

MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

Japanese American Citizens League

5145 NORTH CLARK STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60640-1294
(312) 728-7170

WILLIAM J. YOSHINO
MIDWEST DIRECTOR

February 5, 1985

Mr. Doug Power
Mayor's Office
City Hall, Room 507
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Mr. Power: *Doug.*

February 19, 1942 is a significant date in history for Japanese Americans. It was on that date that President Roosevelt signed an executive order which led to the military removal of virtually all persons of Japanese ancestry from their homes on the West Coast and their subsequent detention in camps for the duration of World War II. As you are aware, the signing of that executive order allowed for perhaps the worst instance of selective discrimination by the government against a group of its own citizens in this country's history.

In the past several years, the Japanese American community throughout the United States has been commemorating February 19th as a "Day of Remembrance" in which the responsibilities and obligations of human and civil rights must be reflected on to insure that similar violations do not occur in the future. Events surrounding this day are regularly observed on the West Coast and especially in California. I know, for example, that the California State Legislature has passed a resolution proclaiming February 19 a "Day of Remembrance" in perpetuity.

As per the enclosure, there will be an event commemorating February 19 and the issuance of Executive Order 9066 at Northeastern Illinois University this year. The Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese American community in Chicago would greatly appreciate a proclamation by Mayor Washington in recognition of February 19. I have enclosed a sample proclamation for your review.

Should you need additional information or any other assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,



William J. Yoshino

National headquarters • San Francisco, California

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PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942 Executive Order 9066 was issued by the President of the United States -- an action which eventually led to the uprooting of over 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry from their homes on the West Coast and their detention in camps in interior regions of the United States for periods of up to four years; and

WHEREAS, The removal and detention of American citizens of Japanese ancestry during World War II represented a violation of the basic protections guaranteed by law and resulted in severe losses for those who suffered this experience; and

WHEREAS, The federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in findings issued in 1983 stated that the broad historical causes which led to the removal and detention of Japanese Americans from the West Coast in 1942 were "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership"; and

WHEREAS, In furtherance of the conviction that moral and constitutional violations which would deny persons the basic guarantees enumerated in our Bill of Rights must never again occur:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harold Washington, Mayor of the City of Chicago, do hereby proclaim February 19, 1985 as a Day of Remembrance -- a time set aside so that Chicagoans might reflect upon their shared responsibilities to uphold the Constitutional and moral rights of all individuals at all times.

NORTHEASTERN
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

COMMUTER CENTER
5500 N. ST. LOUIS
CHICAGO, IL 60625

TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 19, 1985
7:30 P.M.

DIALOGUE and PARTICIPATION

Survivors

OF AMERICA'S
CONCENTRATION CAMPS



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EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066



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