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## JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 • (415) 921-5225

TO: N. CA Redress Area Coordinators.

DATE: November 5, 1984.

FROM: Clifford I. Uyeda.

SUBJECT: Redress Regional Coordinator.

COPIES: Min Yasui, John Tateishi, Carole Hayashino, Ron Wakabayashi, Yosh Nakashima.

Just prior to the National Board meeting in San Francisco (10/84) I was asked by our national president Frank Sato if I would chair the Pacific Citizen Board during the coming biennium.

I had chaired the PC Board during the 1980-82 biennium, and had worked to establish administrative and financial independence for PC. This goal was achieved at the JACL national convention in Honolulu this past August.

The coming biennium is the first under the new rule. PC is working to increase coverage of JACL activities by increasing the number of pages from the present 12 to eventually 16 and hopefully to 24.

Equipments which are outdated and on their last legs must be replaced. Early in 1985 PC will have to move from the present location. The PC staff is being increased. All these and other urgent needs are on the agenda.

In order to focus my time and energy more on PC I've asked John Tateishi to relieve me from the Regional Redress Coordinator's role.

Your dedicated work as Area Redress Coordinators has been greatly appreciated, and thanks for your cooperation. I shall always continue working for the redress movement.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA -WESTERN NEVADA - PACIFIC  
DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING

To: Delegates.

Date: November 4, 1984.

From: Clifford I. Uyeda,  
Regional Redress Coordinator.

Subject: Update and report on  
Congressional responses.

<u>REGION</u>		<u>SUPPORT</u>	<u>OPPOSE</u>	<u>NO POSITION</u>
West of Rockies	20	1	12	7
Midwest, North	42	4	13	25
East, North	20	1	3	16
South	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
	97	7	34	56

Above figures represent congressional responses to redress as of 9/1/84. In spite of the Commission hearings throughout the country in 1981, in spite of the Senate and House subcommittees hearings this year, which received local media coverages --

- 1) Only 7% of the responses show definite support for monetary redress.
- 2) More than a third oppose monetary redress.
- 3) Nearly 60% holds "no position."

This latter "no position" group indicates our hope. Most of them seem genuinely convinced that a great injustice had been committed, that some sort of restitution ought to be made, but to date they have not clearly indicated their support for monetary redress.

By including those in support of monetary redress, we have 65% in favor of some form of restitution. This is an encouraging sign. They are waiting to be convinced that monetary redress is a necessary federal action that must be taken to express this country's true regrets and implement the only true deterrent against similar injustice in the future.

Analysis of Opposition:

The nature of opposition to redress is confined to few specific reasons which appear over and over again in their congressional responses. They are:

- 1) Other Americans have suffered injustices in the past.
- 2) Other Americans have also suffered during World War II.
- 3) Redress would set a precedent.

It seems incredible that these congresspersons are not even aware that --

- 1) Japanese Americans were singled out for expulsion and confinement.
- 2) Sufferings of Japanese Americans were different from those experienced by other Americans.
- 3) Refusing redress is a precedent setting action in itself of enormous concern to all future Americans.

- 1 - No other Americans suffered the similar injustice the Japanese Americans experienced during World War II.

Our imprisonment was the official policy of the U.S. government, the government for which Japanese Americans were dying on the battlefields.

12 percent of those with Japanese ancestry in the U.S. served in the U.S. armed forces during WW 2 which was greater than that of any other ethnic group in America, and also greater than the U.S. national figure which was 8 percent.

- 2 - The sufferings cited in the responses were those of American soldiers at war, and inflicted by the enemy. The injustice against Japanese Americans were carried out by our own government against its own people. There is a difference.

Japanese Americans went through all the sacrifices and sufferings common to all citizens of a nation at war. In addition, Japanese Americans suffered the indignity and the humiliation of imprisonment without any charges or indictments.

- 3 - The precedent of monetary redress for grievous wrongs committed by our government is well established.

To the 1200 Vietnam War protestors arrested and imprisoned for few days in Washington, DC, in 1971 the court awarded \$10,000 to each victim.

To Alaskan Eskimos, Aleuts and Indians. In 1971 the court awarded \$1 billion plus over 40 million acres.

To various Native American tribes in the U.S., both money and lands had been awarded by the courts.

A dangerous precedent is indeed being set by denying restitution for citizens imprisoned for years without due process when the civilian courts were in full operation.

What is to deter our government from repeating such unconscionable act if all it takes to resolve the injustice is a statement, "I'm sorry?"

Although at no time have we tried to equate our experience with those of the Jewish people under the Nazi regime, the Federal Republic of Germany to date has paid over \$25 billion in restitution to the Jewish people. Another \$20 billion in payment is expected by the end of this century.

If the war devastated Germany can "afford" such restitution payments, certainly the United States can afford \$1.5 billion.

The difference in the so-called "relocation camps" for the Jews and the Japanese Americans is in its degree rather than the principle behind the incarceration.

Monetary restitution is an integral part of a meaningful apology in our American cultural value and practice.

The military was responsible for the expulsion and confinement of American citizens and permanent residents by declaring "military necessity" and suppressing evidences to the contrary. The annual military budget is \$298 billion. \$1.5 billion is half of one percent of that annual sum.

If the payment is phased over several years, U.S. can certainly afford it, our country can effect a meaningful restitution for the wrong committed against its own people, and leave a lasting impression on the nation that such large scale violation of constitutional rights cannot be committed so cheaply.

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*C.D.A.*