

4. Arrangements for Exchange of Canadian and Japanese Nationals
statement of Prime Minister, June 12, 1942

Right Hon. W.L. MacKenzie King (Prime Minister): The hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green) asked a question yesterday-which I must apologize for not having answered sooner, because it was asked before-regarding the exchange of nationals between Canada and Japan. The facts are that immediately on the outbreak of the war with Japan negotiations were undertaken with the Japanese government, through the protecting power, for the repatriation of officials. Early in the year these negotiations were extended to cover non-officials, and an understanding was reached for the repatriation to Canada of Canadians in Japan and occupied China, on the understanding that Japanese subjects in Canada who wished to do so may be permitted to return to Japan. As accommodation on the first exchange vessel is limited, an early repatriation of large numbers is not to be expected. Under the circumstances, the Canadian authorities have requested the protecting power for Canadian interest to give priority to women and children in the assignment of berths on the exchange vessel leaving the far east. A small party of Canadians, other than officials, being evacuated from Japan at the present time is expected to arrive in Canada about the end of August or early in September, and other small groups may be expected to arrive at intervals of six weeks or two months from then on. The full list of persons in the first vessel has not yet been received by the Canadian government, and may not be received before the vessel sails.