

Transcript: Panel 3, Civilian Internment in Canada, Winnipeg MB, 16-19 June 2015

Janis: Good afternoon, I'm Janis Thiessen from the University of Winnipeg and the editor of *The Oral History Forum*, which is the journal of [Canadian Oral History Association](#). We are hoping that our panelists here today will be taking advantage of the opportunity to not only share their personal stories with you but also sharing them with the broader readership of the *Forum*. Oral history is a wonderful way of democratizing history by bringing out the stories of those who too often in the past historians have overlooked as unimportant, or as individuals who are considered not of value by the state. As this conference is centered around, and we have a panel here today, of people talking about largely their personal or their family or other individual experiences that they have uncovered through their own experiences themselves or through their own research.

Our first panelist today is Diane Kostyshyn; she is the granddaughter of Matthew Kostyshyn, the pioneer poet who emigrated from Dalhousie in the Western Ukraine, to Canada, and then to New York. Dianne is a business professional who lives in Indianapolis and has worked at Elie Lily and company for over 30 years. Currently she is employed there in their diabetes care division.

Diane: I'd like to thank the organizers for the invitation here. I have tried to learn as much as I can about my grandfather and I would like to share with you a little bit about him. He's just one example of an individual of who migrated here to Canada. So he emigrated in 1913, and then he left in 1921. His time frame here was fairly short. But we were blessed to have all his original immigration documents, from his passport which is in German, to a doctor's letter in Polish which states he is of sound mind and eligible to emigrate, to his train pass from Boston to Canada, Winnipeg. So that tells us a little bit of his journey and what happened to him while he was here. And I do want to just say I really have no idea if he was in an internment camp. It's a possibility, I know he had a terrible experience here, but I don't really know whether he was interned or not, but based on the different pieces of information it's a good possibility that he was.

What is unique about my grandfather is although he was a labourer, he actually worked most of his life as a carpenter, and he was a poet. And I remember as a little girl sitting on his lap and him reciting poems to me and how beautiful the rhythm of the language was. And I thought, you know, when I was a teenager, he maybe wrote like ten or so poems and we ended up hiring someone to go back to *Svoboda*, which is a Ukrainian-American newspaper, and through that work and other work, we ended up finding over 400 poems. Many of them were written here in Canada. So I do have several books of his that include both text and poetry from Winnipeg. Unfortunately I am not fluent in Ukrainian.

Maybe they would be helpful to someone else to understand if he is writing about a historical time frame; it may just be poetry about the country, but nevertheless I feel like there is a body of work that might be helpful to someone.

This is a picture of him; his name was Matthew. And he started in Dehova, which is near Rohatyn and he came through Boston and then went up to Winnipeg and then from Winnipeg eventually came down to the New York Metropolitan area, which he lived in the rest of his life.

So these are the original documents that we have, and the time frames that he went from area to area. I think that one of the things that is very interesting at least to me and maybe typical of people coming from that region, is how his name changed in all the documents and so it is kind of interesting to see that history, and you can see some of the documents specifically from Canada.

So for example, this is the document that talks about him coming over on the plane, on the boat *Cincinnati*, and then the stamps.

And this is a unique document that that he had to check into the chief of police on a monthly basis and you can see the different signatures and it was from Winnipeg.

And then finally here is a copy of a registration form and maybe these are very typical, but unfortunately I don't really fully understand the history behind these so I would be curious if someone could help me learn.

One of the great experiences was my mom, who was big into genealogy in the '70s and '80s, actually interviewed a number of the family members and interviewed him, so this was actually from her handwriting. He met several friends onboard who were going to Canada and for a \$12 pass he took the train from Boston to Quebec to Winnipeg. There was a big depression, he was out of work for seven months, and in 1914 his first job was in a marble factory and he remained there from 1913-1921.

And this was a picture that we had in our records from when he worked in the marble factory.

It goes on to say the reason Pop went to Canada with other Ukrainians was that Canada wanted to settle in Western Canada, and there were representatives to Ukraine to urge farmers to come. They would give them land free if they worked the land for 3 years. It would be theirs and they could apply for more land, and all the land had aspen trees that had ground roots that needed to be cleared.

He was alone, where other men came with wives and children and helped them clear the land, and he was alone and discouraged, so what I always heard was that he buried his farming tools, never to return to Canada. But it took him quite a while to actually earn money to pay off his debt, and then he moved down to the United States.

As I said, what is unique about my grandfather is that he wrote all these poems and anyone I've ever showed them to will just say how beautifully written

they are. And he was an uneducated man, I mean he only had several years of school, then he self-taught. There are actually two phases of his writing. One is in the 1920s, he started in '18 and into the '20s, and the others are '30-'40s. The '30-'40 phase people say is his better work, but still he has many poems and one is called "Прощай", which is his last day of leaving Canada, which is in Ukrainian so I can't share it with you but I do have copies of it. What is unique, I knew that my grandfather compiled all his works with the hope to someday publish other than in the newspapers, and so a couple years ago I went into a museum in Canada with several of my original papers from this box to find out that his three ledgers of work were in a museum in Chicago, so they are available if anyone ever wants to look at them. There are three ledgers: one is of poems that have been cut out of newspapers, and the other two, poems are handwritten. One is over 500 pages, and one is just under 200 pages.

I have a list of those that I know came from Canada.

The last comment I wanted to make is that he was given several honours by *Svoboda*, which is an Ukrainian-American newspaper and I remember several of the editors, past editors, coming to his home and celebrating his life and so, it's hard for me, I don't know how good he was. I don't know the language. I just know what people who have seen the poems have told me and I'm waiting to find the right person who will look through his work. But I'd like to read just the last paragraph of this. There was an editorial in the newspaper when he died and it was called "The Passing of an Era." The last paragraph reads, "Matthew Kostyshyn belonged to a rare breed of man who not only spoke what they felt, but they did what they thought was necessary to establish a foothold in the Ukrainianism in this land. He is now gone, lived a full and fruitful life." What this editorial is saying is that we should learn not only today, but learn from that time frame and the work should not be forgotten. The main message I wanted to convey today other than knowing that these immigration documents are available or copies of them are available, but there is this body of work, hundreds of pages that reflect upon his life in Canada. I can't not believe that there is some historical significance of the information, I just don't know what it is. So with that, thank you very much.

Janis: Our second presenter is Larissa Stavroff, she was born in 1943, approximately one year after her father, Peter Kraftchock, an activist in the [Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association](#) and a member of the Communist Party of Canada, was released from internment. An independent researcher and translator, she recently was given access to the Krechmarowsky and Weir family papers. Two members of these families granted her interviews and it is their stories Larissa will be recounting today.

Larissa: I've titled my piece, "Why are they Taking my Daddy Away?: How Families Cope with Internment." At a memorial in 2003 Mary Prokop delivered a glowing tribute to an outstanding woman. A woman who had devoted her life to the struggle for democratic rights. That woman was Helen Krechmarowsky. Prokop said, "I really got to know Helen well when the Second World War began. When our husbands, along with 14 other of our leading people, were arrested in Winnipeg and interned in Southern Alberta in Camp Kananaskis. They and many others, over one hundred across Canada, all anti-fascist labour leaders, were arrested and interned under the powers of the Defense of Canada Regulations. We, the wives of those interned, were the first to begin action. Telegrams of protest to the Minister of Justice and demands for their release. It was especially during this time that Helen showed her militant spirit and able leadership."

Mary Harrison, Helen and Nick Krechmarowsky's foster daughter, who was sixteen at the time, recalls that at about five in the morning on the day of the arrest, everyone was awoken by pounding and five burly men rushed in through the front and back doors shouting. Their daughter June was frightened and crying but Helen stoically held everyone together. The men started raiding the house and grabbed Mary's suitcase full of Ukrainian books and Helen's husband Nick was given a few minutes to change from his pyjamas before he was led away. They were all left in a state of shock. June, who was eight at the time, also remembers the disquieting experience of a bunch of strange men bursting into the house. At one point, her mother started hiding things in a wash basin while motioning to her daughter to pretend she didn't see anything. Even though the men were nice to her, June knew something bad was happening. Helen Krechmarowsky said in her memoir, "June was crying because she didn't know what was happening. She only knew they were taking her father away. And was wanting to know where he was going."

At the time of the arrest, the Krechmarowsky's were both active in the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association: Nick in the cultural sphere teaching music and Ukrainian, and Helen in the political one serving on executives in the woman's branch. During internment they were on relief. Well, Nick of course not, but Helen and the two kids, they were on relief, they were receiving coupons for food and clothing. Eventually Helen found work at the Winnipeg Co-op making cheese and ice cream. And on Saturday mornings little Junie would join her there. And June would paste butter coupons into books for the government. At some point June had saved up enough money for making 25 cents. Now June doesn't each time quite recall whether it was a day, an hour, or week, but she saved the 25 cents each time and bought herself a "[beauty doll](#)." And some of you might remember the beauty doll from those years from 1940.

In addition to full-time employment, and caring for her two daughters, Helen threw herself into campaigning for the release of the internees. By keeping

contact with prisoners' wives, organizing and holding secret meetings, attending demonstrations, conferences, circulating petitions, canvassing etc., June recalls, "my mother was very active in writing letters and petitioning." When it was found out that the internees were being transferred from Kananaskis to Petawawa, she, along with many others, went down to the Winnipeg train station, kids in tow, placards in hand. Unfortunately the Krechmarowsky internment letters did not survive. But June stresses that the family did its best to keep in touch and recalls that they never forgot her father's birthday. To quote June, "[w]e were always sending baked goods, cards, letters, and parcels at Christmas. At Easter, I sent him a large chocolate egg and the RCMP purposely broke it open, I was devastated." The internees maintained contact with their loved ones, not only through correspondence, but also through souvenirs that they'd fashioned from wood, bone, paper, bark, etc., often registering their loved ones' names right on those objects. When I asked June if she felt different from the other children, she replied, "I think it was known that my dad was arrested. There was a sort of aura around me that I was one of THOSE kids."

Following his release, Nick Krechmarowsky was required to report regularly to the parole office and would sometimes take June along. Because the Labour Temple was still closed, he couldn't resume teaching but found a job at a candy factory, after which he drove a tanker for British American Oil. Nick finally received Canadian citizenship in 1944 when the family moved to Windsor, where he resumed teaching in the Association of Ukrainian Canadians. Concerning her father's arrest, to this day, June Morris wonders why. He was not a member of the Communist Party of Canada, nor even an activist in the labour movement. Just a cultural worker. My mother on the other hand, was both an activist and a member of the Communist Party of Canada. Fortunately most of the Weir internment correspondence has survived. And it, along with Helen Weir's memoirs and an interview with her daughter Lorna Clarke, were invaluable in putting together a narrative.

When Helen Kuchuran met John Weir in Coaldale AB at a course given by the Young Communist League, she was a naive sixteen-year-old girl living in Lethbridge Alberta with her parents. He was a dashing young man of the world, nine years her senior and a left-wing political activist. They married in 1933, they produced 2 children, Charlie and Lorna Mae, and they moved back and forth between Toronto and Winnipeg, and John Weir was arrested in Sept 1940. At that time Helen Weir said, "[w]hen Johnny was arrested and taken to Kananaskis, I had the children to look after and could only do that with my mother's help." So Helen returns to Lethbridge with the children, they are two and six, and it's only two months into her husband's arrest and she finds herself recovering in a hospital following extensive abdominal surgery. She also has a thyroid condition. Longing for John, missing and worrying about her children, unable to work or make ends

meet, and not qualified for relief because she had out of province status, at the age of twenty-five she suffered a nervous collapse.

During her convalescence, Helen's mother cared for Charlie and bore the financial burden, which was eased somewhat by contributions from her sister Gladys and husband John Boyd who are caring for Lorna in Minnedosa. At one point Helen caught word of the prisoners being taken by train through Winnipeg, she was working in Minnedosa at the time, she grabbed the children rushed off to Winnipeg and they missed John by minutes. So that was, for them, quite tragic. She then moved her children to St. David's Ontario to her in-laws on the farm, and she herself got work in St. Catherine's. So the children lived on the farm with the grandparents, and it wasn't a happy situation for anyone, but that's another story. When I asked Lorna how that felt – if she ever felt abandoned – she said that “there was always extended family and in some respects they were abandoned but in other respects they were not abandoned.”

Helen becomes politically active in the NCDR, she travels on speaking tours around Southern Ontario with other activists, and she at one point takes Charlie to Hull to visit John. And for Charlie, he is quite impressed because this little seven-year-old was quite a movie buff at that time, having sat through [The Great Dictator](#) four times, they had to haul him off the balcony and he was crying because he wanted to see the ending for the fourth time. So that is who Charlie was. This was a movie for Charlie. But he wondered about the big red circle on the back of the internees' jackets. Helen explained this to him and she didn't pull any punches and she felt for years that she'd probably really frightened him because it remained in his memory ever since.

She always sent snapshots; she kept up a very vigorous correspondence. There were many, many heartwarming and amusing and poignant moments in the exchange of letters, and it was interesting to track the growing bond between John Weir and his children.

From month to month Charlie would send his scribbler sheets showing his printing skills, pictures of Halloween pumpkins, and an actual tooth that he had lost. John praises Charlie, he encourages good scholarship and good behaviour and he promises when he gets out to play hockey and go on vacation with the children. To Helen he writes that he keeps a snapshot of the kiddies over his bed and he regrets missing the most interesting stages of Lorna's development. To keep the children engaged John sends episodes from the story of Jacob the Crow. Starting with Jacob's babyhood when the men tamed him through feeding sessions, riding on people's heads, messing on coats and furniture, having his wings clipped, growing his feathers back, limping, recuperating, being chased by a big black cat and finally to pulling up all the spring onions. Charlie responds with, “I got your letter and I liked your story about the crow. He must be pretty

funny. I would like to see that crow.” And on another occasion, “I would like to be with you now. How is Jacob the Crow?”

And now back to the saga of the teeth. Helen writes, “Charlie has lost a tooth and we want to send it to you but he is afraid that it will bite you like the other one did.” Due to being only years old at the time of his arrest, Lorna was too young to engage with her father, but she did say things and Helen would write this to John. “I’m going to tell my own Daddy on you!” and “I want to hug my daddy and kiss him.” And on September – excuse me. This is always the moment when I have a problem. – And on the September 14, 1942, John Weir congrats Charlie on his eighth birthday and indicates that the following month he expects they will be able to celebrate it together. And that would mean that John is released and he was released shortly after that and they were able to resume being a family. Thank you very much.

Janis: Our third speaker is Sid Kiyoshi Ikeda. Sid Ikeda was born in Vancouver and lived in an internment camp from 1942-1947. He was employed for forty years at Eaton’s, becoming eventually the National Energy Environment Manager for the company. He has been active in numerous Japanese Canadian and Asian Canadian community organizations, including serving forty-four years with the [Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre](#). Mr. Ikeda.

Sid: Actually I came here because Rhonda Hinthier wrote me an email and I live in Toronto. And she says this letter is for the Harmonica Guy, Harmonica Guy, you know. And that caught me because I love playing harmonica so I’m going to play one song and then I’m going to get into my speech. I’ll play a Scottish song, not Japanese. ***plays harmonica***

Anyways, I do have a story to tell. You know when Rhonda says she wants you to play harmonica, songs from the internment camp, I was only seven years old! I was born on October 11, 1934 - that makes me over eighty years old.

I am the third son of a family of seven, my father came from Japan in the early ‘20s from Kummomorcho Japan. Mother’s parents came from Kummomoto in 1895. They had a family of eight children and my mother was the fourth child of that family. She was born in New Westminster in 1907. My father and mother got married in the late ‘20s and lived in Vancouver. I went to Hasting Park School. I believe I was in Grade 1. And on the outbreak of war, which I knew nothing about, my father got taken away. Then I was, we had to move our family of five over to my aunt’s near Kodova Street.

If you are in Vancouver, Kodova Street is near the baseball diamonds, where the Asahi played, I don’t know about the size but they are the [famous Japanese baseball team](#) before the war. Anyways, on the outbreak of war, my father got taken away and went to Road Camp. We moved from Farm Street to

my aunt's place on Kodova Street. Then I went to Strathcona School. And while I was going to Strathcona School, I was wondering why there was curfew and why we Japanese kids – you know I never thought myself Japanese – but we had to get off the street and why the Caucasian kids could play. And next you know, just before I would say in the early summer, we got sent into Hasting Park. And Hasting Park was a place where the racing stable was and that's where my mother and five kids lived in the racing stable.

My mother was pregnant and she had her sixth child while she was there. But she had the baby in Vancouver General Hospital and then came back. Now you got to remember that Hasting Park was a holding place, because the Canadian Government was building homes in the internment camps all over parts of the southern interior of B.C.

What happened was after the baby was born, the next thing I know is I am on the train and I am going to a place called Tashme. Now Tashme is about 150 miles east of the West Coast. There were 2500 Japanese Canadians living there. There were ten rows of houses and the houses were just matchbox houses. It was just an A-frame house with tar paper and they had two bunk beds on the side for four people to sleep or more and a dining room and a stove, and it was a wood stove by the way, and a Coleman lamp. That's all you had. So we, you know, children, we never stayed in the house. We got up in the morning, ate breakfast, went outside and played, came back home to have lunch, out, supper, out, in bed.

And when they built the schools we went to school. It was a big barn over there which was I always will remember cause that's where we have congregated with the community activities. That was a nice place for community, the school by the way, the school was a separate part, but at the barn that's where they had martial arts, judo and then at night they could have concerts. They kept it very active for people because remember that 2500 people lived there. But one thing I forgot to tell you about is about the bath houses. How did we keep clean? Well, they built four bath houses and these bath houses were all wood and everything. But they had at the center, they had a hot tub. But the bath houses built like this and it was divided by a divider for men and women.

So the women and men would come in and we shared the same hot tub, you know, that's one thing we did. And I remember as a little boy I would dive underneath you know and take a look to see what was on the other side and all I see was women's feet. And I says it's not getting worth getting a headache for, looking at feet.

And these are the boats that were taken away when Japan bombed Pearl Harbour and that's what they did, they took all the cars and boats and your property away from you.

And this is Hasting Park where the racing stables were, my mom with her children, and there were men's and women's dormitories because the men and

women were separated. But the families stayed in the racing stable. And they said they smelled but I could never remember smelling anything because I never stayed there long enough because I needed to get out of that place and I, we all, you know, when you're young, you're always out to play and make new friends.

But it was really something you know, because all of a sudden you come from a city into a crowd of Japanese people and it's amazing, you make friends so easy so when we went to Tashme you can just imagine what a place it was for me or for our friends or my age of people. We made so many friends and we had so many things we could do together, you know, we could go mountain climbing, we could go rafting, we made, even at my age, we made rafts and we went fishing and you know there were a lot of things we did as children. But my parents, they suffered the most, as they had to work. My mother with seven, at that time she had six kids, you can just imagine her washing clothes and cooking and doing everything, and I just couldn't believe how my mother could do so much work.

And then what happens, in 1942, my father comes back from the Road Camp and a year later he dies, but I want to show you a picture of my father and the six kids. That's Tashme with those houses and the next slide there are rows of houses and that's a little old shop for sewing for the office staff. Ok that is the one where the Red Cross brought food for the people. By the way we got food, everything free, the government paid for everything for us, clothing, food, everything. So as far as money, they gave you two pounds to buy your food and everything was fresh and given properly, I forgot to mention one more thing was in a house that had less than six people, two families had to live and share so there was no privacy for people with less than four people in their family.

Ok the next slide, I want to show you my father, that's my father, my mother, my oldest brother, my brother Kenny and I'm on this side, the left side, and my brother Edgar and my sister standing up and my young daughter, my sister that was born in Hasting Park. And then 1943, November 15, my father suddenly died, leaving my mother pregnant with her seventh child, so you can just imagine how stressful it must have been for my mother. A year later, seven months later, my younger brother was born in May 7th, 1944.

So it was quite an experience to go through and so when the war was over in 1945, my uncle wrote to my mother, she was living in Toronto and said whatever you do don't sign up to go to Japan because the Canadian Government says, "all you Japs, we're going to send you back to Japan," but the Canadian-born said, "no, we don't want to go back to Japan, we're born Canadian." So the Government wisely decided that all Japanese Canadians if you want to stay in Canada you got to go East of the Rockies, but you will not go to the West Coast. So most of the Japanese people started to leave for the East, that's uh, the East of the Rockies, and the people that were going home to Japan, Tashme, being the closest to Vancouver, became the depot for sending people back to Japan.

So in 1945, we went to New Denver, which was 200 miles into the interior. Then from there in 1947, my mother and seven children came to Toronto, Canada and that's where it ended and that's when the internment camp was all over for us, that was the five years. But the most difficult time was coming to Toronto with a mother and seven kids and finding jobs and making friends and finding a living. There was no welfare at that time so we all had to find jobs. So in our family my two older brothers quit school and I sold papers, my younger brother sold papers, my mother worked at St. Michael's Hospital part time, and that's how we struggled. But do you want to know something, we are so proud to be Canadians. We're so proud to be Japanese, and we're so happy to be living in this beautiful country Canada. And that's my message. Thank you.

Janis: Our next speaker is Roland Penner. Born in 1924, he is the youngest son of internee Jacob Penner who was interned from May 1940-July 1942. From '42-'46, Roland Penner served with the Canadian Army overseas during the Second World War. He was called to the Bar in '61, practicing law as a partner with Joe Zuken, a name familiar to Winnipeggers. Penner became a law professor in '67, teaching criminal and constitutional law, and in '71 he was appointed as the first chair of Legal Aid Manitoba. Elected to the legislature in '81, he first served as Attorney General and then later became Minister of Education. As Attorney General he drafted and succeeded in having passed a new human rights code which included prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. He has been Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba from '89-'94 and has received the Order of Manitoba and the Order of Canada. Roland Penner.

Roland: Let me start with my personal recollections as a son of a political internee and I use that phrase political internee advisedly as I will illustrate later. That is my father Jacob Penner. At the time of his arrest on or about May 5, 1940, my father was not only a leading Communist but someone who, as many others did, rightly or wrongly, came to oppose Canada's involvement in World War II and at the same time, that is in May of 1940, he was a duly elected and highly respected City Councillor and had been ever since his first election in 1932. And let me emphasize, like all of the other political internees, my father was never charged with or convicted of any offence. He was picked up and detained at times in life-threatening situations and circumstances under the Defense of Canada Regulations, part of the War Measures Act.

The War Measures Act was never proclaimed by an Act of Parliament but simply and quickly proclaimed by a federal cabinet order-in-council. Section 21 of the Defense of Canada Regulations as it then was read as follows, and note as I read it the wide sweeping wording and bear it in mind as I go on. This is the

wording: “The Minister of Justice is satisfied that with the view to preventing any person acting in a manner acting in a manner prejudicial to the safety of the state, the Minister may make an order directly that that person be detained in such place and under such conditions as the Minister may determine and any person so detained shall be deemed to be in lawful custody.” So much for the rule of law or habeas corpus.

My story begins on a warm spring day in early May 1940. My father, mother, and my twin sister and I were sitting as we often did in the front porch, when all of a sudden two, four cruiser cars came, two in the front and two in the back. Eight huge police persons to arrest my father, who was fifty-nine years of age, five foot six and all of 125 pounds. They sent these eight burly police persons and took him away. And that was the last we saw of him until his release in July 1942. July 1942, two years and two months after his arrest, and this is why I use the term “political internment.” More than a year after the Soviet Union was invaded by Germany and became our great and good ally. Even then, from June of 1941 to July of 1942 in my father's case, some a little later, they were still detained.

Some notes of interest. The internees were detained sequentially in three places. First, Kananaskis in Alberta, and then Petawawa, a military base north of Ottawa, and finally in Hull, Quebec. The movement east of the political internees from Kananaskis was prompted in fact because the lives of these political internees, my father's and others, many of the Ukrainian leaders from here that Myron Shatulsky referred to, were in danger because they were kept with fascists and Nazis, who threatened their lives. And the wives, the wives, played a terrific role, but faced a lot of pressure and the government finally agreed to move them out of Kananaskis, east to Petawawa.

But interestingly enough when they were on the train moving, and let me just add a footnote here, some of the material I was able to garner from a wonderful article on the internees published in *Alberta History* Spring 1982 by Ben Swankey,¹ and he reports that as the train moved east from Kananaskis, the political detainees dropped notes out of the window to yard workers who they knew would be sympathetic, so we got word in Winnipeg that the train was coming with our fathers, husbands as the case may be, and so a number of us moved to a place in the CPR yards but the authorities aware of this, shunted the car off about 500 meters on the side and all we could do was wave and hope that our fathers and parents could see their loved ones.

Then the next place of internment was Petawawa, a military base, and the irony of that is that a year later they arrived later in 1943, I was in Petawawa in

¹ Ben Swankey, “Reflections of a Communist (III): Canadian Internment Camps,” *Alberta History* 30, 2 (Spring 1982): 11-21.

the army doing my advance training in the very place where my father had been detained as a political internee. Just my father is a tremendously interesting person and there is a reference about him in Ben Swankey's article in *Alberta History*, I just want to quote and he says at one point in this article, talking about my father, “[w]e imposed our own self-discipline on such matters as keeping neat, tidy, and clean in this respect we all admired Jacob Penner, the Communist Alderman from Winnipeg, already well advanced in years.” He was fifty-nine! Well advanced in years, be that as it may. “His orderly calm and methodical way of tackling all tasks and problems set an example for all of us.” I just wanted to take a minute to tell you what he did among other things, and why they say that he was such an unusual person.

I have here a song book. My father, while an internee, compiled about 100 songs ranging from the “Red Flag in the International” and “Solidarity Forever” to “Polly Wolly Doodle all the Day” and included some of the poems written by the peoples' poet Joe Wallace and set to music by Mitch Sagel. It's a very interesting document in itself and has historical significance. It has songs in three or four languages, English of course, and German, Russian, and French, in this remarkable book that he kept meticulously in his very fine handwriting throughout the course of his detention.

Let me move quickly to the release, the triumph I will call it, of his release. He was released in July 1942 and was on the train, CPR from Hull to Winnipeg not knowing that on the same train, my brother Norman and his new wife were taking their first trip to Winnipeg and my brother and his wife walked down the corridor and who do they see but my father! And when that train, when that train came to Winnipeg, there were close to 5000 people who came to greet my father, including every City Councillor who had earlier voted to take his council seat away. And in the October election of that year, my father again ran for Councillor, he was the top of the polls. He had a record of fighting so conscientiously for the rights of the working people, particularly during the late depression.

What is the legacy? Well, lest we forget. Think of the words that were used in the War Measures Act at the time the political internees were arrested. Think also of the FLQ crisis in October 1970, when Pierre Elliot Trudeau said “[just watch me](#),” proclaimed the War Measures Act, and rounded up 500 people, artists, and singers and composers and so on, none of whom were ever convicted of any offence. “Just watch me,” said Pierre Elliot Trudeau.

And yes, if I may, think of Bill C-51, which seems to me the one that is just being rammed through Parliament, House of Commons, and Senate by the Tories, it seems to me frightening. Bill C-51 seems to be frighteningly like a modern day version of the War Measures Act passed pre-emptively.

And in case you think I am an alarmist or paranoid, in 1985 the then Solicitor General in the Liberal Government, Robert Caplan, since deceased, a very fine person, came across a document that just absolutely frightened him. What was this document? There was in existence in 1985, still, a protocol for the arrest and detention of 1050 people. Leftists. And I was on that list, but not only that, I was Attorney General in 1980, that protocol described how these dangerous people were to be swept up, they were to be detained. Even the size of the barbed wire that was to be used to maintain them and under what circumstances they could be shot if trying to escape. That document existed. And Caplan immediately had it revoked.

But imagine, that's not that long ago, so when we think of legacy in your case I think I'm being a bit of an alarmist, well, I'm not sure I am. I'll conclude with by saying with respect to the idea of the legacy of what I have described in part of a personal and political base, the seventeenth century poet John Donne had it right indeed when he wrote, "[a]sk not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." Thank you.

Janis: Grace Eiko Thomson is the founding executive director/curator of the Japanese Canadian National Museum (now [Nikkei National Museum](#)), and former president of [National Association of Japanese Canadians](#).

Grace: Thank you. It is an honour and a privilege to take part in this panel. My name is Grace Eiko Thomson, born Eiko Nishikihama to immigrant parents who, as Naturalized Canadians (1929), settled in the City of Vancouver in the early 1930s (father having arrived in Canada in 1921).

In 1941, three months before the Pacific War, all persons of Japanese origin living in Canada were fingerprinted and registered. With declaration of war with Japan, even as Canadians were at that time fighting in Europe for democracy and freedom, the Government of Canada invoked the War Measures Act, and some 22,000 persons of Japanese origin (majority Naturalized Canadians and Canadian born) were labelled "enemy aliens" and were uprooted from their homes and sent to government-prepared detainment and internment sites. Resisters were sent to prisoner-of-war camps in Ontario.

To justify the removal of Japanese Canadians from the West Coast of British Columbia, the Government of Canada used various myths and euphemisms, such as "evacuation" rather than "internment", and "protective custody" instead of "forced expulsion", and "reasons of national security" even as its own military and RCMP advised that there was no need for removal of Japanese Canadians, that they offered no security risk.

For Japanese Canadians, the abuse did not begin with Pearl Harbor and the Second World War. It was a culmination of a long history of discrimination that

cast all those of Asian origin in the roles of second class citizens. Stripped of political rights without the right to vote, Asian immigrants and their children were traditionally targets for racist B.C. politicians seeking votes. The war offered a timely excuse to get rid of what they called “The Japanese Problem.”

The racist policy of the Canadian Government becomes more evident when even as the war had ended on August 15, 1945, Japanese Canadians (unlike Japanese Americans who were returned to the West Coast) were not allowed to return home. In fact, there was no home to return to. As early as in January of 1943, not even a year into internment, with Order-in-Council PC 469, all personal properties, such as fishing boats, cars, homes, farmlands, businesses, etc., supposedly left in trust with the Custodian of Enemy Property, were liquidated by the Government without owners’ consent, proceeds used to defray the costs of confinement.

As legal historian (author of *The Politics of Racism*, 1981), Ann Gomer Sunahara, informs us, the second generation of Japanese Canadians, like myself, that is, the Nisei, could not be interned under the Geneva Convention. Internment is applicable only to aliens. Accordingly, Nisei could only be detained at the pleasure of the Minister of Justice. However, this information was not known to the Nisei at this time, that they had thirty days in which to appeal their detention. Without legal counsel, Nisei, labelled “enemy alien” by the Government of Canada, considered their detention as internment.

With the expiry of the War Measures Act at the end of the war, Bill 15 was introduced by Minister Louis St. Laurent which offered transitional powers in peace time to announce two new policies. One of dispersal to the East of the Rockies, and the other, repatriation to Japan, thus ensuring Japanese Canadians not return to the West Coast. By then Japanese Canadians had been interned for three years and were severely demoralized--their former lives obliterated, their assets exhausted.

As a result of the Order, some 4,000 Japanese Canadians, largely the dispossessed seniors who had worked hard to settle in Canada prior to the internment, returned to a war-torn Japan. Many of their Canadian born children who had never seen or experienced Japan were deported as they left with their parents. Refusal to comply with the two options would be taken as evidence of disloyalty to Canada, even as it was reported in the House of Commons Debates of 1944 that “no person of Japanese race born in Canada has been charged with any act of sabotage or disloyalty during the years of war.”

Prime Minister Mackenzie King, to justify his government’s dispersal policy, declared in House of Commons Debates of August 4, 1944:

...the sound policy and the best policy for the Japanese Canadians themselves is to distribute their numbers as widely as possible throughout the country where they will not create feelings of racial hostility...

My parents made the decision to move to Manitoba. We were not allowed to live in the city at this time, so we spent the next five years in rural Manitoba, moving from one village/town to another, wherever my father could find work.

Asian Canadians received the right to vote federally in June 1948, provincially in March 1949. For Japanese Canadians it came into effect when restrictions on their movement were finally lifted on April 1st, 1949, four years after the end of the Pacific war. My family moved into the City of Winnipeg in 1950 to begin a new life. The resettlement is another story of struggle, which took many years.

On September 22, 1988, the federal government acknowledged that the governmental policies during the 1940s affecting the lives of Japanese Canadians were unjust, and pledged that such injustices would never again be countenanced or repeated in Canada.

However, in the past twenty years or more, I have come to realize that the government, despite the Acknowledgement of 1988, were not following or remembering their own pledges within their own institutions. And the myths propagated during the internment years were being re-utilized.

One instance is in regard to the naming of a new government building in Vancouver, which the Ministry of Public Works and Government Services announced in 2006. It was named after Howard Charles Green, praised as having made a great contribution during the Diefenbaker years. What was forgotten in this announcement was that Howard Green had, since his election from Vancouver South as Member of Parliament, in 1935, for more than a decade, tirelessly spoke for a ban on Asian immigration and for removal of Japanese Canadians from the West Coast. He engaged in relentless fear-mongering, following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, pushing for deportation as the ideal solution for the "Japanese Problem." And the argument used by Conservative Senator Hugh Segal and Senator Larry Campbell for this naming, as both Japanese and Chinese Canadian communities remembering the historic past spoke out against it, was that this kind of objection was inappropriate, that if we continually go back to the past, we would not be able to name anybody. But, for me, the most interesting reason offered was one by historian, Jean Barman, who said "Howard Green should not be condemned because he was simply representing the tenor of the time." (Globe & Mail, 2006)

The building was eventually re-named by the Government, Douglas Jung Tower, honouring the first Chinese Canadian Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament (June 10, 1957).

Another instance was the [Canadian War Museum](#) which opened in May 2005. Upon hearing that Japanese Canadian war veterans who had served in both the First and the Second World War (to show loyalty) were ignored in an exhibition panel which specifically spoke to Japanese Canadian “relocation” from the West Coast in 1942, as President of National Association of Japanese Canadians at that time, I went to Ottawa to review the display. What I found it was not just omission but misrepresentation of Japanese Canadian history and misinterpretation of the Government’s own Acknowledgement. Together with our own surviving war veterans and historians, I immediately met with the director, who soon left the position. After more than two years of ineffective negotiation, an *ad hoc* committee of the National Association of Japanese Canadians was formed to take action. Inviting leadership of Dr. Roy Miki (author of *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*) and Ann Gomer Sunahara (author of *The Politics of Racism*), a Position Paper, titled *Taking Responsibility: A Submission to the Canadian Government on the Misrepresentation of Japanese Canadians and Their History*, was submitted to the Government and its Museum staff, and to Media, in September of 2006, raising concerns that twenty-two years after the Redress settlement, the history of Japanese Canadians continues to be misrepresented by Canadian institutions and in official publications. Within months, changes were made to the Museum display as recommended.

I would like to point out here that, within the Government’s Redress Acknowledgement, there is a statement that reads, “. . .that the treatment of all Japanese Canadians during and after World War Two was unjust and violated the principles of human right as they are understood today.” I find myself concerned with the phrase, “as they are understood today,” why it is used here. Are we to understand that “principles of human rights” are open to re-interpretation in accordance with the “tenor of the time” (as historian Jean Barman has suggested), subject to change tomorrow by government (or political) convenience?

Which leads me to wonder, is Bill C-51, recently passed by the current Conservative Government supported by the Liberals, a replacement of the War Measures Act (repealed for good reasons in 1988), reflecting the tenor of *this* time? As Canadians, and myself as a senior who experienced injustices to my family in my lifetime under this Act, I would suggest that we, each of us, as Canadians, have obligation to remember or be informed, and ensure such injustices (or mistakes) are not repeated under this new Bill.

Janis: Though I’m grateful to Rhonda for inviting me to chair this session, I feel also like I have been put in an awkward position of handing these nasty “your time is running down” cards to people sharing such intense personal experience. When I spoke to our last presenter, Myron Shatulsky, about those very cards, he

said, “what happens if I ignore them?” and I joked that I would have to wrestle him to the ground, so we may end in a spectacular manner here but he also asked that I introduce him merely as the former choral conductor of the Ukrainian Labour Temple, but those of us who have any sort of acquaintance with him even casually, know he is so much more than that. In many ways he is the living embodiment of the Ukrainian Labour Temple. And so lest I take any more of his time: Mr. Shatulsky.

Myron: Don't get old. It is indeed a great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak to you because all of these issues that have been raised so far have are very close and really a part of my life to greater or lesser extent. My father was interned for just over two years in the '40s, the 1940s, and it just didn't affect myself, but my mother and I. You live through certain periods that you just can't get out of your mind, nor should you, nor should you.

My father was arrested on June 6th at 6:00 in the morning, I remember because my mother came in and says, “Myron, daddy's going away for a while, come up and say good bye.” I said “Ok.” Because who gets up 6:00 in the morning when you're only ten years old? Anyways, I got up and walked and there's my father standing in the kitchen with two strange men on either side. And he says “Myron, I'm going to be gone for a while,” he says and he's talking to me in English and partly in Ukrainian and he says, “[y]ou look after mom and we'll see you soon.” I says “Ok.” So we hugged and we kissed and everything they went and it wasn't until a few weeks later – well, first of all, I was used to my father going out on tours, he was editor of a newspaper, he was one of the leaders of the Association here in Winnipeg. And I was already used to him going out on tours and going to various branches of our Association and speaking to them and so forth.

So I didn't think anything of it until sometime later I said, a few weeks later, my mother sat down and says, “Myron, I want you to know something.” And then she told me I was what, ten years old, in 1940, and she explained to me what had happened. Well, at ten, I mean you, I couldn't really conceive of what she was telling me. But I knew that something was wrong because there were problems – she had to find work. My mother used to work as a seamstress before I was born and now she had to go back to work and to find a job. And she tried, she went to one here in Winnipeg, you know, they had quite an extensive manufacturing base for clothes and she was a seamstress in the old days. She finally got a job but had to leave after about a half a month because some of the women began to go after her because of my father's internment, it became public knowledge.

And they went after her and she left. She couldn't take it. Then finally she got hired by a man called Silverberg, I forget his name, but he owned Canadian

Sportswear here in Winnipeg, he also owned the North End drive-in, well, which we knew as teenagers, you know. Anyways once she was established there things sort of got stabilized well, more or less. My father was released in September of 1942, and they were already transferred to Hull and I came to see my father and the Commandant of the Hull Jail was there sitting behind the table and my father was about ten feet further away and my father says, "come and sit on my knee," so I did and we talked and we talked. He talked in English then he started talking in Ukrainian and then when the Commandant says, "well, your time is just about up." My father whispers to me in Ukrainian says, "go over and tell them that you want your daddy to come home." Oh, that's all I needed. I got up the tears and I told him, "I want you to let my daddy come home." And he looked at me and I stood there bawling and finally I turned around and kissed my father, didn't see him until maybe over half a year later because my father was released in September of 1942. That's extremely personal and seeing things like that you don't forget, at least I didn't forget.

But the other thing I remember is that when he came home he had things. He had books he brought with him, and one book that he brought was really something that I cherish to this day. First of all, the members that were still in the internment camp had bought this book, I don't know on what occasion, I have a feeling for my father's birthday. Anyways it's a Mark Twain, first edition of Mark Twain *In Eruption*, it was published in 1940 for the first time. And I mean that's something in itself, is it not, when you have a first edition by Mark Twain – you better believe it. But on the back is the boys, the men in the camp, have all signed their names at the back. And I would like to take this opportunity to read them because we talk of them but we don't mention them. Somehow. You know, it becomes a very general thing and I think it shouldn't remain as a general thing, these are people. They are specific people - they sat there in jail in the internment camp.

John Boychuk. John Navis. Peter Procop. Myron Kostensuk. Harry Assen. Jacob Penner. Thomas Chopolvik. William Repkah. Charles Smith. Kent Rawling. Joe Wallace. The poet Joe Wallace, you know I just want to stop for a minute, he wrote a poem when he was in jail there with the boys. He called it "How High, How wide": "My prison window is not large, five inches high, six inches wide, perhaps seven. Yet it is large enough to show the whole unfettered to and fro of heaven. How high, how wide is heaven? five inches high, six inches wide, perhaps seven." Now that is just wonderful, Joe Wallace, and how he sort of condensed that feeling of these internees who were cut off from civilization. I'll continue. Netpolian Adeu. Josheph Duchein. William Taylor. John Villequnaue. Nick Pindows. Misha Cohen. Roy Sanders. Charles Weir. Bill Wash. John Weir. Jack Grey. Thom McQuine. James Murphy. Alfred Campbell. Alec Miller. Fergus McKeen. Harvy Murphy. Robert Kerr. George Belint. Mooney Erilick. Bill

Beeching. Orton Wade. Bill Rigby. Louis Binder. Peter Keperahaw. Bill Toomie. And Mooney Taub. Now that's just thirty-eight people who were there, people that I met.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen of those I personally knew, or got to know. They're the ones that sat there in jail for two years or more. I think that it becomes a very personal thing, as Roland pointed out, and it remains with you, and I know it's going to remain with me for years and years well, years... I'm talking as if I'm a teenager! Those days are gone! But they won in the end, you know. They did. By living and coming home and talking to their parents and seeing their families and their children and their wives and getting back into groups as we have here today, getting to know one another and with the common goal at least a consensus of what we're trying to do, or have done, and I think that we have somehow influenced others. I'm not going to pontificate because it's not an easy job but at least let's not forget. Let's not forget these people. Let's not forget what they tried to do and what they did. There's too much water that has gone under the bridge. But it's strife – life is passing us, I'm speaking like that because I'm eighty-five years old. You sort of come to that point that everything you do and you tried to do has meaning and has more meaning than it ever did before.

I'd like to say that I feel very privileged that to be part of this gathering. Because it's the first time that we've gotten together like this for a long, long, long, long, long, time, and I think the more opportunities that we have to get together and exchange opinions and to discuss and argue and try to come to agreement the better it's going to be for all of us, and I would like to add, for all of Canada and Canadians. I thank you.

Janis: We have plenty of time for questions.

Ed: My name is Ed Caissie, I'm the museum curator for the [New Brunswick Internment Camp Museum](#). I was really moved by all of your stories, but I want Larissa to know what happened to Jake the Crow. Jake the Crow ended up at our camp in New Brunswick and we have a picture of him. If you give me your email, I can send you a picture of Jake the Crow.

Larissa: Thank you! I've been wondering myself because they were released and I'm sure Jacob still had time to go. Who is caring for him now I was thinking.

Ed: Someone from the camp in Alberta was transferred to the New Brunswick camp, and he brought the crow with him.

Larissa: Physically took Jacob?

Ed: Physically took him.

Larissa: Please, we will exchange emails.

Ed: I just thought I'd let you know that.

Larissa: Thank you so much.

Brent: I am Brent Stearns of the [CSULR](#) and I've a question particularly for Roland Penner. I am not sure I have my facts right. But my impression is that some, perhaps all, of the prisoners at Kananaskis had some kind of legal hearing. I am under the impression that Jacob had some kind of legal hearing before being taken to Kananaskis and I'm not sure this is correct. I have the impression that there were judges or a judge in Calgary that was concerned with habeas corpus and required that a couple prisoners go to Calgary for a hearing. I'm under the impression that a judge came to Camp Kananaskis and gave hearings to certain other prisoners. These hearings in the memoirs are regarded as laughable. My question is, what were judges asked to decide at these hearings? What kind of hearings were they? What were the judges asked to decide? Were the prisoners represented by council? And are records kept somewhere of these hearings?

Roland: I'm not familiar with the procedure that was just described by the speaker. What I do know is that some of those who ended up as political internees, for whom there was no trial, were, prior to their being arrested and detained, had been charged with a specific offence. Bill Swankey was one of them. He was tried and found not guilty – the judge said reluctantly, “I have to find you not guilty because there is no evidence beyond a reasonable doubt.” So Ben Swankey walked out of the courtroom and was immediately surrounded by police who said, “we are now detaining you under the War Measures Act,” for which there was no legal process. Once it's there, as I said, the rule of law is gone and habeas corpus is gone.

It is argued that presently the situation would be different today because of the *Charter*. That is why in fact the Harper Government tried and did ram through Bill C-51, hoping by doing so pre-emptively to run around the *Charter* but they won't succeed with it. But it never may have to be challenged if, you will excuse my political leadings, a change of government in October, one of the first things I hope a new government will do if it's other than the Tories will get rid of Bill C-51. Mitch Sagel was charged here with some offence and he was tried by a magistrate and found guilty and sentenced to six months of hard labour. Well, E.J. McMurray, the great civil rights lawyer, defended him and took an appeal and

pointed out there was no provision in the *Criminal Code* for hard labour. So Mitch Segal was released and then he was arrested under the War Measures Act and detained.

Wilf: I'm Wilf Szczezny. You indicated that you didn't think it would be possible for the government to get around the habeas corpus requirements with the *Charter* in place. But I'm wondering what you would comment about the case of the [Winnipeg resident](#) who according to the CBC report I heard was arrested or at least detained with no charges. For some time he was held without any charge and has recently been released with conditions for at least a year, which included all kinds of limitations on his freedom, including, ankle bracelets and what not. Under what authority was he so treated, and is he still being treated and how does that square with the question of the *Charter*?

Roland: Well there's no doubt, there is a provision that escaped everybody's attention but was encompassing more of those mammoth bills by the government. There is a provision in the *Criminal Code* which allows this kind of detention without charge of any kind, as strange as this young person may be, but you see there's never been an opportunity to challenge it in court. I would say, and I generally tend to be, pretty strong in my opinions as a constitutional scholar and teacher. At the moment that provision is in fact challenged in court- any judge and judiciary is pretty good these days, not like in the old days, would say that is illegal, contrary to the *Charter*, contrary to the provision under the legal rights section of the *Charter* that embodies our long tradition of habeas corpus. It will not stand if challenged but it has never been challenged.

It's interesting, isn't it. I just want a final comment, there's a big ad in the papers, we are about to celebrate, the date of the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. And Magna Carta, the Great Charter includes, the habeas corpus, and it's all being celebrated. The government is spending money to celebrate Magna Carta, one of the copies of Magna Carta will be displayed in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in a few months' time. At the same time, its essential provisions have, to considerable extent, been violated in these harsh bills that the current government has passed.

Franca [Iacovetta]: I wanted to thank the panelists for an incredible panel – that was wonderful, I'm glad it was recorded. And the ability to share personal stories punctuate the ironies and the injustice and also have a tremendous sense of resilience and a sense of humor. So I thank you all for that. I wanted to ask Sid a question because so much of the historical scholarship that people are writing and we are teaching about does talk a little bit about, there could be different

experiences during internment depending on your age the context so on and so forth.

But this whole the whole issue you bring up which is so important as children, you saw yourselves in the sense kind of as a camp and you have these very positive memories. We also hear and read about the long period of silence among Japanese Canadians until the Redress Campaign begins and so children are growing up with parents not telling the story or hearing fragments of things and then increasingly getting some sense of what was going on. But I really wonder, given that you spoke of your experiences with such energy and enthusiasm. So I wonder, did the kids, as you had to redistribute yourselves across the country, did you maintain relationships? Did you kids talk about it when no one else was talking about it in your individual families for example?

Sid: That's a good question because, you know, when we were kids – see, since we don't know what war is about, it was like, it's exciting what it is, that you are going from a city into a wilderness and I felt like I thought I was an Indian boy called Hiawatha. You know? And so it's a little different for people like our age group. I made some great friends who are my best friends to this day. From 1942 I met them, they are my best friends today and there are so many recollections.

But there is the positive side in life. I always look at the positive things, because it's living and learning and life is a life of change and disaster but whatever it is, you find a way to move forward and you learn that through your seniors and your people that are there. Like my mother, you just imagine my mother with seven kids coming to Toronto. And she was more worried than anyone, yet we all persevered and built a good name for the Japanese people – see, because our leaders at that time came to the camps they said, you know, the famous Japanese word is *shagatanai*, that means what can you do, what's happened, let's move on and build our future. So our leaders said, "let's build a good family name. Let's educate our children. Let's become good citizens," and well, that's what happened. So we learned from our people that we got to make a good name so my mother always said to me Sidney – because I'm you know third oldest so naturally, I'm spoiled you know, because usually the third child is spoiled and I was spoiled. I was very outgoing and so my mother always worried about me. No one else. She always said to me, "Sidney, you be a good boy." So that's what I did. I became a good boy.

And that's what Japanese people did. They focus on themselves to work hard, educate their children, and grow up, and that's why you find our children, even grandchildren, the intermarried children today have that rich culture in them that comes down from our grandfathers, mothers, and from us to our kids, and it's surprising because of the high rate of intermarriage is over 90%. You see the richness in the children. And that's what I'm saying, our rich culture is there

all because of our experience. To come out of a hard time into making it a good time for everyone so that's why I wanted to talk more about the future of Canada, more than about the past, cause that's what I do in my life. All my life is – harmony, friendship with people.

That's why we have in Toronto the Canadian Multicultural Council. We have twenty-one agents to build together, to make harmony and carry on our culture and religion and our diversity, and in Toronto we joined the police department and we work together with the police to bring safety in the streets and all these good things come from our heritage of Canada, of all of us building this country, and I would like to do more. I play harmonica to make people happy! That's all! You can get me for free! I would have paid my way to come here to play harmonica.

I just want you to know that I am very impressed with the people that talk because I'm only a grade twelve student. I must tell you I almost failed my grade twelve; I got 61% and may I tell you, when I graduated I was so happy you wouldn't believe. But you know, I worked my way up to being a national manager of the Eaton Company, 100 stores. I was a National Energy Environment Manager and all because I learned how to work and learned from people and that's the secret of life is to learn from everyone – and today has been a learning experience and I thank you very much for inviting me and I really enjoy my peers here. Thank you very much.

Janis: We already have, but thank you again to our panel for sharing their stories. Thank you to you for your questions. Certainly let's continue the conversation over the tables here at the break. Thank you.