



CHICAGO-NISEI POST No.1183

The American Legion / ~~1046 West Wilson~~ / Chicago, Illinois 60640 / 312 / 561-9152

5241 N. Bernard St.,
Chicago, Ill. 60625

Aug. 10, 1983

Mr. Larry Schechtman
6007 N. Sheridan Ave.,
Chicago, Ill. 60660

Dear Larry:

I'm enclosing some clippings and printed materials that may be of interest to you. Most of them pertain to the controversial news/letter issued by the national commander of the VFW James Currieo. The latest is that the 14 post commanders of the Nisei VFW posts in California met with Currieo after the state VFW commander made the arrangements. Currieo will not retract publicly what he issued but he won't bring his resolution to the national convention. However, he warned the Nisei vets that Michigan and Virginia delegates are going to bring up similar resolutions at the convention.

Chet Tanaka, author of the book Go For Broke and executive secretary of the Go For Broke, Inc., said the organization wants me to go to the American Legion national convention at Seattle this August 19 to lobby against any anti-Nikkei resolutions. Illinois top delegates are aware of the Currieo news release and will support us; however, that's only one state for us.

I know several other state delegates that will be there so I'm planning to see them before the resolution committee meets.

Mike Masaoka's letter to me (enclosed) indicates how important Mike feels about the American vets influence. I have written to a close friend from Fresno, Ca. who was directly instrumental in the reunion of the 36th Div. people and members of the 442nd RCT. The reunion came out on the Real People show.

Since we are very close to key members and national officers of the 34th Inf. Division people we won't have any problem there.

I talked to John Yoshino and Jane regarding the mini-exhibit of the Nisei Veterans Museum that we are bringing to Chicago in early spring. After a showing and reception here we hope to send the exhibit to all the key midwest cities for showings---St. Louis, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Mpls, Detroit. You know as well as anyone that the average American including John McCloy still confuse the Japanese nationals with the native born. That is why so many letters to the press mention that Japanese were safe in camp while American boys were in the war zones. They don't know that Nisei were in the services after volunteering from camps like myself.

The American Legion and the Red Bull (34th) members back us because they know that Nisei were loyal despite the humiliation of being interned without trial.

Jane told me that she would have to talk to the JAACL board before making any financial commitment---no problem there. Go For Broke, Inc. wants to pay for the plane fare but it is scratching for funds also since the big museum will

"SERVICE TO COMMUNITY, STATE, AND NATION, SINCE 1949"

be sent to Hawaii next to the Pearl Harbor Memorial site. Later the last stop, I think, will be the Smithsonian Institute.

All this takes a lot of money and I have promised to send the next state compensation money in 1984 to the museum fund.

When we have the reception for the mini-exhibit this spring we're planning an open house downtown and will invite all the Legion bigwigs who supported us plus other dignitaries. We're hoping that Dan Inouye will be able to make the reception as he has indicated. That should give us some good p.r.

Incidentally, the nation's governors meeting at Portland, Me. voted 2/3 to 1 against paying monetary reparations to the internees. They agreed that an apology was necessary. Gov. Thompson reiterated what others said: this would set a precedent for blacks, Indians and besides the states were having a hard time financially. Gov. Spellman of Washington tried hard for passage. Initially, eleven western governors had voted in favor.

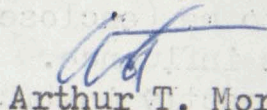
I think this will be a rough fight, harder than the original commission bills fight. Senator Percy asked the guests of the Japan-America Society recently to let him know how they felt about the commission recommendations. I wrote to him already since I'm a member of the Society. Incidentally, the Japan-America Society will co-sponsor the reception with us.

The Japanese American Council, umbrella organization in this community, will help fund the reception and the exhibit. JACL, JASC, all belong to the council.

Since I'm the midwest regional representative for the national museum committee, we can send for the mini-exhibit when we need it. We can hold it indefinitely since there are two others.

Larry, we value your support and expertise. Thanks for all of us.

Sincerely,



Arthur T. Morimitsu

Mike M. Masaoaka

SUITE 520, THE FARRAGUT BUILDING
900 SEVENTEENTH STREET, NORTH
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006
TELEPHONE (202) 296-4484

July 28, 1983

Mr. Art Morimitsu
5241 North Bernard
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Dear Art:

First of all, may I apologize for not writing you earlier not only to acknowledge the various articles and information you sent me but also to let you know that I am coming along better than expected. As you might suspect, I have been busier than I should be not only with my own business but with the redress activities, including my little exchange with the National VFW Commander.

The purpose of this letter is to ask that you contact our friends in the 34th Red Bull Iowa Division and request that they write to their United States Senator, Charles E. Grassley, urging him to give favorable consideration to so-called redress legislation for the benefit of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

As you may know, Senator Grassley is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Administration Practice and Procedure of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. As such, he conducted the first day of hearings on the findings and recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians on Wednesday morning, July 27. Since I have spoken to both him and the members of his staff, I have learned that they have little information concerning our wartime mistreatment and even less regarding the exploits of the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team when we were attached to the 34th Division in Italy the summer and fall of 1944.

If the various officers and members of the 34th Division and their friends would mount a campaign of both organizational and individual letters to Senator Grassley, it will be most helpful.

Senator Grassley may be reached at 232 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510

While there is no urgency about this request at this time, since another hearing will probably not be held until mid-September at the earliest, I would appreciate it if you could get to our friends in the 34th and get this program rolling. When I testify, as I will, for Go For Broke, Inc., I will especially

July 28, 1983

note our relationship with the 34th and I want the Senator from Iowa to understand that there are a lot of his constituents who are interested in this legislation and want him to act favorably on it.

At some future time, I will be writing about Congressman Sam B. Hall, Jr., the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations of the House Committee on the Judiciary. He is from Texas and he needs to know about the 100th and the 442nd and our attachment to his 36th Texas Division.

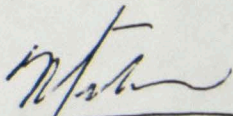
No hearings have been set in the House and there may not be any hearings until next year. But, I wanted to alert you now to contacting our friends in Texas and remind them of the rescue of the Lost Texas Battalion in the mountains of northeast France in October 1944.

Since I know of your interest in the so-called redress program, there is no need for me to go into any details concerning the legislation. At the same time, I am aware that you probably have more direct personal contacts with our friends in both the 34th and 36th Divisions than anyone of the rest of us, so I am taking advantage of our mutual interest to ask these favors of you. It is too bad that I did not keep up the contacts that I developed back in the late '40s and early '50s, so whatever you can do to be helpful will be greatly appreciated.

And, you might suggest that whenever anyone writes for either/both the 34th or 36th as an organization, a copy of their letters be sent to me for my information and use.

Thanks again for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Mike M. Masaoka

MMM:mt

cc: Chet Tanaka
Tom Kawaguchi
Min Yasui
John Tateishi
Floyd Shimomura
Ron Wakabayashi
Ron Ikejiri

STATE 90012

State Governors Balk on Nikkei Compensation Resolution; Approve "National Apology"

PORTLAND, Maine.—State governors meeting here Tuesday refused to endorse a resolution calling for the payment of "just compensation" to Japanese Americans who were placed in camps during World War II, but approved an amended one calling for an "apology and national recognition of the injustice."

Gov. John Spellman of Washington, the sponsor of the original resolution, said the new version "would be deemed as an insult" and tried to withdraw it after it was amended.

But he reluctantly urged his fellow governors to vote for it after there was objection to his withdrawing the amended version. "I'd hate to have this group vote against apologizing to Japanese Americans," he said.

Gov. Richard Lamm of Colorado,

moved to delete reference to paying compensation. He said many groups in American society including Blacks and Hispanics had suffered injustice.

"The trial does never end," said Gov. Bill Sheffield of Alaska. "A lot of wrong had been done." He referred to the relocation of native residents of the Aleutian Islands his state.

"I'm very troubled by the phrase 'just compensation' for the injustice done to Japanese Americans who were interned in camps during the war," said Gov. Richard Snelling of Vermont. Spellman argued that the case was unique.

"There is no precedent for American citizens en masse being deprived of their civil rights," Spellman said. "I don't think it's enough to say, 'Hey, we're sorry.'"

And this follow-up letter appeared in the July 30 issue of The Tribune.

In my haste to respond to the June 30 Associated Press story "Angry Americans oppose apology to World War II internees," I inadvertently overlooked giving due credit for the historic role the Japanese Americans Regimental Combat Team played in World War II, the 442nd; to Oaklander Chester Tanaka, author of "Go for Broke," published by "Go For Broke" Inc., in Richmond.

Tanaka was honored with a write-up in The Tribune Lifestyle Feb. 24, 1981, "Exhibit to honor the brave soldiers of the 442nd." One of the few men to survive all five campaigns engaged in by the 442nd, Tanaka was awarded the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and with his unit: two Presidential Citations.

I would also like to credit the Pacific Citizen, the national publication of the Japanese American Citizens League, June 24 issue, "Frequently Asked Questions about Redress."

JOE OYAMA
Oakland

THE CHICAGO SHIMPO

4670 N. Manor St.
Chicago, IL 60625
Tel: (312) 478-6170

Frank T. Sugano, Pres.
Fujio Hayashi, Gen. Mgr.
Art Morimitsu, Eng. Ed.
K. Kawaguchi, Japanese Ed.

Downtown Office:
Tel. (312) 944-5444
Published twice weekly except
last week of the calendar year.

Subscription Rates
(Payable in Advance)

One Year	\$40.00
Half Year	\$25.00
Single Copy	.45

The Chicago Shimpō

THE CHICAGO JAPANESE AMERICAN NEWS

(I S S N 0009 370X)

Volume 37 3511 (8)

Second-class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois

Wednesday August 10, 1983

TANAKA DISMAYED WITH CURRIEO

Mr. Currieo:

I am a member of VFW Post No. 9879, San Francisco, California, and I was appalled on reading the VFW New Release, June 23, 1983, in which you unilaterally (our Post was never polled) declared for non-payment of reparations and "no apology" for interned American citizens. My concern is not with reparations but rather the context in which these declarations were couched — "Why should Americans . . . pay for the consequences of an indisputable act of aggression by Japan?"

By what stretch of the imagination is the throwing of loyal innocent American citizens into an American concentration camp (President Truman's term) by fellow Americans a "consequence of an indisputable act of aggression by Japan?" It was done by Americans to Americans. That the Japanese Americans were loyal and innocent (never a case of espionage or sabotage before, during, or after Pearl Harbor) was affirmed by the FBI, the Army and Navy intelligence reports submitted to the higher authorities. Furthermore, in Hawaii where the attack took place, there was no mass relocation or incarceration of the 160,000 Japanese American residents. They were under Martial Law and 3,000 miles closer to the enemy but Americans there did not "lock 'em up".

You asked about "guilt". The Commission on War-

time Relocation and Internment of Civilians, headed by Washington attorney, Joan Z. Bernstein, has heard more than 700 witnesses and reviewed tens of thousands of documents during the last two years in the most complete recounting of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Their conclusion, "Personal Justice Denied". Or, as United Senator Robert Mathais, Maryland, stated in the Congressional Record, March 22, 1983, "... Chief Justice Warren, as attorney general of California, had played some role in the internment and he told me on that quiet contemplative day as we sat by a window looking over the lawn of the Capitol that he considered that the (relocation and internment of Japanese Americans) was the gravest mistake and most grievous error, the act he most regretted in his long and distinguished career of public service. If a man as big as Earl Warren can make that confession, then it seems to me all of us can make that confession. All of us can admit that even the United States of America can be wrong on occasion, and when she is, it is the duty and privilege and the responsibility of citizens to correct the error and to go forward with new dedication to the pledge of the Constitution."

Assuming these facts are new to you, "how big a person are you?"

A prompt public retraction and/or a personal response is requested.

Tanaka is author of 'Go For Broke

14 NISEI VFW SEEK RETRACTION

The Golden Gate Nisei Memorial Post 9879, Veterans of Foreign Wars are seriously regarding the recent news release made by the VFW Commander-in-Chief James R. Currieo.

Reading the contents of the news release was not only a tremendous shock, but an insult to all the veterans who belong to this great organization.

The Golden Gate Nisei Memorial Post at this time feels a sense of obligation to the general community as to what action is being taken in regards to this matter.

A special joint meeting of the 14 nisei VFW posts in the State of California was held in Gardena.

A joint letter of protest regarding the press release was drafted by the delegates and hand-delivered to the California state commander in Los Angeles.

The contents of the letter requested the immediate retraction of the news release and also an apology to the general public made by the Commander-in-Chief Currieo.

During the departmental meeting in Los Angeles with the 24 district commanders and delegates in attendance, the letter was read and unanimously approved and endorsed.

The state commander stated that a copy of the letter would be sent to all the state commanders throughout the nation.

The state commander also stated that he would try to arrange a meeting with the Commander-in-Chief Currieo with the Nisei

VFW delegation at Sacramento as soon as possible.

Should the proposed meeting ever materialize, the outcome of the events shall be forthcoming.

Golden Gate Memorial Post 9879

Harry Tanabe, Commander
Shig Miyamoto, Adjutant

AMVETS STUNNED AT OPPOSITION TO JAPANESE AMERICAN REDRESS

(Special to the Pacific Citizen)

LANTHAN, Md. — The national leader of AMVETS says he is stunned that some patriotic groups oppose the recommended payment of \$1.5 billion to the 60,000 American citizens of Japanese extraction who were interned in the U.S. concentration camps during World War II.

Robert Martin, the national commander of AMVETS, said in a statement, that the reparations recommended by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians would at least help to erase this 40-year-old black mark on American history.

"These people were forced into concentration camps merely because they were of Japanese descent," he said. "It appears as if the wartime hysteria of the times caused our government to forget that these were American citizens."

Moreover, the AMVETS commander said it is "morally preposterous" to do as one other veterans group proposed by implying that reparations should be the responsibility of Japan for bombing Pearl Harbor.

"Granted, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor but it was this nation, to its shame, that confined 60,000 of its own citizens merely because they were of Japanese descent.

"As it has turned out, these Japanese Americans who were interned and their descendants are among this nation's best citizenry, Martin said. "It is only appropriate that we do recognize this mistake, however late, and make the necessary apology."

RADIATED TORTOISE ZOO ANIMAL OF THE MONTH

The radiated tortoise (*Geochelone radiata*) has been chosen as the Lincoln Park Zoo's animal of the month for August, announced Zoo Director Dr. Lester Fisher.

These beautifully marked reptiles are found on the island of Madagascar. Here they forage for cactus and melons among the scrubland vegetation of the drier regions on the island. At Lincoln Park Zoo they eat fruit, vegetables, hard boiled eggs and some cut up meat.

The carapace (top shell) of the radiated tortoise is dark with yellow lines radiating from each scute, or scale. Like other terrestrial members of the turtle group, the shell of this tortoise forms a dome several inches high. Body length can reach eighteen inches.

Once a year the female digs a nest hole and lays 4-12 eggs in it. Once the eggs are laid, she covers them with loose soil, smooths the soil over, and then abandons the nest. After about a year, the eggs hatch and the nestlings crawl out to begin their lives as miniature adults.

GO FOR BROKE/ YANKEE SAMURAI AVAILABLE IN 1984

RICHMOND — K. Thomas Kawaguchi, executive director of Go For Broke, inc., announced that the Go For Broke/Yankee Samurai exhibit now on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History will close on Sunday, July 31 and be returned to the Presidio of San Francisco.

The exhibit will be completely refurbished and recaptioned for display at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial Museum at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The tentative date of showing is March 1984.

Ernest Uno, president of the 442nd Veterans Club of Honolulu, is the project director for the Arizona Memorial showing.

Negotiations are underway with the officials of the Citadel Military College, South Carolina, for a display there. Request for the exhibit was made by retired Gen. Mark W. Clark, formerly Fifth Army Commander, Italy, World War II, under whom the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team served.

Gen. Clark is also past president of the Citadel (known as the West Point of the South) and is the chairman of the Honorary Committee for Go For Broke, inc.

In addition to the foregoing major exhibit, Go For Broke, inc. has three mini-exhibits. Bookings have been made for 1984 but some slots are still available, so please contact Go For Broke, inc., Kawaguchi said.

Negotiations are also underway with the forthcoming Ellis Island Museum and with the Smithsonian Institution.

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