

Japanese American Citizens League

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Midwest Chapter Presidents
Redress Representatives
Interested Individuals

DATE: October 15, 1980

FROM: Bill Yoshino

SUBJ: Redress Update

Since President Carter signed the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians Act (PL 96-317) into law on July 31, 1980, the JACL National Committee for Redress has been busy developing plans to deal with the Commission hearings in terms of testimony, witnesses and the educational strategies surrounding each of the hearings.

A general informational mailing to the Japanese American community through the JACL is scheduled for later this month. This mailing will include a brochure giving a summary account of the evacuation, the Commission, and the opportunity the Commission presents. John Tateishi, Chairman of the National Redress Committee, has asked that all chapters forward to him the number of brochures required for distribution in their respective communities. Further, the Redress Committee is in the process of identifying witnesses for the Commission through each of the chapters. Chicago will probably be a hearing site, but this should not preclude other chapters in the midwest from taking part in witness identification and the preparation of hearing testimony.

The areas of testimony identified will include a historical perspective of the Japanese in the United States, personal experiences related to the evacuation and incarceration, dispelling the "military necessity" argument, the Constitutional question, the sociological and psychological impact of the evacuation and recommended remedial actions to be taken under advisement by the Commission.

The total program of redress will require funds. Within the Midwest District, individuals have been identified to carry out this responsibility. In Chicago, initial steps have been taken to secure redress funds and follow-up will occur this month.

The appointees to the Commission have not as yet been made.

The language of the bill indicates that three appointees will come from the White House with the remaining four to be appointed by Congress. The bill also stipulates that the appointments would be made by October 31, 1980. Thus, we will learn of the appointments by the end of the month or shortly thereafter.

In all likelihood, the first meeting of the Commission will determine other important facets of the Commission, e.g., the Commission chairman, the hearing sites and dates, and the Commission staff composition. At present, the first meeting of the Commission is subject to monetary appropriations to be determined by Congress. The signing of the bill by President Carter authorized Congress to appropriate money for the establishment of the Commission. As of this date, Congress has not acted on the appropriation, however, it is anticipated that appropriations will occur when Congress reconvenes following the election. The first meeting of the Commission will then take place 30 days after the appropriation is cleared by Congress.

I will continue to keep you informed on the redress program. In addition, articles will appear in the Pacific Citizen and John Tateishi will also be issuing updates.