

"There is some reason to believe that conditions have been slightly improved since the date on which the eye-witnesses, whom I have quoted, escaped, but the Japanese Government have refused their consent to a visit to Hong Kong of a representative of protecting power, and no permission has yet been granted for such a visit by representative of International Red Cross Committee. They have in fact announced that they require all foreign consuls to withdraw from all territories they have invaded since the outbreak of the war. It is clear that their treatment of prisoners and civilians will not bear independent investigation.

"I have no information as to condition of our prisoners of war and civilians in Malaya. The only report available is a statement by the Japanese official news agency of March 3 stating that 77,699 Chinese have been arrested and subjected to what is described as 'a severe examination.' It is not difficult to imagine what that entails.

"I am sorry that I have had to make such a statement to the House. Two things will be clear from it, to the House, to the country and to the world. The Japanese claim that their forces are animated by a lofty code of chivalry, bushido, is a nauseating hypocrisy. That is the first. The second is that the enemy must be utterly defeated. The House will agree with me that we can best express our sympathy with the victims of these appalling outrages by redoubling our efforts to ensure his utter and overwhelming defeat."

The Prime Minister, Mr. King, added these remarks:

I am informed by our High Commissioner in London that, on the basis of information so far received, United Kingdom authorities agree that of all the reports of specific atrocities received to date none are alleged to have been committed against Canadians, but no reports show that in so far as general treatment of prisoners of war is concerned Japanese have made any differentiation between Canadians and other British troops.

Words cannot begin to express the sense of outrage and the feeling of bitter resentment to which this announcement of Japanese atrocities at Hong Kong is certain to give rise, among civilized peoples everywhere, and nowhere more than in the different countries of the British Empire and in the United States, with which Japan is at war.

Retribution for barbaric behaviour of the kind will follow in full measure in due course. Meanwhile, numbers of Canadians, both soldiers and civilians, in Hong Kong and in other parts of the Far East, are now and will continue for some time to be at the mercy of the Japanese forces. Remembering this fact, it is of the utmost importance that no act of vengeance should be permitted or taken against persons of Japanese origin in our country, since any such acts might be made an excuse for acts of retaliation upon Canadian soldiers or citizens in the Orient.

I may add that the Canadian Government, in conjunction with the Governments of Australia, India, the United Kingdom and the United States, are making every effort, both through the countries which are protecting their interests in enemy countries and through the International Red Cross, to get into personal touch with prisoners of war and others. The object of all these enquiries is twofold: to

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secure all possible authentic information, and also to bring such measure of relief in the nature of medical supplies, food and personal comforts, as can possibly be arranged.

EASTER RECESS

INQUIRY

On the motion to adjourn:

Hon. J. T. HAIG: Honourable members, I should like to ask a question of the leader of the House. I notice the Prime Minister has announced that the House of Commons will adjourn for the Easter recess from March 27 to April 20. Can the right honourable leader tell us what suggestion he will make for the Easter adjournment of this House?

Right Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The House of Commons arranges its sittings and its adjournments to suit itself, and of course likewise the Senate is master of its own procedure. I have not yet looked into the question of when our Easter adjournment should begin and end.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Honourable members, if I am permitted, I shall explain in a few words why I raised this question. It has been raised in this Chamber a hundred times before, I suppose, and I presume that after we all are gone it will be raised a hundred times more. We who live in distant parts of the country—and our number includes at least half the membership of this House—have to sit around day after day for considerable periods, kicking our heels. We certainly should like to have some idea of the dates of the Easter adjournment. Some of us have not much business, it is true, but we have at least a little to attend to, and I say to the right honourable leader that it is very unfair to us not to be informed of such dates at least two or three weeks in advance, in order that we may make certain necessary arrangements. The Prime Minister is giving the House of Commons nearly three weeks' notice of the adjournment of that House, and I think the Senate is entitled to at least as much notice.

Right Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My honourable friend will recognize that my first duty is to find out what legislation must come to us before we adjourn. I shall try to get that information, through contact with my colleagues, as soon as possible, in order that I may make a statement to the House without any avoidable delay. It will be obvious that I must ask the Minister of Finance whether it is necessary that a money bill, in one form or another, be passed before we separate. I have