



City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR WOLF

IN CITY COUNCIL
December 17, 1984

- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge takes special pride in the diversity of its citizenry, and the harmonious relations among all the races and ethnic groups in the City; and
- WHEREAS: Americans of Japanese ancestry have, and continue to make substantial contributions to the cultural and economic life of the City, especially in the areas of education, architecture, music, technology, and social service; and
- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge has played an important role in the history of the Japanese American people, serving as a haven and refuge for Japanese Americans evicted from their homes in other parts of the United States during and after World War II; and
- WHEREAS: This City Council is aware that, in 1942, 120,000 Americans of Japanese and Aleut ancestry were forcibly uprooted from their West Coast homes, incarcerated and confined behind barbed wire fences under armed military guard, without charges or hearings, and deprived of basic human rights by orders of the United States government; and
- WHEREAS: A Presidentially appointed United States Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians was formed in 1980 to conduct hearings in various parts of the United States and to collect any and all documents relating to the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans; and
- WHEREAS: The final public meeting of the Commission took place in Cambridge, and this meeting was addressed by constitutional experts from various parts of the country, who testified as to the serious deprivation of legal rights suffered by Americans of Japanese ancestry during the war years; and
- WHEREAS: The Commission, after more than two years of thorough study and research, issued its Final Report on February 24, 1983, concluding that the exclusion and detention of Japanese Americans had been caused by racism, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership, and that a "grave injustice was done to American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review of any probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II;" and

WHEREAS: The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians made a series of specific recommendations, including a payment of \$20,000 to each surviving internee, the passage by Congress of a joint resolution recognizing the grave injustice that was done to the Japanese American people and offering the nation's apology for their incarceration, a Presidential pardon for those who were convicted of violating the evacuation and curfew decrees, and the establishment of a special fund to encourage research and education concerning the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans; and

WHEREAS: Legislative bills HR 4110, introduced by Congressman Jim Wright of Texas, and S 2116, introduced by Senator Spark Matsunaga of Hawaii, were presented to the 98th Congress and received, respectively 106 co-sponsors and 20 co-sponsors, and further that these bills were intended "to accept the fundings and to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians;" and

WHEREAS: Similar legislative bills to HR 4110 and S 2116 will be introduced to the 99th Congress in January 1985, with strong support from the Massachusetts congressional delegation; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the duly elected Council of the City of Cambridge, mindful of the City's national reputation for leadership and activism does hereby endorse the findings and recommendations of the United States Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, and urges the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to this end; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Cambridge representatives in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.