



# EMPIRE HOME FRONT *What was evacuation from the colonies like?*

Source 1

PERSONS EVACUATED FROM MALAYA AND HONG KONG TO THE DOMINIONS, INDIA AND CEYLON.

FROM MALAYA.

	To Australia.	* To New Zealand.	To South Africa.	To Canada.	To India.		To Ceylon.
					European.	Asiatic.	
Men	500	25	124	6	233	256	162
Women	1214	131	612	6	234	271	117
Children	2117	146	400	5	222		95
TOTALS.	4611	302	1136	17	689	527	374

FROM HONG KONG.

	To Australia.	* To New Zealand.	To South Africa.	To Canada.	To India.	To Ceylon.
Men	107	25	1	9	-	-
Women	924	131	11	4	-	-
Children	916	146	8	-	-	-
TOTALS.	1947	302	20	13	-	-

\* These are combined Hong Kong and Malaya figures. Separate figures have not been furnished.

† The Malayan Government Agent in India states that it is estimated that some 5,000 refugees were brought from Malaya. Only a small proportion are known to him.

OTHER PERSONS EVACUATED TO AUSTRALIA.

	From the Solomon Is.	From Sarawak.
Govt. officials.	31	18
Dependents of Govt. officials.	53	62 (including 9 in U.S.)
Non-Govt. officials.	122	72 (including 2 in U.S.)
<i>and other persons.</i>		

*Completed 2/4/52*  
*[Signature]*

Table showing number of evacuees from Malaya and Hong Kong



Source 2

*Colonial Office* 13139/106

BY CLIPPER MAIL.  
Copy to Washington.

18th July, 1940.  
With the Compliments  
of the  
Under Secretary of State  
for Foreign Affairs  
31 JUL 1940

Dear Department,

I feel it advisable to try and give you as full an account as possible in the time at my disposal of all matters concerning the evacuation to the Philippines of British women and children from Hong Kong, in order that you may have some clearer background to deal with the news

625, 4/10. *Copied sent to W.O. Adams*

10. After nearly six hours in a small launch outside the harbour, we were finally able to board the "Empress of Japan" where we found absolute confusion. Some evacuees were berthed in cabins, but the majority were accommodated on camp-cots placed close to one another in the decks and halls. The purser's staff had done their best to prepare an alphabetical nominal roll from the confusing, separate and incomplete lists furnished by the military and naval authorities. Even the signed lists to be furnished to the Philippine authorities in lieu of passports and to secure exemption from head-tax payment were inaccurate and incomplete and not arranged alphabetically.

11. The ship finally docked about 1 p.m. instead of at 9 a.m. as had been confidently expected. Attempts were made to discover the officers' wives and families in order to send them to Baguio and these were disembarked first, but it was not until 3 p.m. that the special train was able to leave with the result that the tired women and children did not reach Baguio until 11 p.m. or get finally accommodated until 1 a.m. ( I would remark that Baguio is about 130 miles distant from Manila and that the final 25 miles up the mountain is accomplished by motor bus).

19. About ten large buildings in Fort McKinley have been given over entirely to the accommodation of evacuees, and an officer, Major Tow, placed in command. General Pratt and his staff are however constant visitors. Full medical attention is given and any sick are removed to the military hospital. The kitchen is staffed by army cooks; a second kitchen has been arranged solely to cater for the babies and young children, and American army cooks prepare baby food according to regimes laid down by the medical officers; the food is served to the babies by Red Cross nurses. Everything that could be done for the

*Extract from an official report on the evacuation from Hong Kong*



**Source 3**

"their reception, and although the American Army and Red Cross  
"apparently did their best they couldn't cope with the task. I  
"will tell my wife's story - it is typical though perhaps she  
"was luckier than some. The ship arrived in Manila Bay on  
"July 7th; it was 24 hours before she was taken off and  
"loaded in an army lorry, with only the luggage she could carry,  
"for the distributing station at Fort McKinley. It was  
"pouring with rain and all roads were flooded to a height of  
"two feet. She was dumped with the two boys into a corner of  
"a hut shared by over 200 women and children. Lavatory  
"accommodation and the equally inadequate bathing facilities  
"were wide open for all to see including all the Filipino  
"sightseers. There were no facilities for washing and  
"ironing clothes. Big boys of fifteen and sixteen years  
"old - technically children - shared the accommodation.

*A personal account of the evacuation of women and children from  
Hong Kong*