

JCRC RESOLUTION REGARDING THE TREATMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS
BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DURING WORLD WAR II

In 1942, several months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which prohibited all persons of Japanese descent from living, working or traveling in the states of California, Oregon or Washington. Shortly thereafter, over 115,000 Japanese Americans were placed in detention centers. Many were kept in detention for over two years creating considerable financial loss and incalculable psychological damage. Since the end of the war only very minor restitution has been made to those individuals affected.

These events are extraordinary and unique in American history and no doubt one of the worst massive violations of the civil rights of American citizens in this century.

We, as Jews, are particularly sensitive to the denial of anyone's civil liberties and basic human rights due to ethnic factors. Our own history clearly mandates that we be involved in efforts to redress the wrong that was perpetrated against Americans of Japanese ancestry.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia, support legislation designed to compensate Japanese Americans for the harm done to them by incarceration during World War II by the United States Government. While such legislation is but a small measure of the compensation owed to these individuals, it will help establish in our nation's mind that such a policy of detention is counter to the principles of American democracy. The passage of this legislation will also constitute a public apology by our government for this gross violation of basic constitutional protections.

Bill Yoshino

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JCRC

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia

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December 3, 1984

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The Honorable Judge William Marutani
Room 307
1 E. Penn Square
Philadelphia, Pa. 19107

Dear Judge Marutani:

Let me thank you for having taken your time to help us better understand the full dimensions of the issue of detention of Japanese Americans. Our commission members were deeply moved by your presentation.

I am pleased to inform you that at our November meeting the Board of Directors of the Jewish Community Relations Council voted to support legislation designed to compensate Japanese Americans for the harm done to them by incarceration by our government. A copy of this resolution is enclosed. It is our intent to communicate this position to our local members of Congress and the two Pennsylvania United States Senators. We will be publicizing this action within the Jewish and general communities.

We also intend to solicit support of this position from other like-minded human relations organizations in the Philadelphia area. Before we undertake such efforts however, I would like to discuss this matter with you further so that we might best coordinate activities on behalf of the passage of legislation in the 99th Congress.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Burt Siegel

Burt Siegel
Associate Executive Director

BS/rb
enclosure:

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04 DEC. 1984


WM. MARUTANI

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