporary police station, an

Anglican church, and a few houses (Sasaki 1992: 72, 192). This tiny population was reliant on a weekly supply of food and other necessities brought from Victoria by a steamship that stopped at the settlement on its way to the sawmills at Port Moody (Sasaki 1992: 192). The year 1885, however, saw the addition of a new structure close to the foot of Dunlevy Avenue: the Hastings sawmill, later described as being “その規模の大なる点に於いては晩市は勿論ビー・シー州内でも此の右に出づるものは恐らくあるまい” (“in terms of size likely without equal not only in Vancouver but in all the province of BC”; *Tairiku Nippō* 1908). One of the first large steam-powered mills on the West Coast (*Tairiku Nippō* 1908), the Hastings Mill was one of the few structures to survive the Great Fire of June of 1886, a few months after Gastown had changed its name to Vancouver (Sasaki 1999: 72).

The new mill soon attracted Japanese workers, and by 1888 anywhere from sixty to over a hundred Japanese were employed at between \$1.00 and \$1.50 a day, plus room and board (a retrospective of 1908 in the *Tairiku Nippō*, a Vancouver Japanese-language newspaper, quotes the number of Japanese workers as being from sixty to seventy, while the figure of “over a hundred” comes from page 315 of “カナダ同胞発展史”—*Kanada Dōhō Hatten-shi*, or *A History of the Japanese in Canada*, published by the Tairiku Nippō Sha in 1924). The mill hands worked under the supervision of Japanese foremen and lodged together in “スカフ” (*sukafu*; apparently from the English “scaffold”; *Shimpo* 1975: 12): shacks built on rafts moored along the shores of Gastown. The first of these floating shacks was run by a mill hand called 滝造 (Takizō, also known by the nickname “竹爺さん”—“Takejī-san,” or “Old Mr. Takē”), a sailor who had landed in Victoria in 1883 and subsequently found work in Gastown, where he may have been the first Japanese to be employed at the Hastings Mill (*Shimpo* 1975: 12–13). After leaving the sawmill he

opened more *sukafu* and ran a side business supplying provisions to newcomers (Shimpo 1975: 13). By 1886 six *sukafu* were operating in Vancouver (Shimpo *et al* 1992: 33). They were typically around 12 by 60 *shaku* (roughly 12 by 60 feet, or approximately 66 square metres) and housed from twenty to thirty people, mostly rough-and-ready sailors with little English or education and consequently little chance for high-paying jobs, who lived far from luxuriously on a diet in which fish pickled in vinegar featured prominently (Shimpo *et al* 1992: 33). Relationships between the *sukafu* operators and their tenants were strong (Shimpo 1975: 13).

In an article published on September 19, 1908, the “大陸日報” (*Tairiku Nippō*) outlines the history of the Hastings Mill, starting with its construction in 1885 (or “Meiji 18 in our reckoning”). The early history of Japanese employment at the mill is described in the following terms:

此のミールに日本人が初めて働き出したのは二十一年頃よりの事で、  
其の頃の給金は寝食会社持ちで日給一弗から一弗二五仙位だった…  
二十三年の末に日本人は会社に向かって給金の値上げを請求したの  
だ所が会社では頑として是に応ぜなかつたので同胞労働者は仕事を  
止めて悉く思い思いに各地に散乱した事がある、二十三年頃には日本  
人が六七十名あってボスは今の旅館主人内田千代七氏がやってい  
た

Japanese first started working at this mill beginning in about Meiji 21 [1888], when they received about a dollar to a dollar fifty a day plus bed and board.... At the end of Meiji 23 [1890], the Japanese labourers demanded a pay rise from the company, but, faced with the owner's stubborn refusal to respond, our countrymen downed tools and all scattered to the four winds as they pleased. Around Meiji 23 there were 60 or 70 Japanese workers who had as their foreman Mr. Chiyoshichi Uchida, now an innkeeper.

By 1887 Vancouver was recovering from the Great Fire of the previous year and



growing rapidly: in May it had become the new Pacific terminus of the CPR, displacing Port Moody, its harbour was under construction, and in June it welcomed the arrival of the *Abyssinia*, operated by Canadian Pacific Steamship Line, on its maiden voyage from Yokohama (Sasaki 1999: 72). The demand for lumber rose not only with the city's population, which grew from about 500 in 1885 to over 4,000 in 1887, but also with the settling of the Prairies, as the newly-built railroads carried lumber over the Rocky Mountains to settlements on the plains (Shimpo *et al* 1992: 31). Sawmills expanded their workforces and modernized their facilities, salmon canneries sprang up around the mouth of the Fraser River to serve the market in the United Kingdom, and there was an increasing appetite for workers, new businesses, and new public institutions (Shimpo 1975: 10–11; Shimpo *et al* 1992: 31–32). In May of 1889 the Japanese government opened its first consulate in Vancouver, and in January of 1891 the consul, Fukashi Sugimura, was able to report (cited in Sasaki 1999: 72–73): “現今英閣州(ブリティシュ・コロンビア)に居住する日本人は水陸を併せて二百人もあるべし、其の内三、四十名は汽船乗船、二十余名はラッコ猟乗船、三、四十名は鋸木場に働き、一、二名は農業、三、四名は商業、数名は家内奉公、十余名は鉱業、数名は大工及船大工等にして、其の外夏期に漁業して冬季に無業なるのも数十なり” (“There should now be as many as 200 Japanese living in British Columbia, counting those on both land and sea: this figure includes not only 30 to 40 working on steamships, 20-odd on ships hunting sea otters, 30 to 40 in the lumber trade, one or two farmers, three or four merchants, a few domestic servants, over ten miners, and a few carpenters and shipwrights, but also a few dozen who fish in the summer and are unemployed in the winter”). By 1891 Vancouver was home to three Japanese inns (*ryokan*) in the neighbourhood that was soon to become known as Japan Town (Shimpo 1975: 13).

Starting in 1896, an unprecedented gold rush in the Klondike region of the Yukon spurred further growth in Vancouver, which served as a base for miners preparing to head for the gold fields (Shimpo 1975: 10). At the peak of the rush there were ten steamships travelling the routes between Vancouver and Alaska, where miners disembarked to travel overland or up river to the Klondike (Shimpo 1975: 10–11). By 1901 Vancouver’s population had reached 75,000, and larger numbers of Japanese were arriving in hopes of making their fortunes in mining, fishing, lumbering, commerce, and farming (Sasaki 1999: 147). By 1907 businesses catering to British Columbia’s Japanese population had begun to congregate along Powell Street in Vancouver, forming a district that was becoming known as “Little Tokyo” or “Japan Town” (Sasaki 1999: 147). It was said that as long as they remained in this district, residents had no need of English, while outside the community those who had some command of English found work as foremen (“bosses”) for those who had none (Sasaki 1999: 73–74). A Japanese Christian Church had opened its doors in Vancouver in 1896, followed by the “加奈太新報” (*Kanada Shimpō*), a Japanese-language newspaper (established in 1903 as a successor to the “晚香坡週報” or *Bankūbā Shūhō*, itself an outgrowth of a weekly church bulletin, the “教会週報” or *Kyōkai Shūhō*), a Buddhist temple (1905), the Common School for Japanese Nationals (the 共立国民学校 or *Kyōritsu Kokumin Gakkō*, established 1906), and in 1907 by another Japanese-language newspaper, the *Tairiku Nippō* (Sasaki 1999: 73, 129–130). In 1908 Vancouver’s Nikkei (Japanese or Japanese-Canadian) population numbered 1,700, including 700 lumbermen, 300 domestic servants, 22 students, 211 women, and 234 children, and by 1909, 18 years after Sugimura had reported the number of Japanese in British Columbia as being about 200, the total for the province had increased to around 8,000. Of these 2,770 (34.7%) were

employed in the fisheries, 1,600 (20.0%) in the lumber trade (800 in logging and 800 in sawmills), and 1,400 (17.5%, including some 800 contract workers brought in 1907 by the Nikka Yotatsu Gaisha, or Canadian Nippon Supply Company) in building railways (Sasaki 1999: 73).

A snapshot of working conditions in the early 1900s, and of the racism that pervaded employment at the time, not only in pay-scales based on country of origin but in how the Japanese justified to themselves the lower wages paid to the Chinese and “Hindus,” can be found in an article on the Hastings Mill published in the *Tairiku Nippō* on September 21, 1908, as part of a series on “在加同胞事情” (“The State of Our Comrades in Canada”):

…世の不景気につれ各種の労働賃金が低落したと同時に同会社も二月から給金を下げた、即ち二弗のが二十五仙減じて一弗七十五仙となり、一弗九十仙のが一弗七十仙となり又一弗四十五仙のが一弗三十五仙となったのである、目下の処日本人はミール内働きの百二十六人で、ヤードの方が七十五六名ある、普通の人々の給料は最低額一弗十五仙から一弗七十五仙までで仕事の区別によりて給金も亦それぞれの等差がある、またこのミールには十四五歳の日本人子供が働いている、其の給金は矢張り各自の腕に因って八十仙以上一弗十仙まで貰っているのだ

日本人以外に支那人は三十名ばかり働いて居るが、又ヒンジーも二十名ばかり居るが、是等は皆なヤードの仕事で給料は一弗三十仙から一弗五十仙までである、会社の待遇は謂わば日本人よりも劣って居る訳であるが、腕がなければ又た仕方があるまい、白人は総て百五十名ばかり居るが月給は四十五弗以上六十五弗位が普通で、ソーヤーの如きは日給六弗五十仙から貰って居るものもある、白人のホームマンはヤードの一人と内側に三人あるそうだが、此の製材会社は前号にも書いた通りビー・シー州で一番大きなソーミルであるから労働者の数も従って多い、現今は日本人白人其の他の労働者を合算する時は四百余名に達するのである、併しこ[ママ]は単にミール内の就働者数で、此の外に各地

でログを切り出して居る者までも加算する時は大した人数になる訳だ

...[W]ith the economic slump and wages of all kinds on the decline, this company too has lowered its wages starting in February [1908]: amounts of \$2.00 [a day] have been reduced by \$0.25 to \$1.75, amounts of \$1.90 to \$1.70, and amounts of \$1.45 to \$1.35. There are at present 126 Japanese working in the mill with another 75 or 76 in the yard. Wages for ordinary workers are from \$1.15 at the lowest to \$1.75, with amounts varying by job description. In addition, the mill employs Japanese children of 14 to 15 years of age who receive from over \$0.80 to \$1.10 depending of course on their skill.

In addition to the Japanese, there are some 30 Chinese working there as well as some 20 Hindus [South Asians], but these are all employed in the yard at salaries of \$1.30 to \$1.50. In a manner of speaking, they receive less from the company than do the Japanese, but this cannot be helped if they lack expertise. In all there are some 150 whites who normally receive from over \$45.00 to \$60.00 a month [\$1.75 to \$2.30 a day], while some workers, such as sawyers, receive from \$6.50 a day. There is said to be one white foreman in the yard and three in the mill. As noted in the previous article in this series, this is the largest sawmill in the province of BC, and the workforce is correspondingly large. At the moment the total number of workers, including Japanese, whites, and others, is just over 400, but this is simply the number employed in the mill; if we add the workers cutting logs all over the province, the number of people employed is large indeed.

Despite the falling salaries, the discriminatory pay-scale, and a past history of labour unrest, the Hasting Mill was sometimes referred to as the “お助け会社” (*otasuke gaisha*, or “Salvation Company”) for its role in providing employment for many Japanese immigrants at a time when little other work was available (Shimpo *et al* 1972: 75–76). On September 22, 1908, the *Tairiku Nippō* concluded its series on the mill in the following terms:

兎に角こんな大きなソーミルが当市内にあるので二百名近くの同胞は少なからぬ金を日々儲けている居るのだ、要するに此のソーミルは日本人にとりて最大なる恩恵のある会社と云わねばならぬ、終わりに臨みて吾人は同所に働ける同胞が極真面目に立ち働いて益々会社の信用を厚うする事に努めて貰いたいこと希望するのである

In any case, it is due to the presence of such a large sawmill in this city that 200 of our countrymen are able to earn money every day. In short, one cannot say otherwise than that this sawmill is a company of the greatest benefit to the Japanese. We hope, in conclusion, that those of our countrymen who are employed there take their work very seriously indeed and do their best to further contribute to increasing its credibility.

## **2.2 The Kumeric Incident**

With the growth of steamship service between Canada and Japan after 1893, the number of independent voyagers travelling to Canada increased, but due to a recession affecting the West Coast economy from 1893 to 1897, this growth in traffic was not reflected in a growth in the number of actual immigrants to Canada (Sasaki 1999: 105). Japanese immigration however grew rapidly in the years after 1897: the number of passengers arriving directly from Japan was 1,039 in 1898, 1,726 in 1899, and 2,710 in 1900 (see Table 2.2.1), although a report to the BC legislature in 1898 suggests that the majority of Japanese immigrants were in transit to another country, with relatively few remaining in British Columbia (BC Sessional Papers 1899: 1384). The majority of Japanese immigrants before 1907 did not however arrive directly from Japan on passports issued for the purpose by the Japanese government, but came instead via Hawaii. Table 2.2.2 compares two sets of data, one from the Canadian census stating the number of Japanese immigrants to Canada and the other from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) giving the number of Japanese travelling to Canada directly from Japan. While the Canadian figures show a total of 13,027 Japanese immigrants entering the country, the figures from JICA show only 4,645 travelling directly to Canada from Japan, meaning that another 8,382 Japanese immigrants took passage to Canada from a third country. Similarly, of the 7,601 Japanese

who entered Canada in 1907 alone, only 2,753 (including about 870 contract workers of a proposed total of 1,500 railroad workers and miners to be supplied to the Nikka Yotatsu Gaisha by the Tokyo Imin Gaisha and another 100 contract miners to be brought by Kaigai Tokō Gaisha) came directly from Japan; the remaining 4,848, or 63.8% of the total, came via Hawaii (Sasaki 1999: 106–107).

**Table 2.2.1.** *Passengers to Canada from Japan, 1891–1900*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of passengers</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1891	181	Includes the 100 contract workers brought to the Union Colliery in November by the Kobe Imin Gaisha
1892	112	Includes the 73 contract workers brought to the Union Colliery in August by the Nihon Meiji Imiin Gaisha
1893	1,135	Includes 402 independent voyagers brought by the Nihon Meiji Imiin Gaisha
1894	779	
1895	454	
1896	549	
1897	206	
1898	1,039	
1899	1,726	
1900	2,710	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>8,891</b>	

*Source: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Overseas Emigration Statistics (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 105).*

**Table 2.2.2.** *Number of Japanese immigrants to Canada, 1900–1909*

<b>Year<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Number of Japanese of immigrants to Canada</b>	<b>Number of passports issued to Japanese travelling to Canada</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1900	6	—	Issue of passports to Japanese travel- ling to Canada and the U.S.A. was tem- porarily suspended beginning August 2, 1900
1901	—	—	
1902	—	35	
1903	—	178	
1904	354	159	
1905	1,922	196	
1906	2,042	442	
1907	7,601	2,753	
1908	858	601	
1909	244	281	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13,027</b>	<b>4,645</b>	

1. Figures for number of Japanese immigrants to Canada between 1900 and 1907 are for twelve-month periods beginning in April and ending in March the following year.

*Sources: Figures for number of immigrants to Canada from Adachi (1976: 412); figures for number of passports issued from Sasaki (1999: 106–107)*

In six sailings from April 22 to September 18, 1907, a total of 2,534 Japanese entered Canada from Hawaii (see Table 2.2.3). This sudden spike in numbers was due to a ban on Japanese entering the continental United States from Hawaii, Canada, or Mexico, a prohibition prompted by anti-Japanese sentiment on the west coast of the continental U.S. (Shimpo 1975: 40), combined with a large-scale exodus of Japanese from Hawaii due to conditions in the local labour market (Sugimoto 1978: 237). Prior to this ban, Japanese

who had failed to find work on landing in Hawaii (which had been annexed by the United States in 1898) had been able to continue on to the mainland and in 1906, for example, 12,227 (67.2%) of the 18,187 Japanese immigrants to Hawaii had done exactly that (of the remainder, another 3,252 or 17.0% returned to Japan, leaving only 2,708 or 14.9% in Hawaii; Sasaki 1999: 151). When the new immigration act was passed by the Senate and signed into law by President Theodore Roosevelt on March 18, 1907, Japanese and Koreans whose passports were stamped with entry visas for Hawaii, Canada, or Mexico were denied entry to the continental United States (Sasaki 1999: 151), drastically reducing the number of Japanese immigrants to the U.S. mainland (Sugimoto 1978: 9) and increasing the number arriving in Canada (Sugimoto 1978: 237). Those who emigrated to Canada in the years 1906–1907 included not only those who had already lived in Hawaii for some time, but those who had deliberately taken passage to Hawaii with the intent of moving on to Canada or the United States (Sugimoto 1978: 14).

**Table 2.2.3.** *Japanese arriving in Canada from Hawaii, 1907*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Number of immigrants</b>
April 22	Not recorded	294
May 13	<i>Montana</i>	223
July 6	<i>Admiral Jaurequiberry</i>	241
July 24	<i>Kumeric</i>	1,177
August 17	<i>Indiana</i>	306
September 18	<i>Indiana</i>	293
<b>Total:</b>		2,534

*Source: Shimpo (1975: 40)*



In all, 8,125 Japanese arrived in Canada in 1907, including returnees, students, and business travellers; of these, 8,048 landed, the remaining 77 being ejected and returned to their port of origin (Sugimoto 1978: 236). The figure of 8,048 is slightly deceptive, however, as 3,619 (45.0%) of these had passports for the United States, where they proceeded shortly after landing (Royal Commission on Oriental Labourers: 22–24, 41–48, 54–63). The total remaining in Canada was 4,429, of whom only 1,641 (37.1%) came directly from Japan, while 2,779 (62.7%) came via Hawaii, and 9 (0.2%) via Mexico (Sugimoto 1978: 236). More than half (about 870) of those arriving directly from Japan were contract workers brought by the Nikka Yotatsu Gaisha and Tokyo Imin Gaisha (Sasaki 1999: 170; Sugimoto 1978: 236). Of the remainder, about 300 were returnees, and another 151 emigrants who had intended to travel on to the United States but who were refused entry, becoming instead involuntary immigrants to Canada (Sugimoto 1978: 236–237). The number of conventional visitors to the country was only about 290, of whom approximately 100 were business travellers, government officials, students, and tourists who normally resided only temporarily in Canada, leaving only 190 as immigrants in the conventional sense (Sugimoto 1978: 236–237).

In light of subsequent agreements on the part of the Japanese government to restrict emigration to Canada, it is interesting to note that almost 80% of arrivals had passports for the U.S. or came via Hawaii (Sugimoto 1978: 237), and consequently fell outside the scope of such agreements. The Japanese government initially made no effort to prevent those leaving Hawaii from taking passage to Canada (Sasaki 1999: 189). As part of its strategy for modernization (“富国強兵”: *fukoku-kyōhei* or “enrich the nation and strengthen the military”), the government had in fact adopted a national policy of promoting overseas

emigration as a means of bringing wealth to the nation and enhancing its influence overseas (Sasaki 1999: 189). When then Minister of Foreign Affairs Takeaki Enomoto first licensed emigration companies in 1891 (see page 9), his deputy minister was one Tadasu Hayashi, while the Japanese consul in San Francisco was Sutemi Chinda (Sasaki 1999: 187). By the time Japan embarked on a policy of actively promoting overseas emigration after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5, Hayashi was Foreign Minister and Chinda was his deputy in the first Saionji cabinet, and both, together with International Trade Bureau chief Kikujirō Ishii, were dedicated to the promotion of Japanese emigration to North America via Hawaii (Sasaki 1999: 187).

On March 5, 1907, shortly before the new American restrictions on Japanese and Korean immigration via Hawaii, Mexico, and Canada were due to go into effect, Kan Saitō, the Japanese Consul General in Honolulu, reported to Chinda that about 1,000 Japanese immigrants were standing by in plantations around Honolulu waiting for a chance to leave for the U.S. mainland, and that nearly all the emigrants expected to arrive in Hawaii in future could similarly be expected to move on to the mainland in short order (Sasaki 1999: 151). Saitō added that regardless of whether they planned to find work in Hawaii, return to Japan, or move on to other destinations such as Vancouver, the emigrants in Hawaii would be “厄介者” (*yakkai-mono*, a nuisance), and that some temporary expedient should be found to persuade them to seek some other form of employment, as all but four or five of the Japanese boarding houses in Honolulu were currently devoting almost all their efforts to assisting emigrants who wanted to move on to the continental United States (Sasaki 1999: 151). In a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999:151–152) expressed his fears that Japanese emigration from Hawaii to British Columbia might give

rise to anti-Japanese sentiment in Vancouver:

桑港に向かい転航する道途絶したるが為に此の節右之日本人宿屋等は英領晚古坂に対し新たに航路を開始せんと運動致居候得共、同港に向かいては船便比較的僅少にして且つ何れも豪州諸港より寄港する船舶なるが為多数の転航者を引き受るの余地無之既に一昨日は凡そ六百名許の転航希望者に対し会社は僅かに二十余名の切符を売り与致候位にて目下之所先ず好都合なれども、然し下等客船の有無は船会社の経済に顧みて少なからざる利害を分かつか為今後汽船会社に於いて投機的の考を挟み頓に晚古坂転航を奨励するが如きことあらば是亦た早晚桑港同様の紛擾を招致すべきこと有之候。

The said boarding houses are working on opening new routes to British Vancouver as the routes to San Francisco are cut off, but there is very little in the way of steamer service to this port and such ships that do call at Honolulu are from Australia with little room to accommodate passengers. The day before yesterday there were about 600 people wanting passage but the shipping company sold only 20-odd tickets. While that may suit our purposes well enough for the moment, the shipping companies' business depends on the availability of third-class passengers, and if they suddenly decide to start service to Vancouver it could sooner or later result in a disturbance similar to the one that occurred in San Francisco.

On April 4, 1907, Saitō reported to Vancouver consul Kishirō Morikawa that a ship called the コレア (*Korëa*) was preparing to depart Honolulu for Vancouver with some 300 Japanese emigrants aboard (Sasaki 1999: 152). He claimed that although in his capacity of Consul General for Japan he had gone to great lengths to dissuade the emigrants from boarding by attempting to convince them that it would be against their interests to pay large sums to travel to Vancouver without first knowing the conditions there, ultimately there had been nothing he could do to persuade those enticed by the prospect of emigrating to the continent (Sasaki 1999: 152–153). He concluded his letter by asking Morikawa for information on conditions in Vancouver (Sasaki 1999: 153). In a telegram to Hayashi on

April 8, Saitō reported that the *Korëa*, with 297 Japanese emigrants aboard, had sailed on April 6, and in a note to Ishii also dated April 8 (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 153), he reported:

当ホノルル府に於ける転航周旋人及び日本人宿屋等は差し当たり生計の道なきを以て近来英領晩古坂に向かい彼等の転航を勧誘し、ため囊きのモアナ号にて本邦人四十四名、コレア号にて二百九十余名出発致候、当館に於いては種々勸止の手数を試み候得共、右の周旋人等も亦更に周密なる自防の策を廻らしコレア号の出発の際の如きは代言人が埠頭に出張して彼等の乗船を援護し居るが如き有様にして所詮一通りの説論勸告は其の効力なきこと明白に有之候

The emigration brokers and boarding-house keepers, having for the present no other means of earning their livelihood, have taken to persuading people to take passage on to British Vancouver, and so 44 Japanese have just sailed on the *Moana* and another 290-odd on the *Korëa*. The consulate tried everything to stop them, but the said brokers have devised ever-more cunning schemes to defend themselves, such as having a lawyer come to the wharfs before the *Korëa* departed to assist the emigrants on board. It is clear that our advisories have had no effect.

Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 153) was optimistic that Japanese emigration to Canada was a temporary phenomenon and would soon end, writing in a note to Hayashi on April 15, 1907:

該組合の申し出に依れば、臨時船廻航の事は目下の処到底成立の憂いなかるべし又耕地に於ける日本人も英領晩古坂往は然迄熱望に無之且つ英領地より合衆国領地に転入する事は無論同国官憲に於いても充分の注意を怠らざると同時に加那太政府も又多数日本労働者の入国には反対すべきを以て布哇より晩古坂に転航することの気焰は暫時にして消滅すべき様被在候

According to the claims of the association [of plantation owners], there should be no cause to worry that additional sailings will be scheduled at present. Japanese living on the plantations are not at all eager to move to British Vancouver. With United States authorities undoubtedly keeping

their eyes open for those entering the U.S. mainland from British territory, the Canadian government will also be opposed to large numbers of Japanese emigrants entering their territory. The enthusiasm of Japanese emigrants for travel to Vancouver via Hawaii will no doubt die down shortly.

Meanwhile, Morikawa in Vancouver telegraphed to Tokyo asking whether, in the event 3,000 Japanese emigrants were to arrive in Vancouver from Hawaii, he should send every one of them back to Japan or simply not interfere (Sasaki 1999: 153–154). In a telegram on April 16, 1907, he voiced his concerns as follows:

布哇在留安野伸太郎なる者同地より約三百の移民を桑港にて入国を拒絶されたるを以て本人は右移民を当港に向け輸送中なり、若し同人をして右移民を故障なく当国に入国せしむる時は、同人は更に我労働者三千人を布哇より輸入する計画なる由探知せり、目下議会開会中影響少なからず、又今回同人をして成功せしむる時は今後再三布哇より輸入を試むるに相違なし、移民官をして加奈陀移民法二十号に依り出来得れば悉皆出発地へ送還の処置を執らしむべきや、又其の儘放任すべきや至急御電訓を請う

We have heard that a Shintarō Yasuno of Hawaii is on his way from that territory to Vancouver with about 300 emigrants who were refused entry to San Francisco, and that should this individual get said emigrants into this country without difficulty, he plans to bring an additional 3,000 labourers from Hawaii. This would have no little effect during the present legislative session, and we may be sure that should this man succeed he will attempt to bring still more [emigrants] from Hawaii. Should I, in my capacity as an immigration officer, return every last one of them to their point of departure according to Article 20 of the Canadian Immigration Act, or let the matter rest where it is? I await your prompt reply by telegram.

Hayashi's reply (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 154) came in a telegram dated April 17, instructing Morikawa to let the matter rest on the grounds that, as a signatory to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, Canada had no right to refuse entry to Japanese citizens no matter how many Japanese emigrants might arrive from Hawaii: “布哇よりの

転航の移民に関しては貴電の通り事実上好ましからざる次第なるも事条約上の権利問題に関するを以て其の処置方は一切其の地官憲の裁量に放任し貴官に於いて此際進んで何等の行動を執らざる様せらるべし” (“With respect to emigrants travelling via Hawaii, although as you stated in your telegram it is in fact not to be desired, the matter is a question of rights defined under treaty. You should therefore leave the entire matter in the hands of the local authorities and not take any action on this occasion”). Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 154) replied on April 24, first acceding to Hayashi’s request with the words “好ましからざるも干渉すべからずとの御電訓に接し候につき当館に於いては全然傍観致候” (“With respect to your telegram stating that although the situation is undesirable we should not intervene, this consulate undertakes to act solely in the role of a bystander”), and then continuing:

右移民は総数二百八十九名内女六名にして汽船モンタラ号に移乗し、本月二十二日当港に安着致候、然るに当港加奈陀移民官は来航移民の所持金を調査し前記の二百二十二名は所持金甚だ手薄にして公然扶助の虞ありとの理由にて其の上陸を拒絶せんとの態度を示したる処、安野及び一味の者は移民官に交渉し結局二千弗の保証金を移民官に託し二週間内に右移民に職業を与え其の就労先を同官に報告する時は保証金を返付するとの条件にて上陸を許可せられ、四十九名は無条件にて上陸を許可せられ候 [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 154–155]

A total of 289 of the said emigrants, including six women, transferred to the steamship モンタラ [Montara] and on the 22nd instant arrived safely in this port. On examining the new arrivals to determine the amount of cash they had on hand, the Canadian immigration officers at this port however seemed inclined to refuse entry to 222 of the aforesaid as being likely, due to lack of funds, to become a public burden, at which juncture Yasuno and his circle entered negotiations with the immigration officials, in the end agreeing that these emigrants could land on condition that a surety of \$2,000 was deposited with the immigration officers and that the emigrants would find work and notify the officials as to the identity of their employers within

two weeks, after which the surety would be returned. Another 49 emigrants were granted permission to land without condition.

Morikawa went on to inform Hayashi that Yasuno had collaborated with boarding-house keepers in Honolulu to entice the Japanese to leave Hawaiian plantations and take passage to San Francisco, for which they claimed a fee \$25 to \$30 a head, and further that Yasuno had accompanied the emigrants to San Francisco, where they were refused entry, and had then proceeded to Vancouver by land to await their arrival (Sasaki 1999: 155). Noting that Yasuno was reportedly already making arrangements to transport more emigrants, Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 155) described the difficulties he saw facing any new arrivals as follows:

目下当州に於いては労働者の急需あるは事実に候得共、同人等は単に手数料を貪るのみにて当州の政況を顧慮せざるは勿論、移民の就業疾病其の場合には少しも責任を有するものに無之候に付き、此の儘放任し置く時は移民の供給遙かに需要外に超満し先年の如く街頭食を乞うの困難民を生ずる事なきを保せず候間、此の際是非共布哇に於いて転航食い止め策を講ぜざる時は当国に於いて我移民の前途を不利に陥る虞有之かと在候

While it is true that there is at present an urgent demand for labour in this province, these people are interested only in the fees they can collect, and while it is to be expected that they have little concern for the political situation in this province, they also shirk any responsibility for the emigrants' employment, health, or other conditions. If the authorities are content to let matters stand, the supply of labour will far exceed demand. I cannot promise that this will not end with the victims begging in the streets, as happened some years ago. If under these circumstances no measures are taken to prevent them leaving Hawaii for Vancouver, it may be to the harm of future Japanese immigrants to this country.

On May 20, 1907, Morikawa reported that in addition to about 50 immigrants who had

already arrived directly from Japan via a trans-Pacific service, another 285 had arrived in Victoria via San Francisco on May 12, 59 of whom had landed in Victoria while the remainder went on to Vancouver, arriving the following day (Sasaki 1999: 155). Of these, 65 were initially refused entry due to insufficient funds, but on deposit of a surety of U.S. \$500 by an interested party they were allowed to land and subsequently found work with the railway and other employers (Sasaki 1999: 155). This did little to assuage Morikawa's concerns regarding the effects of future immigration; with the Nikka Yotatsu Gaisha planning to bring another 1,000 contract workers for the C.P.R. and 600 for the Union and Wellington collieries on Vancouver Island, he warned Hayashi that there would be little work in winter and that facilities were not yet adequate to accommodate the new workers (Sasaki 1999: 155–156).

Despite the consul's advice, neither the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo nor the Japanese Consul General in Hawaii made any effort to deal with the situation (Sasaki 1999: 155). In a note to Hayashi on May 22, 1907, Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 156) reported from Honolulu that a total of 667 Japanese emigrants had left Hawaii for Vancouver after the ban on travel to the U.S. mainland had gone into effect, but that a proposed attempt to transport an additional 1,000 emigrants aboard the steamship *Kumeric* was unlikely to go ahead due to the cost: “今回在ホノルル日本人宿屋十一・二軒は白人 代理人を顧問として近来葡国移民を搭載して来航すべき汽船クメリック号を雇い入 れ、我布哇移民壹千名を暹香坡に送付せんと計画致居候、然るに本船は米金二万弗 の請負の外現金保証金五千弗を要する旨なれば各宿屋等疲弊の折柄ゆえ多分成立 不致見込に有之候” (“Eleven or twelve of the Japanese boarding houses in Honolulu have taken a white lawyer as an advisor and recently chartered a steamship, the *Kumeric*, which



is due to arrive in Honolulu with Portuguese immigrants aboard. Their plan is to transport 1,000 emigrants from Hawaii to Vancouver, but as the voyage would require a contract deposit of U.S. \$20,000 on top of a \$5,000 security, amounts that would likely impoverish the boarding-house keepers, I think it unlikely at this stage that this plan will come to fruition”). In a telegram on June 4, Morikawa again attempted to persuade Hayashi to restrict Japanese emigration by preventing the *Kumeric* leaving for Canada, but on June 22 Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 157) reversed his earlier sanguine assessment and reported to Hayashi that there was little he could do to prevent the *Kumeric* sailing for Vancouver with “around a thousand” emigrants aboard: “渡米の目的にて来布哇したる移民の残存すると及び之を勧誘する者の運動激甚なるとに依り此転航は遂に成立すべき様子相見え候” (“Given the presence here of emigrants who have come to Hawaii with the intent of going on to the mainland and the efforts of those who are persuading them to take passage to Vancouver, I think it likely at this stage that their plan will be realized eventually”). Saitō argued that he had no more influence over the Japanese emigrants than could be wielded through advisories published in cooperation with local Japanese-language newspapers, but reported to Hayashi that he was hopeful that these were having the desired effect as the number of applicants for emigration was dropping and the boarding-house operators were suffering from the decline in business (Sasaki 1999: 157). He added that plantation owners kept an eye on emigrants to prevent them leaving and that the consulate was making every effort to ensure that the owners treated their workers well, and blamed boarding-house keepers in Vancouver for encouraging Japanese emigration from Hawaii (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 157): “英領晚香坡に於ける日本人宿屋は申し合わせて森川領事の報告と正反対なる転航勧誘書を発し、又右米領及び晚香坡在住本邦人よりは此転航者の為

に其旅費を続々送付するに付き勧誘者は之を奇貨として遊説員を各地に派遣し、勧誘し又々転航熱を再燃為致候” (“Japanese boarding-house keepers in British Vancouver have conspired among themselves to issue invitations to emigrate, exactly contrary to what Consul Morikawa has reported, and, taking advantage of the fact that the aforementioned Japanese residents in the United States and Canada are constantly sending the emigrants money for travel expenses, these conspirators have sent campaigners everywhere to canvass for potential emigrants, further fanning the trans-migration craze”). Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 157–158) concluded that without any means to sanction those responsible for the “trans-migration craze,” little could be done unless there were to be an anti-Japanese upheaval in Vancouver:

此転航熱は今更本省に申上候共本省に於いては別段制止の好方法無之は勿論に付き唯当館に於いて今後とも益々奮って之が制止に従事するのみに有之候、之を要するに賃金の豊富なると勧誘者に対する制裁の道なきとは如何なる方法を執るも其の制止は困難には相違無之候、只だ本年末又は明年の始めに於いて加那太に日本人排斥論の発生せられざらんことを希望し出来るだけの注意と運動とを施す義に候

Needless to say, the ministry [i.e., the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs] has few useful means of controlling this trans-migration craze. Of course we at the consulate must simply devote our enthusiastic efforts to stopping it in future, but as there are no sanctions we can make against the promoters, who are abundantly supplied with all the money they could require, there is no doubt that it will be difficult to control them whatever means we were to use. We only hope that there will not be an anti-Japanese uproar in Canada at the end of this year or the beginning of the next, and will take every precaution and make every effort that we can.

In a telegram from Vancouver on June 28, 1907, Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 158) petitioned Hayashi to impose a ban on Japanese emigration to Hawaii due to an over-

supply of emigrants in British Columbia:

布哇より約千五百名の移民当地に向け来航中なり、既に再三上申せし通り右移民は当地方の需要に超過するのみならず之を収容すべき宿舎なき為め非常なる失態と困難を惹起すべし、右移民に対する処分方至急御電訓を請う、又右転航移民の多数は新渡航者に付き此際断然布哇行き移民禁止ありたし

About 1,500 emigrants are on their way here from Hawaii. As I have already stated, this is a colossal blunder that will lead to serious trouble, as not only does the supply of emigrants exceed local demands but there are no facilities to accommodate them. I urgently request that you telegraph me with your instructions as to what I am to do with said emigrants. In addition, given that most of these trans-migrants are newly arrived, emigration to Hawaii at this stage must be stopped at any cost.

In another telegram to Hayashi on July 3 (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 158), Morikawa reinforced his concerns:

内地移民会社は在布哇旅人宿業者と気脈を通じ最初より当国民に転航せしむる計略にて布哇に向け続々移民を渡航せしめ居る趣なり、今日迄に当地に転航したる移民の旅券を調査するに悉く本年下付新渡航者なるが故彼等が本邦出発の際より当国へ転航の企図を有したるは明らかなり・・・就いては此際全然布哇行き移民の渡航を禁止せられたし、又今回の転航者は貯金なき者は飢渴に陥る虞送還するの外途なしと思考す

With the express intent of sending our citizens on to other destinations, emigration companies in Japan collude with local boarding-house keepers to send a continuing stream of emigrants to Hawaii. An examination of the passports belonging to the emigrants trans-shipped here [British Columbia] clearly shows that all those who departed this year had by the time they left Japan already formed a plan to travel on to this country.... In my opinion, emigration to Hawaii must be banned at this juncture, while those who have already arrived without savings must be sent back to prevent them falling into starvation.

On July 8, too late to stop the immigrants already preparing to leave on the *Kumeric*, Deputy Foreign Minister Chinda responded to Morikawa's request by asking the Chief of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police and the heads of local police offices to issue an advisory against travel to Canada via Hawaii (Sasaki 1999: 159). Morikawa had already agreed with Dr. A.S. Monroe, a medical inspector and immigration agent for the Canadian government, that Japanese immigrants would only be permitted to land if they had at least \$25 (Roy 1989: 187), but this effort to slow emigration from Hawaii also failed to have the desired effect: when the *Admiral Jaurequiberry* arrived on July 6, the Japanese Boarding-House Keepers Union of Vancouver were able to advance the required sum to all 241 passengers on board (Roy 1989: 301), while Saitō reported from Honolulu that the promoters of the *Kumeric*'s voyage had simply lent the required amount to most of the passengers (Roy 1989: 187–188). On July 15 Saitō was reduced to wiring Hayashi a list of excuses as to why he had been unable to prevent the *Kumeric* departing Honolulu on July 13 (Sasaki 1999: 159–160).

On July 16, 1907, Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 160) again wired Hayashi expressing his concerns that most of the immigrants on the *Kumeric* would be unable to find work on their arrival: “クメリック号にてホノルルより千二百名来航なるも目下当地には三・四百の外労働口なし、又十月頃に至れば多数の労働者職を失うべし” (“Should 1,200 arrive from Honolulu aboard the *Kumeric*, there is at present employment here for no more than three or four hundred, most of whom will have lost their jobs come October”). He also expressed concern that anti-Japanese sentiment was mounting: “過日上申せし布哇往き移民の渡航禁止せられたるや、若し未だなれば至急断然渡航を禁止せられたし、目下当地に置いては日本人排斥の世論日々激昂” (“If you have not yet done as I

requested a few days ago and imposed a ban on Japanese emigration to Hawaii, one should be put in place immediately whatever the cost, as anti-Japanese sentiment here is now getting more virulent by the day”).

All Morikawa’s efforts and warnings were unable to prevent the *Kumeric* arriving in Vancouver on the morning of July 25, 1907, with 1,177 Japanese emigrants aboard (Sasaki 1999: 170). Although as noted above (see page 29), the actual number of Japanese intending to reside more or less permanently in Canada was actually relatively small, Morikawa, together with the other inhabitants of British Columbia, cannot be blamed if they saw all 1,177 passengers as having arrived with the express intent of immigrating permanently to the province (Sugimoto 1978: 235). While earlier migrants had come in smaller groups and excited relatively little notice save in the shipping section of the newspaper, the Vancouver press gave the arrival of the *Kumeric* headline coverage, complete with photographs (Roy 1989: 188). Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 160–162) described the local reaction in a series of telegrams to Hayashi between July 27 and August 2. On July 27, he telegraphed:

クメリック号転航者千百七十七人本月二十五日朝当港に着し嚴重なる  
検査を受けた後昨日午後皆上陸せり、然るに当地には彼等を容るるべ  
き宿屋なき為非常なる困難を起し約八百名昨夜フレザー河畔に送り  
宿泊せしむる事とせり、彼等は急に職業を得ること難しければ追々救助  
を要するものを生ずべし、之が為当地方は政党政派に論なく排日熱沸  
騰し白人労働組合は示唆運動をなすに至れり [quoted in Sasaki 1999:  
160]

The 1,177 trans-migrants on board the *Kumeric* arrived on the morning of the 25th instant and, after being closely inspected, landed on the afternoon of the following day, but there have been severe difficulties as there is no accommodation for them here. About 800 were sent to stay on the banks of the Fraser. If it proves difficult for them to find work quickly, in the course

of time it will become necessary to provide for them, which will undoubtedly bring anti-Japanese sentiment to a boil in the political parties and their factions and result in demonstrations by white labour organizations.

On July 30 Morikawa wired again to describe the deteriorating situation in Vancouver:

右移民の来航に関してはしばしば当地新聞紙に特記せられたる事なれば、移民上陸の当日は白人群を為して埠頭に押し寄せ、代議士マクファーソン氏の如きは移民の上陸種々の干渉妨害を試み得々として白人労働者に其の声望を売らんとし、一方に於いては千余りの転航者先を争うて上陸せんとし荷物を投げ出すもの押すもの引くもの争うもの等其の混雑名状すべからず、暫く同日夕刻に至り悉く皆上陸を了し候…此の如き混雑及び多数移民の群来は当港開闢以来の出来事なれば各市各新聞は連日筆を揃えて排斥論を掲げ大に白人労働者を扇動し又政党员等は各派いづれも先を争うて集会を催し、或いは中央政府に反省を求め、或いは次期議会に対する準備を講ずる等至る処物議騒然たらざるなく、之が為め加奈陀行き我が移民の前途に非常なる障碍を与えたるは遺憾千万に有之候 [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 161]

The newspapers here have been giving the arrival of the afore-mentioned immigrants headline coverage, and on the day the immigrants landed, whites thronged to the shore while, in a naked attempt to win acclaim and recognition from the white workers, people like Mr. Macpherson, M.P., tried to put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the immigrants landing. For their part, the over 1,000 trans-migrants contributed to the indescribable confusion by throwing their luggage about and pushing, pulling, and fighting in an effort to be the first to land. It was evening of the same day before all had finally disembarked.... The crowds and the mass arrival of immigrants are like nothing the port has seen since it first opened. Everywhere one turns someone is kicking up a fuss: every last one of the local newspapers is united in calling for expulsion, while the white workers are up in arms and all the politicians and factions are falling over each other to make public speeches, or are demanding that the central government reconsider, or are making plans for the next legislative session. It would be most regrettable were future immigrants from our country to Canada to be faced with unusual obstacles.

On August 2, Morikawa once more pleaded with Hayashi to do something to stop the ar-

rival of more immigrants from Hawaii:

…本年第一回転航開始以来総計二千八十九名の多数は布哇より当州に上陸し候次第に有之候、一人是のみに止まらず布哇に於いては既に八百名の転航者募集中なれば此の分も亦日ならずして当港に向かい出帆致す事と存候

翻て当州に於ける日本人の事情は内地よりの新転航者を適当に制限し需要供給の度を失せざる様当館の証明あるものを標準とし弗々渡航許可相成り来たり候に付き、在留日本人の労賃も漸次増額して一般在留民は見る見る発達の兆しを呈し白人の気受けも宜しく此の分にて無事に数年を経過する時は当州在留日本人も一廉の進歩を為すべくと期待したる処、豈図らんや一度布哇移民の転航者群来するに及んで、日本人排斥の議一時に沸騰し各新聞は日として排日の論議を掲げざるなく又保守党自由党の両党は互いに排日運動の硬軟を難じ各自先を争うて日本人排斥の運動に着手し以て自党の立脚地を固めんとするが如き騒擾を起こすに立ち到り候…右等転航者を制止するには勢い布哇行き移民の渡航を一時禁止するの外他に良策無之ものと存じ候、右小官卑見は再三電信にて及上申候得共今に何等御処置無之は如何なる事情に有之候や…万一本省に於いて布哇行き移民の渡航を禁止せられる事なく転航者を続出せしめ其の結果当国に於いても合衆国新移民法の如く法律を以て転航者の上陸を禁止するが如き事にも相成り候はば之が為日本人は旅行の自由及体面を毀損し其の不利益尋常一様ならざるべくと存候 [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 162–163]

...[I]t turns out that most of the 2,089 immigrants arriving since the start of the first trans-migration this year have landed in this province from Hawaii. Nor has it ended with this; already in Hawaii they are recruiting another 800 trans-migrants who are to depart within the day for Vancouver.

On the other hand, with respect to the status of Japanese in this province, by only giving those holding certificates from this consulate permission to immigrate, emigration from Japan has been restricted to ensure that the link between supply and demand is not lost, resulting in a gradual increase in the wages of Japanese workers in Canada, visible signs of progress among ordinary Japanese immigrants, and acceptance by whites. Just at the point at

which one could hope that the Japanese in this province were about to make considerable progress after several uneventful years like this, to our surprise a mass of immigrants arrives all at once from Hawaii and then suddenly everyone is talking about expelling the Japanese, not a day goes by without every newspaper devoting space to anti-Japanese debates, both the Conservative and Liberal Parties are accusing each other of being too hard or too soft on the anti-Japanese movement, and everyone is falling over each other in a rush to join the Japanese expulsion movement. In a seeming effort to solidify their respective bases, the parties have taken to causing disturbances.... In order to control the aforesaid immigrants, there can be no other sensible policy but to temporarily place vigorous restrictions on emigration to Hawaii. I have stated this, my humble opinion, to you many times in my telegrams, but no measures have been taken. Why is this the case? ... In the event that no measure is taken by the Ministry to prohibit emigration to Hawaii and trans-migration continues, the result will be that this country will enact a law similar to the United States Immigration Act forbidding entry to trans-migrants, and this will restrict the freedom of Japanese to travel and result in loss of face. The disadvantages of this would be extraordinary.

Although Morikawa, together with the Japanese Consul General in Ottawa, Tatsugorō Nosē, had a degree of success in convincing some segments of the Canadian population that the Japanese government had neither the obligation nor the power to limit the emigration of its citizens (Roy 1989: 188), the arrival of the *Kumeric* contributed to the anti-Japanese sentiment that was shortly to spark the Vancouver riot (Roy 1989: 186).

## **Chapter 3: The Vancouver Riot**

### **3.1 Prelude to the Riot**

Had they all remained in the province, the some 2,000 Japanese who had arrived in the first seven months of 1907 would have increased British Columbia's Japanese population (then about 5,000) by 40%, and the year was not yet over (Sasaki 1999: 165). On August 26, Saitō, the Japanese Consul General in Hawaii, wrote to Chinda, the Japanese Deputy Min-



ister of Foreign Affairs, to say that the number of migrants would only increase, although the reasons he gave were seemingly contradictory: first, that emigrants were being enticed from the Hawaii by acquaintances on the continent, assisted by “白人代言人” and “日本人宿屋” (“white lawyers” and “Japanese boarding house keepers”; quoted in Sasaki 1999: 153, 156), and second that because the emigrants had come to Hawaii with the express intent of using it as a jumping-off point for other destinations, there was little that could be done to stop exodus (Sasaki 1999: 165). It was however accepted by both the Canadian and Japanese governments that under the Anglo-Japanese agreements of 1902 and 1905, Canada had no right to impose restrictions on Japanese emigration, and that while the Japanese government could restrict emigration from Japan, it could do nothing to stop emigration from Hawaii (Roy 1989: 187; Sasaki 1999: 165–166). Saitō indeed saw emigration as being to Japan’s benefit:

元来本邦労働者が海外有望の地に移住することは移民自身の利益にして、従って本邦の国益なり、故に我が移民保護法第四条の明文に抵触せざる限りは我が政府に於いても其の希望者を英領加那陀に移住せしめて何等故障なきこと勿論なり唯一時に多数を出すときは該地方労働市場に急激の変動を生じ従って出稼者の不利益を来すの怕あるが為に本邦に於いては常に其人員を制限するの必要を生ず、然るに布哇より転航する者に対しては既に之を差止むること能わざると同時に尚更不可能なり [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 166]

That Japanese workers are free to move where they wish is in essence to the benefit of the emigrants themselves and therefore to the benefit of the country, and our government can consequently have no reason to object if those who wish to do so are allowed to emigrate to the Dominion of Canada, so long as it does not contravene Article 4 of the Emigrant Protection Act. While large numbers leaving all at once gives rise to abrupt changes in the labour markets in the affected areas to the potential detriment of migrant workers, necessitating that Japan unfailingly restrict their numbers, with

respect to those leaving Hawaii for other destinations there is neither any way to stop this nor any way to change it.

Saitō suggested that the government ban emigration to British possessions from Japan but do nothing about emigration from Hawaii other than to suggest to Canadians that the Americans were to blame (Sasaki 1999: 166).

On August 27, 1907, the Japanese Consul General in Ottawa, Tatsugorō Nosē, informed Hayashi, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, that while the Canadian government acknowledged that there was nothing the Japanese government could do to control emigration from Hawaii, Prime Minister Laurier had expressed his intention to pass a law similar to the United States Immigration Act restricting immigration via third countries (Sasaki 1999: 166–167). Nosē (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 167) wrote, “事情頗る緊迫来たり、目下諸方面に対し運動中なるも布哇転航者の渡来を一時制限し得るにあらざれば成功覚束なきを認む” (“The situation is becoming extremely tense, and I recognize that our varied efforts to address the problem will have little hope of success should we prove unable to control migration from Hawaii to Canada for the time being”). Hayashi instructed Nosē to await the arrival of International Trade Bureau chief Kikujirō Ishii, who had been dispatched to Vancouver in the role of Commissioner to investigate Japanese immigration via Hawaii, and to take no action before then as Canada had no power to restrict immigration under the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (Roy 1989: 189; Sasaki 1999: 167), which gave British and Japanese imperial subjects the “full liberty to enter, travel, or reside in any part” of each other’s “dominions and possessions” (Article 1 of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation Between Great Britain and Japan, quoted in Sugimoto 1978: 257). Hayashi’s telegram read in part as follows:

布哇より転航禁止策に付いては政府に於いても目下種々考究中にして石井局長晩香坡到着の上実際の状況を考査し適當の方法を決定することとなり居り、且つ加那陀政府は本邦人の入国に対し米国同様の制裁を加え得べき条約上の根拠を有せざるに付きもし斯る制裁を設くるに於いては面白からざる国際問題を惹起すべきにより貴官は加那陀当局をして右の如き処置を執らしめざる様十分御尽力あれ [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 167]

The government is currently investigating ways of preventing trans-migration from Hawaii and will make a decision as to the appropriate method after bureau chief Ishii has arrived in Vancouver to assess the true nature of the situation. The Canadian government has no grounds on which to apply restrictions similar to those imposed by the Americans and would face an embarrassing international problem if it did, and consequently you should make an effort to prevent the Canadian authorities taking such steps.

In a further message to Nosō on August 31, Hayashi noted that although the Japanese government had already imposed some restrictions on direct emigration to Canada from Japan, a new policy further restricting emigration would go into effect on September 11:

加那陀行き移民制限方に就き貴官がローリエー首相に対し為されたる説明は従来帝国政府の執りつつある方針に適合したる次第に有之、既に本年三月一日機密第一号を以て申進候通り其の制限方は依然励行致居候義に有之候、将又此程定期航海船にあらざる英国汽船ウールウイッチ号に二百七十名許かりの移民を搭載し神戸より加那陀に向け臨時直行せしめたる者有之、右移民中には北米合衆国に赴きし者も混入致居候哉の聞こえも有之候得共其の数多寡に拘わらず将来臨時船を以て専ら移民のみを本邦より直接輸送する等のこと屢々有之候義はコロンビア州に於ける労働派に対し口実を与うることと可相成りと懸念せられ候に付き其の取り締まりの一法として自今移民を搭載し加那陀に向う船舶に対しては移民保護法の制裁を受けしむることとなし来る九月十一日より実施することに本月二十七日の官報を以て告示及び置き候 [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 168]

The explanation you gave to Prime Minister Laurier on restricting emigration to Canada was that our policy conforms to that of the Imperial government in the past, and that as I had already noted in the first confidential memo on March 1 of this year, these restrictions have been carried out to the letter. While some 270 emigrants travelled directly to Canada from Kobe aboard the British steamship *Woolwich*, which is not part of a regular service, we have heard that the emigrants aboard included some destined for the United States, but regardless of their number, given that there are fears that additional chartered sailings may in future be made directly from Japan for the sole purpose of carrying immigrants, and that this will provide labour in British Columbia with an excuse, we will hereafter apply the Emigrant Protection Act to ships bound for Canada with immigrants aboard as one means of preventing this. I sent an official telegram on the 27th instant reporting that this policy will go into effect this September 11.

In a telegram to Hayashi on September 7, the day of the Vancouver Riot, Nosë (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 169) reported that Laurier was satisfied with Japan's emigration policy: “本日総理大臣に面会を遂げたるに同大臣はブリティシュ・コロムビア州に於ける日本移民排斥に係る過日來の行動をヂスアップループし、從來日本政府が加那陀移民に対し執り来りたる政策に全然満足を表すべき旨を言明したり” (“The Prime Minister met with me today to voice his disapproval of the activities of the other day in British Columbia promoting the exclusion of the Japanese, and to state his complete satisfaction with the existing policies of the Japanese government with respect to emigration to Canada”).

Despite the worries of the Japanese consul in Vancouver and many politicians and officials in the Canadian government (particularly Frank Oliver, the Minister of the Interior, whom Laurier had sent to British Columbia in August to assess the situation; Roy 1989: 190), the Japanese and Canadian officials, their hands tied by the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, felt that voluntary restrictions on direct emigration from Japan would be sufficient to deal with the anti-Japanese sentiment on the west coast (Sasaki 1999: 169; Roy 1989: 189). Many in British Columbia, however, failed to share this sanguine

assessment of the situation, the sudden influx of immigrants from Hawaii having triggered fears on the part of some British Columbians of a plot to take over business and labour in the province (Roy 1989: 188–190). In July, the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council had established an Asiatic-Exclusion League—modeled on, but independent of, similar racist organizations that had proliferated on the west coast of the United States since the founding of the first such organization in San Francisco in 1905 (Sugimoto 1978: 115)—devoted to prohibiting immigration from Asia and keeping British Columbia white (Roy 1989: 190–191; Sugimoto 1978: 1–2). In an effort to drum up interest in its activities and to convince the federal government of the level of popular support for anti-Asian immigration policies in British Columbia, the league held a mass meeting on the grounds of Vancouver City Hall on the evening of September 7, 1907 (Roy 1989: 191; Sugimoto 1989: 114–115).

### **3.2 The Vancouver Riot**

The meeting itself was orderly (Roy 1989: 193; Sugimoto 1978: 119), apart from demonstrations that included burning the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia in effigy (for the crime of not having given royal assent to the latest of British Columbia’s many legislative attempts to restrict immigration on racist grounds; Roy 1989: 168–169, 192) and speeches calling on the Canadian government to allow the passage of the BC anti-Asian immigration laws and to act immediately to totally and permanently exclude Orientals (Roy 1989: 192; Sugimoto 2–3, 121). The speakers included a minister at a local church, H.W. Fraser (Sasaki 1999: 174; Roy 1989: 192), who, it was reported, seemed almost to fear that “his own pulpit would soon be in the hands of a Jap or a Chinaman” and declared that the Empire was the product of “pure Anglo-Saxon blood” and “would never be made

with a mixture of Asiatic blood” (*News-Advertiser*, September 8, 1907, quoted in Sugimoto 1978: 119). Prior to the meeting’s conclusion, however, a leaderless group of protestors rampaged first through Chinatown and then through the Japanese district, stealing banners and breaking windows before the police were able to restore order by arresting some rioters and persuading the remainder to return to their homes (Roy 1989: 193). On September 8, Trade Bureau Commissioner Ishii, who had only arrived in Vancouver the previous day, reported in a telegram to Hayashi that:

本官九月七日午後十一時晚香坡着、是より先き本日午後当地に於いて日韓人排斥同盟会の示威運動あり、浮浪の輩相集まり午後九時より五・六十名にて日本人及支那人の商店なる市街を横行し瓦石を投げ硝子窓を破壊せるあり、暫くして第二回の襲来あり、今回は約五百名に上がりりと云う、次いで第三回の襲来あり、本邦人の商店は皆な前面の窓を破壊せられたる模様あり、負傷者は目下の処一名のみと思わる、警察は全力を尽くすべしと言ひ居れども深く頼みとする能わざるの感あり、森川領事は重ねて一面警察官憲の警戒を促し一面我が居留民の激昂を鎮撫する為現場に出張中なり、多分は之にて一先ず鎮定するならんと思わる、尚支那人側の損害は一層激し [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 172]

I arrived in Vancouver at 11 p.m. That afternoon, prior to my arrival, there had been a demonstration by the Anti-Japanese and Korean League [sic]. A group of hooligans gathered at 9 p.m. and about 50 to 60 of them went on a rampage through both the Japanese and Chinese commercial districts, throwing stones through the windows. A short time later there was a second attack, this time apparently by about 500 people, followed by a third in which it seemed all the windows of the Japanese businesses were broken, although at the moment it is believed that only one person was injured. The feeling is that the police are not to be relied upon, though they say that they are doing all they can. Consul Morikawa has repeatedly urged complete police coverage and has gone to the scene of the disturbance to assuage the anger of the Japanese residents, and the situation seems to have calmed for now. The damage in Chinatown was even heavier.

In all, some 56 Japanese properties were damaged (Shimpo 1975: 47) and more than 20 rioters arrested (Sasaki 1999: 173; Roy 1989: 194), but by September 9 Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 172) was able to report that “本日二時半に至り彼等は四散し静穏に歸せり” (“by half past two this morning they [the rioters] had dispersed and tranquility was restored”) and that the Canadian Prime Minister, “at the behest of the Governor General,” had sent Mayor Alexander Bethune of Vancouver a telegram requesting that peace be restored and the offenders brought to justice (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 179–180). On the evening of the same day, several thousand protestors and on-lookers gathered in Vancouver’s downtown and attempts were made to burn down the Japanese school on Alexander Street and a sawmill that employed Japanese, but these were easily repelled by the Japanese themselves (Roy 1989: 193), who nevertheless took the precaution of removing portraits of the Japanese Imperial family from the school, first to a police station and then to the Japanese consulate (Shimpo 1975: 47). On September 10 Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 173) reported that some six or seven hundred rioters had approached Japan Town on the night of September 9 before being dispersed by the police. This marked the end of the Vancouver riot; no further acts of public unrest took place (Roy 1989: 193).

On September 10, 1907, the *News-Advertiser* reported, “His Excellency the Governor-General has learned with the deepest regret of the indignities and cruelties to which certain subjects of the Emperor of Japan, a friend and ally of His Majesty the King, have been victims and he hopes that peace will be promptly restored and all the offenders punished” (quoted in Sugimoto 1978: 157). Although he proposed little in the way of action against the rioters, Mayor Bethune promised to do what he could to prevent further disturbances and issued a public statement of regret, which also urged the citizens of Vancouver

to moderation (Sugimoto 1978: 157). In this he was backed by the community at large, with even supporters of Asiatic exclusion confessing that their cause could not be advanced through barbaric means (Roy 1989: 194). At a council meeting on September 10, Bethune declined to take sides in the controversy but stated that his duty was to protect all residents, regardless of race or origin, in which he received the unanimous support of the aldermen (Sugimoto 1978: 157–158). In a message to Hayashi on September 16, Morikawa (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 173–177) first blamed the riot on agitation by members of Seattle's Japanese and Korean Exclusion League and then, in a display of class prejudice, directed his ire toward Vancouver workers:

翻て九月七日夜の暴行事件の当夜及其の後市民一般の感想を見るに当夜は無思慮浅識日本人を下等人種と心得居る大多数の白人は暴行者に同情声援し年若き婦人の如きものをも日本人を見る時は大声を揚げて痛罵したる程に有之、又巡査(巡査は其の性行卑俗劣等にして下等労働者と同じ)は日本人部落に於いては日本人の為に詰責督励せられたるを以て相当尽力したるも、支那人街に於いては目前に一人の暴行者あり三人の巡査之を目睹し居り乍ら何等の処置を為さずして看過したるの類は当館館員の目撃したる処にして例に取締り不十分に有之候。然るに市民の重立つものは深く今回の出来事を恥辱となし中には加那陀の歴史に汚点を印したりと云い或いは白人労働者の余りに利己的なるを攻撃するものも有之候得共何分当市はシヤトル市の如く実業家の勢力膨大ならずして市民の大多数は大小の労働者なるが故人種的偏見強く近来に至っては白人の加那陀なる語連邦を通して各地に声言するに至れる等面白からざる現象を兆し候。尤も市長は[中略]同夜開かるべき亜細亜人排斥同盟会の会合に対して何等の干渉を為さざる事を決議したるは明年一月市長及び市会議員改選に際し労働者の反対を怖れたるに依るものと存じ候。 [quoted in Sasaki 176–177]



And now, after the incident of the riot on the evening of September 7, my impression of the general public is that they are imprudent and lack judgment; the majority of the whites, who think the Japanese an inferior race, sympathize with and support the rioters, to the point where even young ladies hurl abuse when they sight a Japanese. Moreover, although the police (whose character and conduct are as vulgar and inferior as those of the basest labourer) made some effort to help the Japanese by reproaching the rioters in the Japanese district, in Chinatown their behaviour was lax: for example, staff from this consulate have seen three officers letting a lone rioter go by without taking any action, as well as other similar incidents. Nevertheless, most people in Vancouver regard the incident as a source of profound shame. Some say that it will remain a blemish on Canada's history, or criticize the selfishness of the white labourers. Unlike Seattle, however, Vancouver has no influential entrepreneurs; the majority are after all labourers to a greater or lesser degree and as such have strong racial prejudices. In a new twist, they are calling for a "White Canada" across the federation. Of course the Mayor...declined to interfere with a meeting of the Asiatic-Exclusion League that night [September 12] for fear of opposition from workers as there are, I believe, to be a mayoral and municipal elections in January next year.

Morikawa noted that, although newspapers in British Columbia continued to grumble about each new arrival of Japanese emigrants, the first batches to arrive after the riot were greeted without additional disturbances: “其の後ウールウッチ号及び信濃丸は東洋よりインディアナ号は布哇より各二百五十～二百六十づつの日本移民を搭載し、前二艘はヴィクトリヤ港に後者は当港に入港したるも例に依り新聞紙が喧噪するのみにて實際上何等の迫害を為す事なく無事今日に至り候” (“The *Woolwich* and the *Shinano-maru* subsequently each brought 250–260 Japanese emigrants from Hawaii, but when they arrived—the former in Victoria and the latter in Vancouver—there were no actual acts of persecution and all are safe so far, with only the newspapers fulminating against them as usual”). He concluded his report by stating:

要するに今回の暴行事件は全く偶然的にして決して重大事件と称するに足らず、其の動機は白人行列に不和随従[ママ]したる無頼漢等悪戯

的に瓦石を投じたるを機会として付和雷同して暴行を激生[ママ]したるに過ぎず、彼の桑港に於けるが如く屋内に乱入する等の事聊かも無之、単に窓硝子に向かって投石したるに過ぎざるを以て其被害は窓硝子及び少許の商品に過ぎず候。[quoted in Sasaki 1999: 177]

In short, the riot is a random incident and not a matter for grave concern, in motivation nothing more than a group of hoodlums who, following a parade of whites, went along with the crowd to participate in violent acts and enjoy the opportunity to throw stones for no reason. It was not a riot like the one in San Francisco, where the demonstrators invaded private premises; instead, they did little more than throw stones at windows, damaging only glass and a few goods.

Like Morikawa, the Vancouver press also initially seemed inclined to blame the riot on hooliganism, although some papers also saw the Canadian government's reluctance to impose restrictions on Japanese immigration as a contributing factor (Roy 1989: 195). Later the press shifted their focus to Morikawa's second culprit, namely intervention by American agitators, although neither the press nor Morikawa had much evidence to support this claim beyond the presence of the secretary of the Seattle Japanese-Korean Exclusion League, A.E. Fowler, at the meeting on September 7, where he spoke at the invitation of the meeting's Canadian organizers (Roy 1989: 195–196). Whoever was to blame, the riot was soon to have consequences for Japanese emigration to Canada, consequences neither government particularly desired (Roy 1989: 196).

### **3.3 The Consequences of the Vancouver Riot**

In the combined financial and diplomatic aftermath of the Vancouver riot, the Japanese Foreign Ministry was represented by the Consulate General in Ottawa (Sasaki 1999: 178). On the financial front, Consul General Nosë sought the opinion of Trade Bureau Commissioner Ishii, who reported that Japan was legally in a position to demand reparation (quoted

in Sasaki 1999: 179): “我が国民が被った損害に対して、我が政府は賠償を請求する資格があるというのが私の意見である” (“It is my opinion that our government is in a position to demand compensation for damages suffered by our citizens”). Nosë forwarded this information to Hayashi, who responded with the following message:

晩香坡暴動事件の為帝国臣民の蒙りたる損害賠償請求方に関し石井局長電報の主旨を承認することに決定したるにより、森川領事へ右損害(直接と間接とを区別し)調査方を電訓しその結果を貴官へも電訓せしむることに取計い置きたり、尤も賠償請求の程度に付いては森川領事調査又結果を見たる上更に何分の電訓すべきにより貴官は該電訓を待ちて適當の方法に依り公然となく加那陀政府当局者と商議を開始し速やかに右賠償の方法を講ぜしむる様御取計あれ、又今回の暴動は日本人排斥団体に於いて予め準備したる計画に基づくこと既に明らかにして該団体が今尚解散せず団体として存続し居る以上は将来暴動の再演を画策すること之なきを保し難しと懸念せらるるを以て貴官は此点に関し特に加那陀政府当局者の注意を喚起し将来該当局者に於いて彼等の行動を嚴重に監視するは勿論在留帝国臣民をして其の生命財産に対して不安の念を起さしむるが如き何等の行動をも敢えてせしめざる様適當の手段を講ぜられんことを要求せらるべし [quoted in Sasaki 1999: 179]

With respect to requests for compensation for damages suffered by Imperial subjects as a result of the Vancouver riot, it has been decided to accept the thrust of Commissioner Ishii's telegram, and consequently you are to telegraph Consul Morikawa with instructions to investigate the aforesaid claims (distinguishing actual from consequential losses) and have him wire the results to you. On reviewing Consul Morikawa's investigation or its results, you are instructed to request additional telegraphs as necessary and to employ them as you think fit in publicly opening negotiations with the relevant Canadian authorities with respect to the size of the claim, and to promptly decide a method whereby said compensation can be made. It having already been established that this riot was prearranged by the Asiatic-Exclusion League, there are concerns that as long as the League is not dissolved but continues in existence there can be no guarantee that it does not

plan a repeat of such violence in future, and you are not only to bring these concerns to the particular attention of the Canadian authorities so that they will closely monitor the League's activities in future, but to demand that the government take appropriate steps to prevent any acts that may cause Imperial subjects to fear for their lives or property.

Through Consul General Nosē, Hayashi also sent a message to the Canadian government to express his "hope that, in view of the cordial and friendly relations existing between Japan and Canada, the case may be settled at Ottawa independently of the British government and without going through the usual diplomatic channels" (quoted in Sugimoto 1978: 159).

On October 17, 1907, Nosē (quoted in Sugimoto 1978: 260–261) wrote to the Canadian Governor General expressing his regrets for the "very strong feeling of hostility to the Japanese residing in the province who are engaged in legitimate and peaceful occupations." Nosē expressed the opinion that, given the lack of violence against "Hindoos" and the head tax that already "practically excluded" the Chinese, the activities of the "Anti-Asiatic League" were necessarily "principally directed against Japanese immigration".

Nosē continued:

Your Excellency's government may also be aware of the fact that the Anti-Asiatic [sic] League has for its avowed object the exclusion of Japanese subjects from Canada.... The continuance of the Anti-Japanese agitation by the said league and by the labour element throughout the western section of Canada, and its cooperation by the leading newspapers and prominent citizens of Canada, has created a feeling of very grave apprehension on the part of my countrymen resident in British Columbia, that further disturbances may arise which might lead to loss of life or property, unless effective measures are taken by the local authorities to see that these peaceful and law-abiding subjects of Japan are protected in their ordinary vocations.

Nosē's charge that anti-Asian sentiments were chiefly directed toward the Japanese were borne out by W.D. Scott, the Canadian superintendent of immigration, who in a visit to British Columbia in September found the residents of that province seemingly more inclined

to support Chinese and South Asian immigration than they were to allow unrestricted immigration by the Japanese (Roy 1989: 199). T.R.E. McInnes, who infiltrated the Asiatic-Exclusion League as a spy for the federal government, also reported that the Japanese were more feared owing to the tendency among many white British Columbians to perceive the Chinese and South Asians as belonging to inherently inferior races (Roy 1989: 199). The Japanese, in contrast, were seen as aggressively serving the expansionist interests of the Japanese Imperial government, particularly in the wake of Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 to 1905 (Knowles 2000: 36).

In an effort to both appeal to the prejudices of British Columbians and work out a diplomatic solution with Japan (Roy 1989: 202), the Canadian government appointed two Royal Commissions in quick succession: one to determine the origin of the disturbance, investigate the damages caused by the riot, and assess claims for indemnification, and another to determine the reasons for the sudden increase in immigration and its effects on British Columbia (Shimpo 1975: 48; Sugimoto 1978: 4; Roy 1989: 202). Both commissions (the "Royal Commission to Assess and Pay the Damages Occasioned by the Anti-Asiatic Riot" and the "Royal Commission into the Methods by Which Oriental Labourers Have Been Induced to Come to Canada") were headed by the then Deputy Minister of Labour (and later Prime Minister), W.L.M. King (Sugimoto 1978: 160; Roy 1989: 202–204). The former Commission was the outcome of Nosë's representations to the Canadian government on October 7, 1907 (Sugimoto 1978: 161). Nosë claimed compensation in the amount of \$13,519.45, following Morikawa's report to Hayashi, which fixed the amount for actual (i.e., direct) damages at \$2,405.70, based on testimony from lawyers and professional appraisers, and the amount for estimated consequential losses (which is to say, indirect losses

due to loss of business and the like) at \$11,113.75, which Morikawa felt should probably be reduced by about half as it was based solely on claims by the victims with no independent evidence to back it up (Sasaki 1999: 181; Sugimoto 1978: 162). As the result of hearings from October 22 to November 5, King however recommended total awards of \$1,523.60 for actual damages and \$7,512.40 for consequential damages (Roy 1989: 204), respectively 63.3% and 67.6% of the amounts claimed in Morikawa's report (Sasaki 1999: 184–185); the discrepancy was largely due, as Morikawa had forecast, to inflated claims for loss of business and claims for guards and other forms of protection that the Commission ruled excessive (Sugimoto 1978: 164). Additional sums of \$139 and \$1,600 were awarded to pay the legal fees of the claimants and the Japanese Consulate, respectively (Sugimoto 1978: 162), although for its part the Consulate declined to accept the award on the grounds that the Japanese government required no compensation for doing its duty by its citizens (Sugimoto 1978: 162–163). Chinese claims were not investigated until March 1908 and then only because the British government felt it had a better chance of receiving compensation for the loss of British lives and property in China were the Dominion government to compensate the Chinese in Canada (Roy 1989: 203), but in the end the Chinese victims of the riot were awarded \$26,990 (Walker 1997: 69).

On the diplomatic front, meanwhile, both the Canadian and the Japanese governments were eager to avoid conflict, the Canadian government under Laurier because he saw prospects for increased trade with Japan (Roy 1989: 203) and the Japanese government because it wished to avoid friction with its British and Canadian counterparts (Roy 1989: 197). The initial Canadian response took the form of the Royal Commissions described above, while the initial Japanese response was to act quietly to reduce the volume

of emigration to Canada (Roy 1989: 197). On September 9, 1907, before the Vancouver Riot was quite over, Consul General Saitō in Honolulu telegraphed Hayashi in Tokyo to assure him that there would be no further emigration to Canada from Hawaii for at least another six months (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 177): “布哇より英領加那陀に向かう転航者は本月六日出帆の船にて僅か二百七十九名にありしを最後とす、今後少なくとも向こう六ヶ月間には転航者なかるべきを一般に確認す” (“The ship that departed on the 6th instant had only 279 emigrants aboard and is to be last sailing of emigrants from Hawaii to the Dominion of Canada. The public may be assured that there will be no additional emigration for a period of at least six months”). On October 2, Hayashi (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 185) wired Saitō requesting information on the fate of the Japanese who had emigrated from Hawaii to Canada and asking whether he felt the situation in Hawaii warranted a reduction in the number permitted to emigrate there from Japan. In his reply the following day, Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 185) repeated his contention that further emigration from Hawaii was unlikely in the foreseeable future: “晚香坡へ今年中は転航者なき見込みなり、又布哇移民耕地の状況は少なくとも現在数の維持を希望する旨耕主組合の申し出に付き当分此の儘に差し置かれたし” (“I would prefer to let matters rest for the present, as it seems unlikely that there will be additional migration to Vancouver this year and the plantation owners’ association has requested that emigration [to Hawaii] be maintained at at least current levels given conditions on the plantations here”).

Saitō’s reassurances were perhaps less than sincere, given that he seems to have viewed Japanese emigration as benefiting Japan’s national aspirations, supporting emigration to Hawaii where there was relatively little anti-Japanese sentiment and observing a strict silence concerning emigration to areas where public opposition was strong, namely

Canada and the United States mainland (Sasaki 1999: 189). As its paternalistic response to the victims of the Vancouver Riot shows, the Japanese government viewed its emigrants as “Imperial subjects” who might potentially serve their interests overseas (Sasaki 1999: 189). Saitō certainly seems to have held this view, as can be seen from the following message to Hayashi on August 6, 1907 (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 187–188), in which he argued that the Japanese government should take no action to limit emigration to Mexico and Canada even in the face of local opposition, on the grounds that emigration could only be of benefit to the Japanese Empire: “移民を海外に出す事は日本帝国の利益なり、亦勤勉にして且つ廉給なる労働者を輸入使用する事も亦米大陸起業家全体の利益なる事疑いなし、唯之に反対を試むる者は彼の労少なくして報多からん事を望む白人労働団体なるものはなり、而して此の団体は跳梁跋扈の結果桑港に在っては最早自滅に垂々たるの報あり当然の事と云うべし” (“There can be no doubt that sending emigrants overseas serves the interests of the Japanese Empire, while it is also in the interests of entrepreneurs in the Americas generally to import workers who are diligent and who can be paid low wages. Those who attempt to oppose this are white labour organizations who hope to do little work for high wages. It should not surprise us to hear that these organizations, as a result of having had everything their own way, are already gradually disappearing”). Saitō saw Hawaii as a distribution centre for emigrants and pointed out the benefits they brought the mother country: “布哇は二十余年間の日本人労働者の移住地であり、すでに六万人以上がおり、毎年の送金が米金二百五十万弗の巨額に上っており、日本からの輸出の方が多いが日本にとっての一大商業地になっている” (“Hawaii has been a destination for Japanese emigrants for 20 years and is already home to 60,000 Japanese who send U.S. \$2,500,000 a year to Japan, and while exports from Japan are larger this is nevertheless an



important region for Japanese business”). Saitō concluded his message by saying:

勇進発展は我が国民の性質なり、況んや大陸の起業者之を外より誘ない高額賃金其の心を動かすに方ては政府の注意と雖とも之を制止する事能わざるは瞭然たり…今又英領加那陀の転航を開始す、是布哇に於ける発展の余力遂に溢れて其の勢を作し遂に布哇をして我が移民の集散地と為すに至りしなり、英領加那陀は今後大いに我が移民を送付せざるべからず

海外に移民を為す事は帝国に於いて目下有益なる事業の一たれば在外官吏は其の駐屯地に多少の混雑を生ぜざる限りは努めて誘導の勞にあたるを心掛け、彼の愚民一派の反抗に畏縮して目前及び将来の国益を等閑に付せざる様注意すべきのみ

It is in the nature of our people to aspire to overseas expansion, and it is obvious that the government can do nothing to stop entrepreneurs luring them to the continent with promises of high wages. ... [E]migration to the Dominion of Canada has now started once again, and Hawaii is full to overflowing with energy for development that can be diverted into at last making it a distribution centre for emigrants. We must send many more of our emigrants to Canada from now on.

Sending emigrants overseas is one of the most useful national ventures the Empire can undertake at present. Our representatives overseas should do what they can to guide them as long as this can be done without causing excessive crowding at their destination. We should be careful not to overlook our current and future interests in the face of opposition from a portion of the ignorant masses.

Although he did not include this information in the report of the Royal Commission, King suspected the Japanese of similar Imperial aspirations, and believed that Canadian support for the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation could only be maintained through restrictions on Japanese immigration (Roy 1989: 205).

Despite repeated reassurances from Saitō that emigration from Hawaii had dried up for the time being, Morikawa, perhaps cognizant of Saitō's expansionist views, continued

to urge that measures be taken to restrict emigration to Canada from Hawaii. In a telegram to Hayashi on December 27, 1907, he wrote:

聞く処によれば布哇に於いては明年一月より雇い船にてじかに多数の本邦移民を続々当地に転航せしめんと準備しつつある由、然るに当地方に於いては冬期中職業なく目下現に五十余名の白人は市長の保護を受けて僅かに寝食を得つつ程なれば此の際彼等の来航するは一般白人社会の感情を害すること甚だし、故に之れ迄再三再四申せし通り一時断然布哇行き移民の渡航を禁止し転航者を減するの法を講ぜられたし [quoted in Sasaki 185–186]

I have heard that there are preparations underway in Hawaii to charter a stream of ships that will bring large numbers of Japanese emigrants here, starting in January. There is however no work available here in winter—in fact some fifty whites are receiving minimal food and shelter under the protection of the Mayor—and under such circumstances their arrival would constitute an enormous affront to the white population. I therefore urge you to immediately impose an absolute ban on emigration to Hawaii and to take steps to reduce the number of trans-migrants.

The following day, Hayashi informed Saitō (quoted in Sasaki 1999: 186) that Canada planned to restrict the number of emigrants from Hawaii under the Immigration Act: “加那陀政府は布哇より加那陀に転航する外国人労働者に対し外国人労働法を適用する意向にて、其の結果我が転航移民は上陸を拒絶せらるるの虞あるに依り、此の旨新聞紙外等を利用し我が移民一般に周知せしむる様取計いあれ” (“The Canadian government intends to apply the Immigration Act to foreign workers from Hawaii, and our emigrants might be refused permission to land as a result. You are to see to it that the emigrant population at large is notified of this through newspaper advertisements and other means”).

Hayashi’s information was correct: the Laurier government was indeed planning an amendment to the Immigration Act in response to King’s findings in his second Royal

Commission. King attributed the sudden increase in immigration from Hawaii to a drop in wages on the plantations and activities by the Japanese Boarding House Keepers of Honolulu to promote emigration to Canada, where wages were higher (Roy 1989: 206). He recommended that Japanese emigration from countries outside Japan's direct jurisdiction be banned and that the number of Japanese admitted to Canada each year be restricted (Roy 1989: 206–207). In response, the Immigration Act would be amended in 1908 to impose a “continuous journey” restriction requiring all immigrants to Canada to arrive on a direct passage with a ticket from their country of origin, at a stroke banning emigration of Japanese citizens via Hawaii and, given that no shipping company offered direct service from India to Canada, effectively ending all South Asian immigration (Knowles 2000: 38).

#### **4. Conclusion: The “Gentlemen’s Agreement” and Prelude to Family Settlement**

While Deputy Minister of Labour W.L.M. King was preparing his reports, his immediate superior, Minister of Labour Rodolphe Lemieux, was visiting Japan in the hope of negotiating a settlement that would satisfy the British Columbia public while preserving the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (Roy 1989: 202, 206). Given that the treaty guaranteed Japanese citizens the freedom to “enter, travel, or reside” anywhere in Canada (Sugimoto 1978: 257), the Canadians could not limit the number of Japanese travelling to Canada without violating the treaty; instead, the Canadian government hoped that the Japanese could be persuaded to voluntarily restrict emigration to Canada from its shores. The end result of Lemieux’s negotiations with his Japanese counterpart, Foreign Minister Hayashi, was that the latter would offer *pro forma* public assurances that it would limit emigration to Canada, thus giving the Laurier government evidence it could present

to Parliament that something was being done to restrict Japanese immigration (Roy 1989: 209). Hayashi supplemented this public statement with a private promise to restrict emigration to Canada to the following categories of travellers: Japanese with certificates of residence in Canada issued by Japanese consular officials; the parents, spouses, and children of Japanese residents in Canada; “domestic servants” bearing invitations from residents of Canada certified by Japanese consular officials; contract workers whose contracts were certified by Japanese consular officials; and emigrants requested, again with consular certification, by Japanese farmers (Roy 1989: 209–210; Sasaki 1999: 107). The Japanese government also agreed to voluntarily restrict the total number of emigrants to 400 a year (Knowles 2000: 38; Sasaki 1999: 107). That the Japanese authorities were at least aware of these putative restrictions on emigration to Canada in the year the agreement came into effect can be seen in a report on Japanese settlements in Canada issued in January 1908 by the International Trade Bureau in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

本邦移民ノ加奈陀ニ在住スルモノ約七千余アリ[中略]「コロムビヤ」地方ニ本邦労働者麤集ノ結果自然土着ノ労働者ト競争関係ヲ生シ近年多少ノ紛紜アリ目下我移民渡航ノ制限ヲ為シ居レリ漁業権ハ英國臣人ノ外ハ之ヲ受クルコトヲ得ス但シ本邦人ニハ歸化ヲ許セリ當分多数移民ノ見込ナシ目下加奈陀太平洋汽船会社其他ノ外國船ヲ以テ晚香坡間ノ往来ニ充テ居レリ [英領加奈陀移民情報]

There are about 7,000 Japanese residents in Canada. ...The flocking of Japanese workers to the “Columbia” region has naturally resulted in competitive relations with local workers and there has been some conflict in recent years. Restrictions on the entry of emigrants from our country are presently in place. Although fishing rights are extended only to British subjects, Japanese may become naturalized citizens. There is no prospect for immigration in large numbers for the time being. At present the Canadian Pacific Steamship line, in company with foreign vessels, are making round trips to Vancouver.

Although few contract workers arrived after the conclusion of this “Gentleman’s Agreement,” as their employers also required permission from Canadian authorities, the Japanese however soon stopped applying the quota of 400 emigrants a year to family members on the grounds that they were not travelling to Canada to seek employment, so that in effect only “domestic servants” and agricultural workers were subject to Japanese government restrictions (Sasaki 1999: 107).

The conclusion of the Gentleman’s Agreement did not stop the growth of Canada’s Japanese population, but the increase in the number immigrating as family members of existing Japanese residents may have altered its character. In a change from previous immigration patterns, the family category was soon dominated by women and girls (Roy 1989: 213), and Japanese communities in Vancouver and Steveston became the cores of a growing Japanese population (Sasaki 1999: 73–74). Whereas formerly the Japanese in Canada had largely been *dekasegi* (transients who left home temporarily for work), the balance was now shifting to those who came to settle, stay, and raise their families (Roy 1989: 213). As can be seen in Table 4.1, while in 1907 women and girls made up only 3.2% of Japanese immigration to Canada, their numbers rose sharply in the year the Gentleman’s Agreement went into force, and in the years between 1908 and 1923, when new rules on Japanese immigration went into effect, they occupied 53.0% of total immigration. That Canadian “continuous passage” regulations had a marked impact on the number of Japanese immigrants arriving from third countries is clear from the fact that the number of passports issued for travel to Canada exceeds the number of immigrants after 1907. The number of passports issued also indicates that the limit of 400 immigrants per year was largely ignored by the Japanese authorities, although it may have had the effect of reducing

immigration by migrant workers and increasing female immigration.

**Table 4.1.** *Number of Japanese immigrants to Canada, 1907–1922*

<b>Year<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Japanese immigrants to Canada</b>	<b>Female Japanese immigrants to Canada</b>	<b>% female</b>	<b>Passports issued to Japanese travelling to Canada</b>
1907	7,601	242	3.2	2,753
1908	858	565	65.9	601
1909	244	153	62.7	281
1910	420	134	31.9	538
1911	727	217	29.8	820
1912	675	362	53.6	1,025
1913	886	424	47.9	1,270
1914	681	447	65.6	1,284
1915	380	328	86.3	778
1916	553	233	42.1	1,055
1917	887	310	34.9	1,226
1918	1,036	370	35.7	1,780
1919	892	530	59.4	1,764
1920	525	389	74.1	1,371
1921	481	338	70.3	1,163
1922	395	300	75.9	1,022
<b>Total:</b>	<b>17,027</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>18,731</b>

1. Canadian immigration figures for 1907 are for the twelve-month period beginning in April 1907 and ending in March 1908.

*Sources: Figures for total and female immigrants to Canada from Ayukawa (2008: 36); figures for number of passports issued from Sasaki (1999: 106–107)*

This paper has examined changing patterns in Japanese emigration to Canada in the years between 1877 and 1908. The first Japanese to arrive in substantial numbers were contract labourers brought to work in the collieries on Vancouver Island. These miners fit the pattern of *dekasegi* labourers, migrants travelling in search of work rather than immigrants looking to put down roots in a new country. Faced with voracious contractors, poor working conditions, a depressed economy, and efforts by Canadian labour to exclude them from the more lucrative jobs in the mines, they soon broke their contracts and moved elsewhere, some becoming part of the nucleus of new communities of Japanese Canadians formed by fishermen, agricultural workers, lumbermen, shopkeepers, and mill hands. As the West Coast economy improved, their numbers slowly increased, reaching about 5,000 by 1907.

The opening months of 1907 saw the United States impose restrictions on Japanese emigration to the continental U.S. from the territory of Hawaii, triggering a sudden spike in the number of Japanese arriving in Canada. Anti-Japanese sentiment, which had simmered in the province since the first arrival of Japanese contract workers in 1891, came to a boil in British Columbia when the *Kumeric* arrived in July 1907 with an unprecedented 1,177 Japanese emigrants aboard. Whereas earlier anti-Japanese reaction was largely due to discriminatory wage scales that resulted in “white” workers fearing displacement by their more poorly-paid Japanese counterparts, as well as fear of upward mobility among the Japanese in Canada, the sudden arrival of large numbers of Japanese sparked concerns that the Japanese government had imperial designs on the West Coast of Canada. As we have seen, these fears were not entirely unjustified, as some Japanese officials supported emigration as being of benefit to Japan. The Japanese government also viewed Japanese overseas as Imperial subjects who they hoped would support their goals, and went to great lengths

to protect their interests. The paternalistic attitude of the Japanese government towards its citizens in Canada can be seen not only in the Japanese Consulate General's response to the Vancouver Riot, but also in the repeated interventions by the Vancouver consulate to assist miners at the Union Colliery.

Anti-Asian feelings culminated in the Vancouver Riot in 1907, which was partly prompted by the arrival of large numbers of Japanese emigrants via Hawaii. This event led to efforts by the Canadian government to appease anti-Japanese sentiment in British Columbia while obeying the letter of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, culminating in the "continuous voyage" restriction and the Hayashi-Lemieux "Gentleman's Agreement" governing emigration from Japan. While successful in curbing immigration from Hawaii, these actions had the paradoxical effect of increasing family immigration to British Columbia, creating a permanent community from what had formerly been chiefly a collection of migrant workers.

Further opportunities for research on this topic exist in the archives of Japanese diplomatic correspondence, much of which has only recently come to light and is not yet available in English. More research could also be done on materials available locally in various locations in British Columbia, such as the Cumberland-Courtenay-Comox area on Vancouver Island, and such records as may exist of early non-governmental Japanese organizations in British Columbia, such as the Common Japanese National School, the Japanese Methodist Church and Buddhist Temple, and the Fraser River Fishermen's Association. Limitations of space have also prevented me examining the response of Japanese government officials to British Columbia's numerous attempts to pass variations on the Natal Act restricting non-white immigration to the province.



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