

ORA Update

ORA has sent out over 17,000 verification packets to potentially eligible individuals so far. Some 9,000 have returned all the requested documentation and received confirmation letters from ORA. ORA is currently sending out packets to living eligibles in their early seventies.

In order to expedite processing of the information, the ORA has asked us to pass on some general suggestions.

1. Except for the Voluntary Information Forms, Change of Address, or Death Information Forms, no information should be sent to ORA until you get a specific request from ORA.
2. Every individual should send back the information requested in his or her verification packet SEPARATELY in the envelope provided by ORA. Even if both husband and wife receive packets from ORA, they should NOT combine the documents in the same return envelope. In some instances that will mean duplicating documents so that each one will have a copy for his or her own packet.
3. Anyone who receives a verification packet for a deceased relative should call the toll-free number to let ORA know as soon as possible. Depending on the circumstances, ORA will let you know what further information needs to be sent in. A Death Information Form can be sent to ORA at any time, even if a verification packet has not yet been received. A copy of this form is printed elsewhere in this newsletter for your convenience.
4. The processing is being done in order of age. ORA will make public announcements when they believe they have completed an age group. No announcements have been made yet. Note that as the age groups go from mid-seventies to lower-seventies to upper-sixties, and so on to younger and younger people, the age groups get larger and larger, and so each group tends to take longer to process than the one before it. Processing time also depends on how promptly people return their documents to ORA.
5. In any correspondence or communication with the ORA, it is very helpful to have the full name, date of birth, social security number, and current address. If the person in question has an ORA File Number, mention that as well. Only those who have received verification packets from the ORA will have a File Number.
6. Read the instructions carefully, **ALL THE WAY THROUGH**, before you start.
7. Veterans should send in a Voluntary Information Form. Fill out every section that applies to you AND add a note stating that you are a veteran, giving dates of induction into and discharge from the service.

Veterans will be processed separately. ORA will send a letter to veterans with a form to be filled out asking for additional information. Grounds for claim include property lost as a result of the evacuation; or if there was a denial of liberty (confined to quarters, denied permission to visit family, etc.).
8. If you are signing for someone else as their guardian, follow proof of guardianship instructions carefully. In the guardianship letter, be sure to include the penalty of perjury clause. NOTE: "guardian" as used here includes more people than just "legal guardian." It may also mean primary care-giver.

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NEW ORA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

Paul Suddes is the new Deputy Administrator of the Office of Redress Administration. Paul, an Ohio native, received his Bachelor's degree in Public Administration from Youngstown (Ohio) State University in 1980, and his Masters degree in Public Administration from Ohio State University in 1983.

Paul first came to the Department of Justice in 1983 through the Presidential Management Intern program, and has served in several positions within the Department. He brings strong budgeting and financial expertise to ORA, having also

worked at the Treasury Department's Finance Office. For the last three years he was the Investment Manager for Fairfax County, Virginia.

Paul is married to the former Melinda Au. They have two children — Daniel, 2-1/2, and Tom, six months.

With the expansion of ORA's workload, it was felt that a full-time Deputy was needed. Paul succeeds Shirley Lloyd, who has moved over to full-time responsibilities as Deputy Administrator of the Justice Department's Executive Office.

Congressional Hearings Underscore Department of Justice Commitment to Redress

by JoAnne Kagiwada

At two Congressional hearings held in March, the Department of Justice reaffirmed its commitment to go forward with the redress program as expeditiously as possible.

The Senate Judiciary Committee, on 8 March 1990, recommended confirmation of former New York State Senator John R. Dunne as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Senator Paul Simon (D-IL), who chaired the hearing on the previous day, remarked on the long delay in funding for Redress, and asked Dunne about his commitment to ensure that the Office of Redress Administration would be ready to start making payments by the beginning of Fiscal 1991. "Absolutely," Dunne stated confidently, "as soon as the money is available, ORA will be ready."

In response to a request from Senator Simon's office, JACL-LEC

prepared questions for him about the operation of the Office of Redress Administration.

In oversight hearings on 8 March 1990, the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Commerce, Justice, State took written testimony from Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, James P. Turner. But, as there was no further action for them to take on this matter, they did not question him. In his prepared statement, Turner reminded the committee members that redress is "now an entitlement program . . . [and] payments to the first 25,000 will begin in Fiscal Year 1991."

Turner acknowledged that the workload is formidable, but the DOJ is "absolutely committed to being ready to begin issuing checks immediately after funds for that purpose are released."

In the process of identifying potential eligibles, ORA, using historical records of the US Govern-

ment, "has established a masterlist which specifically identifies over 119,300 Japanese Americans known to have been interned or evacuated." While the list is believed to be more than 99% complete, it could take years to identify the last remaining individuals. "These are largely those whose names are not recorded in historical records, including some voluntary evacuees and a very small number of persons held at obscure locations."

Turner continued, "Voluntary contacts to ORA . . . now exceed 78,000 . . . For those former internees with years of birth through 1914, we have located 8,503 living eligibles, 6 percent more than predicted by our recent actuarial study."

He described how staff has been increased from 8 federal employees "and a small number of contract employees" to the current level of 33 persons. "Through automated improved methods, . . . our analysts are processing upwards of 30 cases daily."

The first letters were sent in August 1989, and as of 10 April 1990, ORA sent out over 16,000 letters. JACL-LEC Executive Director, JoAnne Kagiwada, learned from them that more than 1,900 letters have been sent out to persons age 90 and older.

The two major problems which ORA is still experiencing are first, people have been very slow to return documentation, and second, about half of the responses require follow-up letters because the documentation submitted is incomplete. To help prevent delay in making payments to these potential recipients, the ORA has taken several steps. Besides establishing a new toll-free help-line, the original notification letters have been re-written, and a series of follow-up letters will go to potential eligibles who have not responded

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9. Encourage prompt responses in returning verification documents. ORA hopes to have most of the packets sent out to eligible individuals by the end of June. These packets need to be completed as requested in the cover letter and returned promptly in order for ORA to be prepared to send out payments in October.

The ORA has done a number of workshops and is doing their best to keep the Help-Lines operating (although they've had problems with

the phone company). Keep trying until you get through. The toll-free numbers are 1-800-395-4672 (voice) and 1-800-727-1886 (TDD), and operate 9:30 am - 5:30 pm Eastern time. The verification process needs everyone's cooperation so that the payment process can operate smoothly.

Also, as part of their ongoing program of community workshops, ORA will have an exhibit at the JACL Biennial Convention this June in San Diego. Staff will be there to try to answer your questions.

Eligibility Verification

If you know of any elderly persons who have received their verification letters, and have not yet responded, please do what you can to help them complete and return their verification packets. If they have not received a packet, please help them fill out a Voluntary Information Form and send it to the ORA.

If there are questions, you can call the ORA Help-Line [see ORA Update, page 1]. If language is a problem, ask for the bilingual staff person. The lines have been very busy, and, unfortunately, when people call, they have been getting a ring rather than a busy signal. The

lines ARE staffed, and they are answering people's questions as quickly as they can.

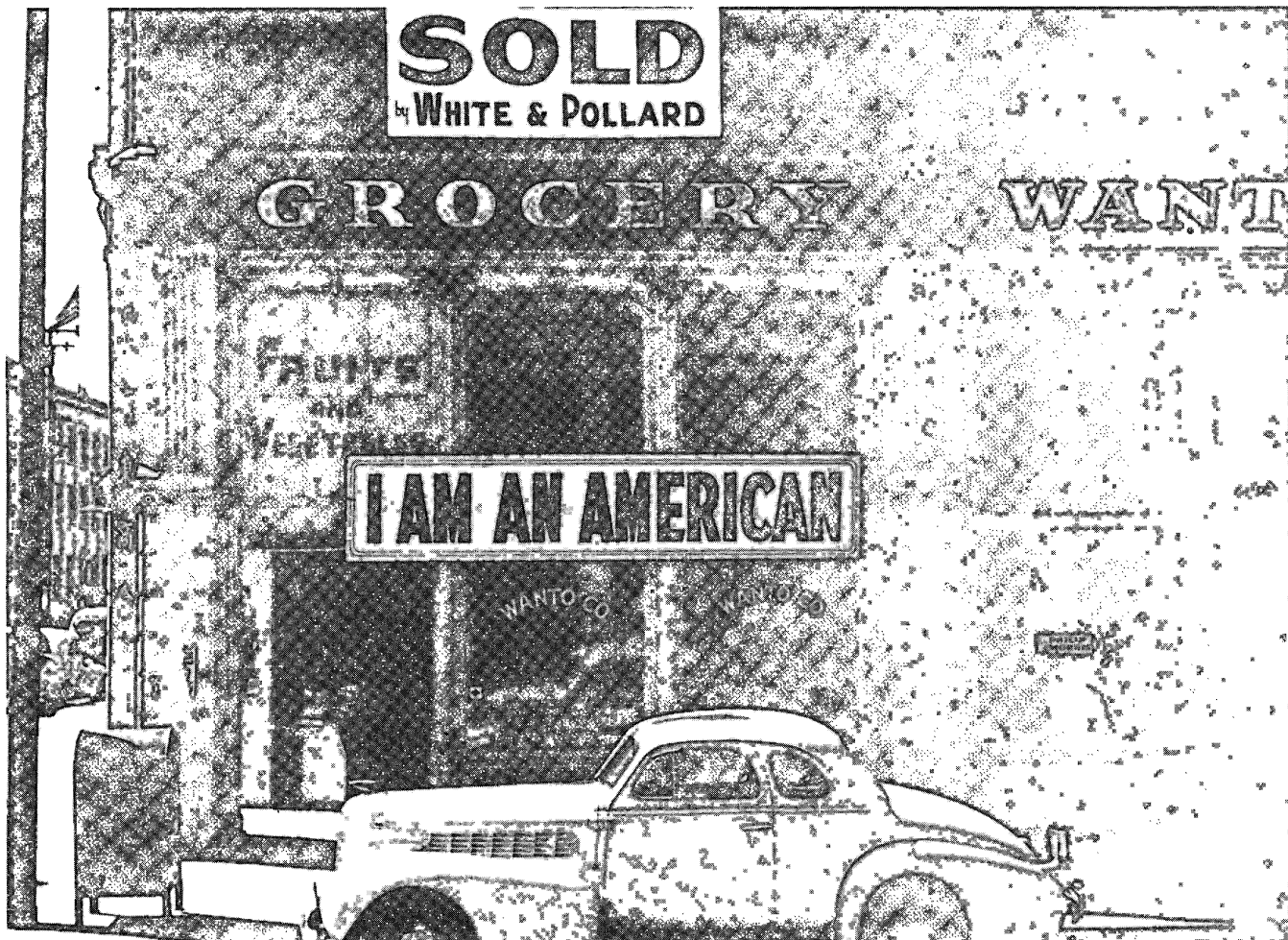
The following words of wisdom are from Ken Yokota in the March 1990 Fresno JACL Newsletter.

Because each verification letter is different, depending on what documentation the ORA requests from the individual, the instructions should be read VERY CAREFULLY. We encourage the use of the authenticity clause, following the EXACT wording in the instructions. That should eliminate the need for notarization.

We find that many individuals in this area submitted information to the National Archives in recent years and received confirmation letters from

them. That information was transferred to the Office of Redress Administration, Department of Justice. However, these individuals may wish, at this time, to also complete and submit the ORA's Voluntary Information Form, or telephone ORA, to insure that they are identified.

We know that there is much sharing of concerns about Redress and the verification process. The ORA's immediate goal is to have verified the 25,000 individuals for whom there will be funds the first year of payment starting October 1, 1990. The goal is to make sure that 100% of eligible individuals are identified, documented and ready to receive payment. Your help will be much appreciated.



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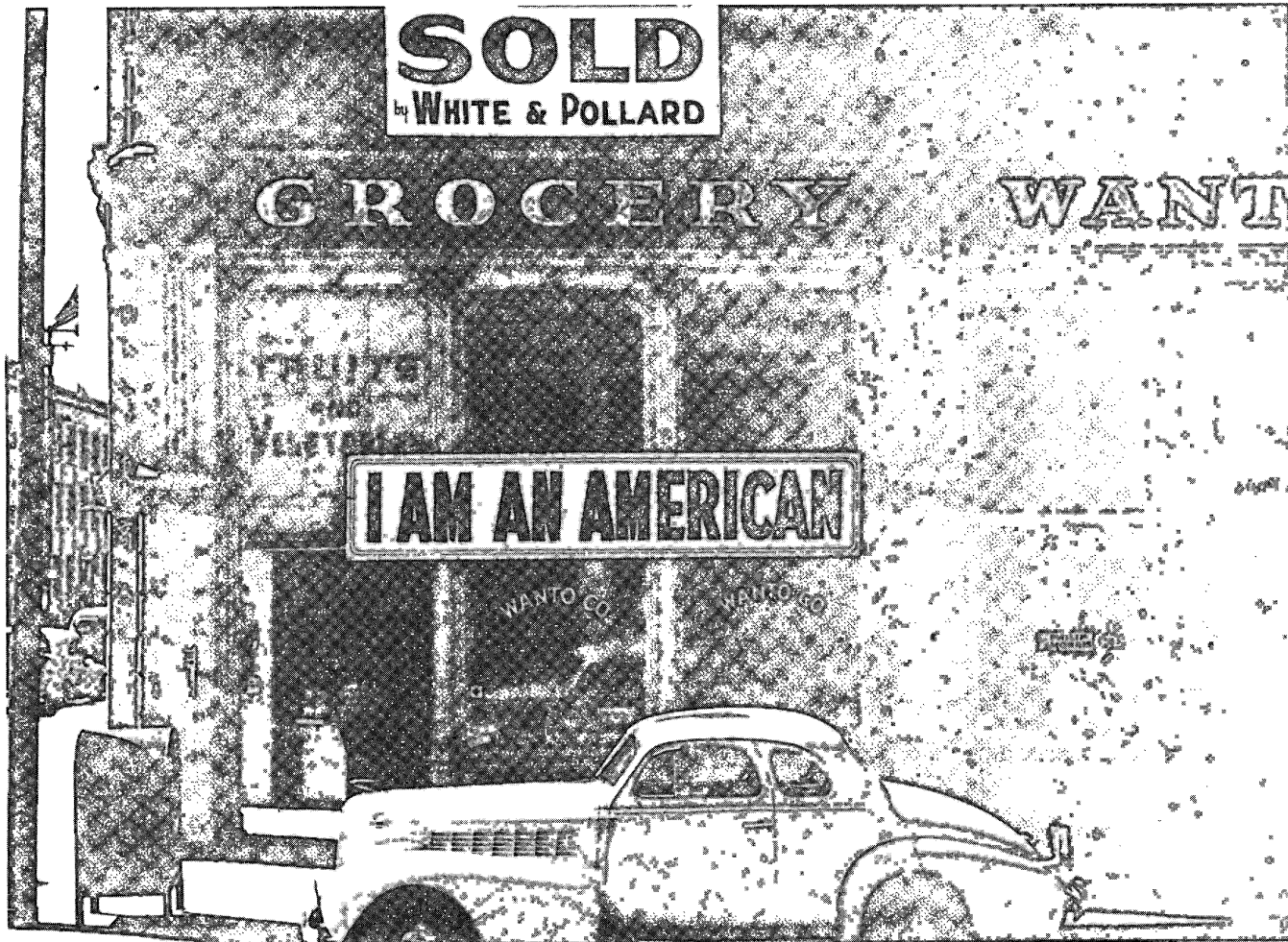
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Most Canadians Will Receive Redress By September 1990

by Rochelle Wandzura

On 15 December 1988, the Japanese Canadian Redress Secretariat "opened for business." Unlike the American redress program, where it is the responsibility of the Attorney General to locate all eligible individuals, in the Canadian program individuals are required to submit applications to the Secretariat. The Canadian law stipulates that applications must be submitted by 22 September 1993. However, individuals who can present evidence that they were unable to apply by that date could still, at the discretion of the Minister of the day, be considered for redress. Currently, the Minister carrying the portfolio for the Japanese Canadian redress program is the Minister for Multi-Culturalism and Citizenship and Secretary of State.

Originally, it was estimated that there were about 12,000 potential recipients for the Canadian redress. Rubin Friedman, Acting Executive Director of the Japanese Canadian Redress Secretariat, reported that as of 31 March 1990, 17,974 applications had been received and of those, 15,570 had been approved for payment. As in the United States' program, eligible individuals have been found in "Switzerland, Bangkok, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Sweden, Africa; almost everywhere in the world except Antarctica." When asked how many more applications they anticipated receiving, he stated that they are still arriving at the rate of about ten per week, and "following the curve out, we can expect about 300 - 350 more to come in this year."

There are several factors preventing them from giving a firm estimate of the total number of applications

which can be expected. First, making this sort of estimate is a statistical process, and there is always a high degree of uncertainty in trying to predict the exact size of a small group within a large population. Also, the original estimate of 12,000 potential eligible persons was based on the 1980 Canadian census. The census, however, didn't include all of the people having only one parent of Japanese ancestry when it tallied Canadians of Japanese ancestry. The people removed during World War II, however, included all those persons who were of Japanese ancestry IN WHOLE OR IN PART. In addition, the Canadian census counted only those persons living in Canada, whereas about 1,800 (approximately 10%) of the eligible individuals live abroad.

Friedman also said that as the program continues, the Secretariat is receiving more and more applications from people whose claim to redress is less clear cut than those who were applying at the beginning of the program. This has several results. First, these claims take longer to process. Second, they are noting a substantial percentage increase in the numbers of claims being rejected — from one in the first nine months of the program to 26 in the last six months. Lastly, a number of applicants have waited to submit an application until a person

whose case they think is similar to theirs has had their application approved. "But," Friedman remarked, "they're not always right. So more applications are coming, but probably a higher percentage will be rejected."

He pointed out that, like the ORA, the Redress Secretariat has given older people the top priority, but that is also where they have the most

difficulty getting documentation to substantiate claims. He noted, for instance, that some of the individuals in question immigrated to Canada so long ago, there is no record of when they arrived.

Friedman said that he is "very pleased with the progress of the redress program so far" and that they expect to have made payments for almost all of the approved applications they have on hand by September of this year, one month before payments in this country will begin. In addition to the amount appropriated to cover this year's payments, the Secretariat will have sufficient appropriations to cover payments in each of the following two years if more applications are approved.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

by Mae Takahashi,
JACL-LEC Fundraising Chair

Since June 1985 through December 1989, JACL-LEC raised over \$700,000 to fund the successful campaign for redress for Americans of Japanese ancestry. And we won a victory for all Americans to ensure that no group of Americans will ever again be denied their constitutional rights solely on account of race or ancestry. This was an incredible achievement, and just as incredible was the spirit and commitment of thousands who contributed and gave their support to the redress effort.

It was a privilege for me to be a part of this significant and historic achievement in our successful pursuit of redress. And on behalf of the JACL-LEC Board of Directors, I extend to you our appreciation for your commitment and financial support.

Your contributions ensured the success of the redress effort.

Thank you again.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Shig Wakamatsu, JACL-LEC Treasurer

The Treasurer has been keeping his books on the basis of a fiscal year which runs from 1 June to 31 May of the following year. In order to make the transition to a calendar year basis, he has found it useful to use a "Short Year" report. The following is the "Short Year" report for the period 1 June 1989 - 31 December 1989.

LEC FUND DRIVE STATUS

BALANCE AS OF 1 JUNE 1989	\$59,853.49
Fresno Checking Account (Fund Drive Chair)	
RECEIPTS	92,441.85
Donations	\$34,033.29
Interest	8,408.56
Cash from C/D	50,000.00
TOTAL	\$152,295.34
DISBURSEMENTS	93,000.00
Transfer to Washington, DC Office	75,000.00
Transfer to Treasurer	18,000.00
BALANCE AT FRESNO CHECKING ACCOUNT	59,295.34
C/D, 6 June 1990	50,000.00
C/D, 17 August 1990	50,000.00
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE IN FRESNO AS OF 31 DEC. 1989	\$159,295.34

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

BALANCES AS OF 1 JUNE 1989	\$ 18,003.29
Treasurer	11,423.48
Washington, D.C. Office	5,282.52
Legislative Strategy Chair	1,297.29
RECEIPTS	94,354.78
Transfers from Fresno	93,000.00
Reimbursements & Credits	910.00
Interest	444.78

EXPENDITURES	91,815.84
Treasurer	22,192.17
Washington, DC Office	66,711.30
Legislative Strategy Chair	2,912.37
BALANCES AT 31 DECEMBER 1989	20,541.97
Treasurer	5,342.94
Washington, DC Office	14,814.11
Legislative Strategy Chair	384.92

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES 1 JUNE - 31 DECEMBER 89

ADMINISTRATION	24,584.67
Office Expenses	16,122.90
Washington, DC	\$14,270.81
Treasurer	1,838.79
San Francisco JACL	13.30
LEC Board Meetings	8,367.43
Personnel Committee	94.34
FUND DRIVE EXPENSES	1,056.00
PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS	61,294.97
Staff	53,535.66
Salaries	30,393.49
Taxes, FICA, w/h	17,092.02
Insurance/Pension	6,050.15
Lobbying	3,402.99
Legis. Str. Chair	2,912.37
Veterans Liaison	550.62
LEC Chair (phone, sect'y, travel)	2,507.12
Leg. Str. Ch. (phone, bus. appts)	1,473.97
Vice Chair for Operations	375.23
PR/SPECIAL EVENTS	1,010.00
(OCA, ADL, Matsui Sacramento)	
MISC. EXPENSES	3,693.56
Staff Travel	1,115.56
Employee Moving Expenses	2,578.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR 1 JUNE - 31 DECEMBER 1989	91,638.64

GUEST EDITORIAL

Rita Takahashi, Former JACL-LEC Executive Director is now Associate Professor, Department of Social Work Education, San Francisco State University.

CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA FOR THE 1990's: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Countries throughout the world have experienced dramatic changes in political, economic, legal, and social orders. Some of these changes led to greater individual freedoms (e.g., in Eastern Europe), while others served to repress and oppress the population (e.g., in China). In the United States, movements have propelled the country toward greater degrees of equity and justice, while other measures have moved the country back some degrees.

All Americans should be proud of the passage of redress legislation, as it was one of several pieces of civil rights legislation which affect the quality of current and future lives. With the success of this legislation, many Americans realized the impact which each individual can have on the state of civil and human rights. In a word, we felt "empowered."

This sense of empowerment should positively direct our future behavior. This historic legislation must be seen in its context and in terms of its implications. It enhances equitable rights and promotes justice for all.

There is great danger in fixating on past achievements, becoming satisfied with the level of achievement, and becoming stifled by the need to be recognized for them. The struggle for civil, constitutional, and human rights should be an ongoing one. We should forever broaden our

Message From the Chair

by Jerry Enomoto, JACL-LEC Chair

It's always difficult to say anything that adequately expresses one's feelings upon the loss of anyone whom we hold dear. Especially this is true when the person has had as profound an effect upon Americans of Japanese ancestry as Senator Spark Matsunaga.

Although a native of Hawaii and never interned, the Senator worked tirelessly on behalf of Redress legislation from the beginning over a decade ago, because he believed from the "gut" that what happened to us was wrong. His personal popularity was responsible for a single-handed effort that resulted in an unprecedented 71 co-sponsors of the Redress bill when it was introduced in the United States Senate.

visions for greater successes, and we should be active in setting legislative agendas. We need to think and plan strategically.

But just as important, as concerned citizens, we must monitor the future direction of this country, as the decade of the 1990's presses forward. In the process of achieving justice, we need to question carefully the means which we use to achieve an end. Questions of ethical standards and moral judgments should be at the forefront of our decision making and problem solving approaches. We need to uphold the very principles for which we struggle.

Lofty ends achieved by unethical, illegal, and morally offensive means only create new injustices. Justice can and should be achieved through ethically sound and just means.

His distinguished career in the House of Representatives and the Senate was always marked by compassion and an abiding commitment to human rights and world peace.

The same courage and leadership was reflected in his military service with the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, where he served with bravery and distinction.

My service many years ago as National President of the Japanese American Citizens League brought me into personal contact with Sparky, as he was affectionately known. I was always struck by his genuine warmth, and his ability to make you feel that the time you were spending with him was important — not a common quality among all "leaders." In reflecting upon his death, it seems to me that the affection and respect in which he was held by so many mainland Japanese Americans is one measure of a life that was so valued by all Americans who will always cherish his memory.

To seek out the wrong is only half the task;

To set it right is the tougher half.

— Spark Matsunaga

Jacobs v. Thornburgh

John Nakahata, JACL-LEC Special Legal Counsel, reports that there has been no movement in the suit filed by Arthur Jacobs. Mr. Jacobs, who was interned at Crystal City along with his German father, seeks to have the Civil Rights Act of 1988 declared unconstitutional.

The Department of Justice has sought to have the case dismissed, and several groups, including JACL-LEC, have filed "friend of the court" briefs supporting dismissal.

Senator Spark Matsunaga Eulogized

ROLL CALL Editorial: "Spark Matsunaga, one of the finest, kindest Members of the United States Senate, died last weekend at the age of 73 It's easy to forget, in an age when institutional criticism runs rampant, that many Members of Congress worked their way up to Washington the hard way, devoting themselves to lives of public service. Spark Matsunaga was such a man.

Public service was his life — teacher, soldier, prosecutor, territorial legislator, the Member of the US House and Senate. He was a vigorous advocate for his constituents, for Japanese-Americans interned during World War II (he succeeded at last in winning compensation for them), for the poor, and for all Americans. He was a thoughtful, sweet, engaging man — one of our favorite people on the Hill. Spark Matsunaga will be sorely missed."

Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI), in remarks to the U.S. Senate: "Spark will always be respected for his outstanding legislative record that fulfilled his visions of peace, international cooperation, and assistance to those in need.

I will remember him for these achievements, and also recall with much fondness another part of him — his always friendly personality and love of "haiku," which is Japanese poetry. Spark was much more than a colleague from the same State; there were also many similarities in the paths of our two lives — from our parents' work on the plantations, to our military service, to our decisions to enter law school and seek elected office. I would like to share with my colleagues a conversation that Spark and I had about 3 years ago during a quiet moment here in the Senate Chamber. We often spoke, of course, about legislative matters, especially



Senator Spark Matsunaga

those affecting our State of Hawaii. But this conversation was much more personal and philosophical, focusing on our views of life. I asked Spark how he wished to be remembered. He replied that he wanted to be remembered as a friend. That answer

intrigued me, and I asked what he meant by it.

Spark said that, "I want to be remembered as a friend of peacemakers." That he will be, for it was his 22 years of lobbying efforts that resulted

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in the establishment in 1984 of the U.S. Institute for Peace. He had seen firsthand the horrors of war and was determined that our Nation devote itself to the pursuit of peace.

Spark said, "I want to be remembered as a friend of the veterans, because if not for them, we would not be enjoying the fruits of democracy." As a ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Spark Matsunaga's imprint could be seen on virtually every major bill that passed the committee. He was engaged in efforts to establish a veterans medical center in Hawaii, to serve the aging and ailing military veterans in our islands. I am confident that we will be successful in carrying on this endeavor, and when this veterans hospital is constructed, I will ask that it forever bear his name, in remembrance of his contributions to veterans of our Nation.

Spark said that, "I want to be friend of the men and women who serve our nation in faraway lands, who stand in harm's way so that we can sleep better at night." Spark had the highest respect for our military and diplomatic personnel, for he recognized that they actively preserve our democratic freedoms and promote democracy abroad.

He said, "I have done my best for them, and I hope that the friendless consider me a friend." Spark was indeed a voice of compassion for the homeless as well as the physically and mentally ill. When it may have been unpopular to do so, he waged a campaign for justice for Americans of Japanese ancestry who were interned during World War II. As my colleagues know, Spark went from office to office seeking cosponsors for a measure authorizing an apology and monetary reparations for Japanese Americans whose patriotism was questioned. When it was introduced, it bore the names of 74

Senators — a remarkable feat — and it was enacted in 1988. He was a very tough, persistent soldier in politics as well as life.

And, Spark said, "I hope that you're my friend." Spark, you will always be my friend.

Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA): "Spark Matsunaga was a great man of peace who fought in war, and later fought to eliminate war and the wartime injustices which preyed upon innocent people. That he was so successful in this is his lasting legacy to our nation, and a timeless source of inspiration to all Americans.

We will all miss Spark Matsunaga."

Rep. Robert Matsui (D-CA): "For his fellow Japanese Americans, Spark will forever be remembered for his unyielding efforts that helped Congress to pass redress legislation in 1988. The passage of that law is a fitting tribute to the resilience and ingenuity of Spark Matsunaga."

Rep. Patricia Saiki (R-HI): "Spark Matsunaga's efforts to create, foster and maintain peace throughout the world will surely stand as his legacy for generations to come."

WASHINGTON POST Editorial: "Sen. Spark Matsunaga of Hawaii had wide interests, and his death this week at age 73 left mourners reminiscing about contributions that ranged from his support for a U.S. peace institute to his efforts on behalf of reparations for Japanese Americans interned in camps during World War II. But the senator also had another constituency - poets. Local writers and readers of poetry knew the haiku-writing Hawaii Democrat as the man who worked doggedly for years to establish a position of American poet laureate, and finally succeeded in 1986 in adding that title, plus a nominal dollop of public funding, onto the existing job of Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.

... [T]he laureateship so far has been an unmitigated success and pleasure to this city. As the programs took root, Sen. Matsunaga remained an enthusiastic parent, and he was frequently to be found at events, adding his voice in praise and even reciting a lyric or two of his own. The Library had already planned to honor Sen. Matsunaga at its program marking the conclusion of Mr. Nemerov's tenure on May 3, and it's fitting that that event will now be dedicated to his memory. [Howard Nemerov is the incumbent poet laureate.]

Senator Spark Matsunaga died on 15 April in Toronto, where he had gone for cancer treatments. He was 73. Matsunaga was flown on Air Force One from Washington, DC to Honolulu where his body lay in state in the rotunda of the State Capitol. After funeral services at Central Union Church, his ashes were interred at Punchbowl National Cemetery. Plans are being made for a memorial service to be held in Washington, DC. He is survived by his wife, the former Helene Hatsumi Tokunaga, and five children.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, friends may make contributions to the Matsunaga Peace Foundation (formerly the Pacific Peace Foundation), P.O. Box 1038, Honolulu, HI, 96808. The foundation, made possible through the inspiration of United States Senator Spark Matsunaga, is a nonprofit public charity devoted to the support of institutions and scholars pursuing peace studies, research, and the application of conflict resolution techniques.

Cards and letters of condolence are being sent to the Senator's office: 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, 20510.

ALEUTS FINALLY GET PAYMENT FOR INTERNMENT: \$12,000 CHECKS

by David Hulén

18 January 1990

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Anchorage Daily News

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Any time now, Mary and George Bourdukofsky each will get a check from the United States for \$12,000 — payment for terrible things that happened a long time ago.

Many of the Bourdukofsky's relatives and former neighbors will get the checks, too. It is intended to compensate them for the two years during World War II they were forced to live more than 1,000 miles from home in squalid government camps.

It works out to about \$16 a day.

The Bourdukofskys live in Anchorage now, but in the summer of 1942 they were among 881 residents of the Aleutian and Pribilof islands evacuated from their homes by the Department of the Interior.

The Japanese had just attacked Dutch Harbor, and occupied islands at the tip of the Aleutian chain. Ships were sent to inhabited islands closer to the mainland to evacuate residents as protection against a Japanese invasion.

Instead of protection, the Aleuts found misery.

The government set up five internment camps in abandoned canneries in southeast Alaska, and sent the Aleuts there to wait out the war. The camps were cold, damp, filthy and crowded.

Two years ago, Congress allocated \$27 million to repay the Aleuts for their suffering, and another \$1 billion to compensate 60,000 surviving Japanese Americans imprisoned as

security risks. The law included a formal apology to those who were interned.

400 still alive

The money is just now being distributed. Of the original 881 Aleuts taken to the camps, and the children born there, about 400 are believed to be still alive.

In addition to the reparations to individuals, another \$15 million will go to the Aleut Corp., \$5 million into a special trust fund and another \$1 million to rebuild churches on the islands destroyed in the war.

Japanese Americans who were interned will get \$20,000 each, about equivalent to what the Aleuts will receive in cash plus payments to their corporation and trust fund.

In 1942, the Bourdukofskys were a young married couple on Saint Paul Island, a treeless, wind-pounded rock in the Bering Sea, descendants of Aleuts forcibly taken there in the 19th century to harvest fur seals for Russian traders. They had two sons: Benjamin, 2, and Jason, 2 months.

"I remember it was Sunday," said Mary, now 67 and living in Anchorage. "We saw some ships in the harbor and saw launches come ashore."

The islanders were given two hours to round up their children and pack one suitcase each. "We left almost everything behind," she said. "Furniture, bedding, dishes."

They had no idea where they were headed. After 10 days at sea, the ship arrived at Funter Bay, an abandoned cannery in a cove 19 miles southwest of Juneau.

"It was the first time we saw trees," said George, 70.

Appalling squalor

Dozens of families crammed into each building. They separated their tiny living spaces by hanging blankets from the ceiling. At first, everyone slept on the floor. Later, someone found a roll of chicken wire and people made cots. Mary shared her cot with her children.

There were no toilets, just out-houses that overflowed into the water below. One small wood stove heated an entire building. The only lights were candles.

"The kids never went outside," Mary said. "There was no place to go. Just these planks, and people would fall through the wood, it was so rotted. They'd be inside and sick."

Every 10th Aleut in the camps died, most from waves of tuberculosis, pneumonia, influenza, measles and mumps, according to government reports. One death certificate listed the cause of death simply as "pain."

After visiting Funter Bay, Alaska's territorial attorney general wrote then-Gov. Ernest Gruening, "I have no language to describe what I saw; if I had I am confident you would not believe my statements."

Men drafted

As the war dragged on, many of the Aleut men in the camps, including George Bourdukofsky, were drafted into the U.S. Army, and many of those were sent back to the Aleutians. In 1944, the first groups of Aleuts were released from the camps. Fewer than half of them returned to their homes.

In the late 1970's, as Japanese Americans began pressing for payment for their suffering, so did the Aleuts.

Continued back page

Matsui Speaks at Day of Remembrance Ceremony



Rep. Bob Matsui, Rita Takahashi, JoAnne Kagiwada, and Jerry Enomoto

This past February 17th Representative Robert Matsui (D-CA) spoke at the Sacramento Day of Remembrance observance. He reminisced about a number of things, including the day the redress bill was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I remember very distinctly Norman Mineta and I were standing

next to each other as we were watching the vote count, and all of a sudden we grabbed each other and we hugged each other and we cried. And just then, about 30 or 40 other (House) members came up and they hugged us and cried as well.

"One member said, 'I want to thank you for allowing us to vote on

this bill. I want to thank you for allowing us to vote on something so important.' The tears were coming out of that member's eyes.

"Never in my entire political life, probably in my entire life, have I ever experienced anything so important as that very moment on the floor of the House of Representatives."

Matsui also reflected on the redress movement in general, and how something which seemed "impossible" 10 years ago was accomplished.

He stressed that "values carried from Japan" by Issei are "still within us, and we were able to struggle, survive and reach our goals." He mentioned his mother, who was unable to talk about her camp experiences until she was about to pass away, and said, "I wish she were here today. She would feel peaceful at being vindicated."

But, while paying homage to the past, Matsui told the gathering to "look to the future, go beyond your own ethnic group . . . You have a responsibility to make sure that a Nelson Mandela is no longer in prison, that a child born today has the same opportunity as your son or daughter, and that a homeless person has shelter."

NCJAR Finishes Work

from the Newsletter of the National Council for Japanese American Redress, November 1989

These words of farewell are from William Hohri, who was the plaintiff in NCJAR's class action lawsuit of

William Hohri et al v. United States that sought civil damages to redress Japanese American victims of mass exclusion and detention.

It is unnecessary as it is impossible for me to thank you all. Whatever we invested of ourselves in this movement makes most of us owners. As owners, we have realized true satisfaction, real value from this movement, not unlike owning a Mine Okubo painting, reading Joy Kogawa's OBASAN, hearing

Edward Ozaki sing his songs based on poems from POETS BEHIND BARBED WIRE, being part of our day at the Supreme Court, or enjoying new and wonderful friendships. Actually, the anticipated payment of \$20,000 seems a little anti-climatic, even though I still plan to buy a car with it. As my mother, whose life spanned almost a century and expired a month after the Civil Liberties Act became law, used to say at milestones in her life, "I can die happy."

Victory continued from page 1

Americans who were sent to internment camps. The tax-free payments will begin Oct. 1, with the oldest survivors being paid first, according to a spokeswoman for U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, a Japanese-American who was wounded while serving in the U.S. Army in World War II and a supporter of the measure.

Kometani was instrumental in educating politicians and citizens about the internment issue. As regional coordinator for the Japanese American Citizens League and president of the New York chapter, Kometani was a frequent spokesman for the group, appearing on national television news shows like "Nightline" and "The MacNeil Lehrer News Hour." During his lobbying effort, Kometani described his camp experience on numerous occasions. And though he speaks freely about his life, the memory of his childhood years behind the barbed wire of the internment camps is a difficult one.

Growing up in Auburn, Wash., in 1941, Tom Kometani considered himself an all-American boy. Living in a small town, most of his days were occupied with friends and school. The events of World War II seemed a million miles away.

But in the weeks following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, Tom Kometani's world began falling apart.

There was the time his mother scolded him for playing with a flashlight in the back yard. She said she was worried that people would think he was signaling Japanese war planes.

And the time his father burned all of the family's books and records.

Then the FBI came to search his home, examining the family's belongings and confiscating radios.

In the spring of 1942, a military order was posted near Kometani's

Personal Perspectives

by Rochelle Wandzura

I started working on redress in the Washington, DC office in March of 1985, but my interest in the issue goes back to my childhood. My mother, a native Los Angeleno who grew up in a mixed immigrant neighborhood, says of 1942 that that's "the time when they took my friends away," and made sure that my brother and I both knew about the terrible wrongs which were committed then. Now that the LEC Board has decided to close their office here, I am going to work for another organization committed to seeing that people are treated with all the dignity and respect which they deserve in their daily lives.

When I first came to this office, we used to talk about what would happen IF redress ever became law. One day Colleen Darling, then LEC Associate Director, said, "and when redress passes..." at which point I interrupted her and asked her if she realized what she had just said. Our eyes got wide, and we literally started jumping up and down for joy, because that's when we KNEW redress was going to become reality.

It was worth all the pain, anxiety and effort. Our goals have largely been accomplished, and we all learned many things. We learned how sensitive members of Congress are to the letters they receive. We were told by office after office that they HAD to hear from their constituents. And all of you came through. You wrote letters, you organized letter writing sessions in your churches and clubs,

home, and his family was given only a few days to dispose of its house, its gas station and most personal belongings.

"My dad called us around the table and explained that we would have to

you contacted friends in places where we didn't have many people. And all those letters turned the tide.

I know that some try to claim that the years of grass roots effort didn't really do that much. That the letters to the members of Congress, the letters to the editors of the local papers, really had no effect other than giving the illusion of helping. But this flies in the face of what we heard over and over from the Congressional offices.

One of the hopes we here in the office had, was that helping to heal the damage inflicted on our nation by the internment would also help heal the Japanese American community. But sometimes it seemed that people cared more about who got credit than actually making sure redress happened. There were even times when I thought some people didn't care if redress NEVER became reality, as long as everyone knew they "had been out in front." Reading all the name-calling in the vernacular newspapers, and seeing the insistence on looking backwards instead of forwards, the day of community healing still looks far away.

Working on redress taught us that together we can bring about massive change for the better. That is a lesson we need to remember as we confront the challenges of the next decade.

I feel grateful and honored to have had the opportunity to work with the many people and organizations who made redress one of their priority issues. It's been good, but now it's time to say good-bye, and God speed.

leave our home, and we were only allowed to take what we could carry with us," Kometani said. "Until that time I never thought of myself as Japanese. My mom was born in this

Continued next page

Victory continued from previous page

country and my dad came here from Japan as a young child. We were Americans. I couldn't understand why we were being sent away."

He didn't know it at the time, but Kometani would never return to his hometown of Auburn. Stripped of all money and belongings, his family spent the next 2 1/2 years behind the barbed wire and guard towers of the Japanese internment camps created during World War II.

Located in desolate mountain and desert regions of the West and South, these camps were created in February 1942, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which enabled the government to legally remove anyone of Japanese descent from their communities.

About 120,000 Japanese-Americans — 77,000 American citizens and 43,000 resident aliens living in California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii — were forced from their homes in the months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and sent to 10 internment camps.

The government contended that these people were a threat to national security, were disloyal and were possibly working as spies for Japan, according to Kometani.

"At the time there was a tremendous amount of anti-Japanese sentiment," Kometani said. "Congress and the press openly expressed racial hatred for the Japanese. Even if the Japanese community had been better organized and stronger politically it wouldn't have mattered. The nation wanted us put away. It was almost by popular demand."

Life in the internment camps was harsh. Because they were in desolate regions, internees suffered from

extreme heat in the summer and sub-zero temperatures in the winter. The wooden barracks, covered with tar paper, provided little protection from the weather. Each barrack typically housed three families, and each

"We were Americans. I couldn't understand why we were being sent away."

family was assigned only one room. There were communal mess halls, toilets and laundries and makeshift schools were set up for the children.

Kometani's family spent the first year of imprisonment at the Tule Lake internment camp in the California desert. The camp held about 12,000 people.

"My family of six slept in one room, and there was little privacy between compartments. You could always hear what was going on in the next room," Kometani said. "Because the camps were so far away from the nearest towns, we rarely had teachers or doctors who came from the outside. We had to rely on the people

"All the guns were pointed inside at us. No one was trying to get in, and we weren't allowed to go out."

in the camp for everything."

But the most pervasive memory of many of the internees were the two barbed wire fences that surrounded each camp and the soldiers with fixed bayonets who patrolled between the fences. Each camp also had guard towers along the perimeter, each

equipped with a machine gun and a searchlight.

"They called them relocation centers, assembly centers, concentration camps, but they were prisons. If you didn't believe that, all you had to do was look outside. All the guns were pointed inside at us. No one was trying to get in, and we weren't allowed to go out," Kometani said.

There were few cases of outright brutality at the camps, which was probably because that most of the

internees just accepted the situation and did not attempt to retaliate, according to Kometani.

"I know of only a few instances where people were hurt. Once an old man chased a dog too close to the fence and the guards shot and killed him. This didn't happen often but it reminded you that you were a prisoner, and if you tried to escape you would be shot," Kometani said.

"We didn't retaliate. It's part of the Japanese culture that we as Nisei (second-generation Japanese-Americans) inherited. You sort of accept things and do the best with what you've got. We tried to make a life of it despite the severe circumstances."

In 1943, Kometani's parents, along with the other adult internees, were given the opportunity to fill out a loyalty questionnaire. Among other questions, they were asked if they would be willing to serve in the United States army.

"As you can imagine, it was hard for most people to swear loyalty to a government that was keeping them prisoner, but most people answered yes to these questions," Kometani said.

Ultimately, more than 33,000 Japanese-American men and women volunteered or were drafted into the

armed forces during the war. In the Pacific they served as translators and in Europe a Japanese-American unit — the 442nd Regimental Combat Team — was among the most decorated and bloodied units of the war.

After giving positive answers on the loyalty questionnaire, Kometani's father was allowed to leave the camp, and he traveled east to look for work.

The rest of the family had to remain behind until Kometani's father found a place where they could resettle. They were forced to move from the Tule Lake camp, however, when it was reserved for those internees who had given negative answers on the loyalty questionnaire.

"This time we were transferred to a camp in northwest Wyoming, called Heart Mountain, where my family stayed until our father found a place for us in Illinois," Kometani said. "The one thing that sticks in my memory about that is the cold. It was extremely cold."

In late 1944, Kometani's father took the family to live in the small farm community of Maringo, Ill. His father worked as a mechanic on a number of farms in return for a small salary and a ration of chicken, eggs and milk. Kometani recalls this time as the most difficult period of his life.

"I had to go to school and the war was still on, the Japanese were hated and we were synonymous with the enemy. We looked like the enemy so we must be the enemy. It was very difficult for our whole family," Kometani said.

After the war, Kometani's family was able to settle into a peaceful life in the small community. Kometani left the town when he went to college, and job opportunities eventually brought him to New

Jersey, where he has lived for 26 years. But he still considers himself a Midwesterner, and fondly refers to Maringo as his hometown. His mother still lives in the farm community, in the same house the family has owned for 46 years.

Today, Kometani speaks openly about his camp experiences. But for most of his life he kept his feelings and his opinions hidden.

"Like many Nisei, I went through a long period of denial. I wanted to forget the past and forget my heritage. But it was always there, you think about it every day. It wasn't until I became involved in the

"Like many Nisei, I went through a long period of denial. I wanted to forget the past and forget my heritage."

lobbying effort that I really addressed the problem."

In 1981, Kometani and other members of the Japanese American Citizens League participated in mock hearings designed to prepare former camp internees to testify at hearings held by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in Washington, D.C. While listening to other Nisei describe their internment, Kometani decided he wanted to speak out about his experience.

"As I listened to the testimonies, I was deeply moved," Kometani said. "Up to that time I had never talked about it and I never even told my friends. But it always gnawed at me. At that point I knew I wanted to get involved."

But the struggle would prove a long one. For the next seven years,

Kometani dedicated as much as 80 percent of his free time to the cause, lobbying congressmen and gaining grass-roots support for the effort.

"It was exceptionally hard work in the East because many people had never even heard about the internment camps," Kometani said. "We really had to do a lot of educating. The biggest problem was that most of the people involved lived west of the Rockies, while most of the votes in Congress were east of the Rockies."

In 1988, Reagan signed legislation authorizing the government to issue an official apology and payment of reparations. The fight for reparations had come to a successful conclusion, and Kometani was suddenly left with a lot of free time.

"These days I spend my free time at home," Kometani said. "I'm still on the Legislative Education Committee for the JACL so I'm still busy."

Kometani's involvement in the lobbying process has helped him speak freely about his ordeal behind the barbed wire of the internment camps. But many internees still find it impossible to openly discuss the economic and physical hardships they endured.

"More than 45 years have passed and you still think about it every day," Kometani said.

"It is a part of our country's history, not a pleasant part, but it is a part of history and it should be noted," Kometani said.

Tom Kometani has been a member of the JACL-LEC Board since 1989. His story represents that of many others across the country. We have included this interview as a good example of the sort of educational work a number of people have been doing in their communities.

States' Treatment of Redress

The March 1990 issue included a summary of how states will be treating redress payments for purposes of state income tax and eligibility for social welfare programs. Since then, we have received more information from some of the states. The changes from March are given below.

ALABAMA

TAXES: Yes, exempt from taxation

BENEFITS: Yes, exempt for state's food stamp and AFDC programs.

COLORADO

BENEFITS: Yes, payments will be excluded as income or resources when determining eligibility or benefit amounts for any State funded program.

INDIANA

BENEFITS: "No formal policy statement has been issued . . . However, it is likely that the state public assistance programs will follow the federal programs . . ." *Contact Dept. of Public Welfare to verify. Contact Dept. of Human Services regarding Housing and energy assistance programs.*

KENTUCKY

BENEFITS: Yes for federally funded AFDC, Food Stamp, Medicaid, Refugee, and Weatherization assistance programs; and for the State Supplementation program assisting individuals who need personal care services in their own home or licensed personal or family care homes.

LOUISIANA

BENEFITS: Yes for AFDC and Food Stamp programs; Louisiana has no state funded public assistance programs.

MAINE

BENEFITS: NO for State public assistance programs; eligibility is based on actual need and redress

compensation "has to be taken into consideration because it has lessened that persons need . . ."

MARYLAND

BENEFITS: Yes for State programs administered by Dept. of Human Resources such as GPA and PAA. Sent inquiry to Dept. of Housing on 12 April about State's housing programs.

OHIO

BENEFITS: Ohio Dept. of Human Services exempts all redress payments for all public assistance programs in determining both eligibility and level of benefits.

OREGON

BENEFITS: Yes for federally funded programs and programs administered by Adult and Family Services division. NO for state General Assistance Programs. Except for certain nursing facility residents, recipients would lose eligibility until "lump-sum" income is exhausted.

RHODE ISLAND

BENEFITS: Yes for AFDC, General public assistance, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, Supplemental Security Income.

SOUTH CAROLINA

TAXES: Yes: "not subject to South Carolina income tax."

BENEFITS: Yes: payments excluded "for determining eligibility for public benefit programs, such as food stamps, AFDC, State Housing Authority financing, etc."

TENNESSEE

BENEFITS: Yes, will disregard payments both as income and resources in determining eligibility for benefit programs.

TEXAS

TAXES: No state income tax.

In addition to these changes, we would like to point out some problems which need more follow-up.

ARIZONA: not counted "in determining eligibility for federal Medicaid;" no response to inquiry regarding eligibility for State benefit programs

IDAHO: programs administered by State Tax Commission will be unaffected, no information about programs administered by Department of Health and Welfare.

ILLINOIS: payments may affect "entitlement privileges." Legislation has been introduced to exempt redress payments.

KANSAS: No response to inquiries regarding taxation or benefit programs. Kansas is the only state we have not heard from at all.

MAINE: Payments will affect eligibility for State public assistance programs.

MISSISSIPPI: The only state which said it will tax redress payments.

NEW MEXICO: Will include redress payments in calculating tax rebates and credits.

NEW YORK: A lobbying campaign has been mounted to pass a bill in the State Legislature which would exclude redress payments when determining eligibility for State assistance programs.

OREGON: Will include redress payments when determining eligibility for the State funded General Assistance program.

PENNSYLVANIA: Will include redress as income in "determining forgiveness under special state tax provisions for poverty."

We would like to remind you again that all States periodically revise their laws and regulations on tax and benefit programs, and checking with State authorities is advisable.

NCCR's Future Plans

At a statewide meeting in January, NCCR made plans for their organization's future work, including "Life After Redress." They have scheduled a convention for November 1990 to refine and ratify their plans.

Over the next two years or so, the main focus will remain redress and reparations work, until the redress process is completed. This includes eligibility follow-up and assistance to survivors, especially in community workshops. NCCR also plans to continue educational work, such as curriculum projects for Japanese American history in the schools and oral history projects. There is also some discussion of a "Community Fund" which could be used for basic needs (e.g., Nikkei senior citizen housing). Other related work, such as supporting amendments addressing non-Japanese Americans who went to camp and trying to have the Day of Remembrance become a recognized statewide or national calendared day will be pursued as well.

Social Security Credits

from *ROUND-UP, Arizona Chapter JACL Newsletter, April 1990*

SOCIAL SECURITY . . . WAGE CREDITS ARE GRANTED TO WORLD WAR II INTERNEES for each week he or she was age 18 or older. The credit for each of these weeks is the greater of: A.) The highest hourly rate of pay for which the internee had previously worked in any employment multiplied by 40; or B.) The Federal minimum hourly rate

in effect during that time. The minimum wage rate during 1941-1944 was 30 cents per hour, and during 1945- 1946, 40 cents per hour. If the person was not employed or was self-employed before internment, the amount of wages credited shall be based on the Federal minimum hourly rate in effect for that period. These credits are not given if a larger benefit would be payable without them, or if a monthly benefit payable by another Federal agency is based on the same internment. (Information from Uta Eto)

Population Projections For the 1990 CENSUS

AGE	POPULATION 1990	1980	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Total	250,410,000	226,546,000	10.5%
90 - 94	873,000	557,000	56.7
95 - 99	260,000	131,000	98.5
100 or older	56,000	15,000	273.3

1990 JACL San Diego Convention Sayonara Banquet and Ball

Make your reservations now by filling out this form and mailing with your check to: San Diego JACL 1990 Convention, PO Box 2548, San Diego, California 92112. For more information see page 2.

An appeal to Redress Supporters from Peggy Liggett, on behalf of the LEC program committee.

_____ No. dinners at \$50.00/person _____ Amount enclosed

Deadline: 14 June 1990

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Chapter _____ Other _____

Applications Underway For \$12 Million Canadian Community Fund

by *Kim Koyama and Tony Tamayose*
from *NIKKEI VOICE*, December 1989

The Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation Board of Directors is receiving applications for shares of the \$12 million community fund, which came out of the 1988 Redress Settlement.

The board has proposed a breakdown of the \$12 million (no less than \$8 million to go toward capital projects, while no more than \$4 million is to be used for program funding). The capital funding has been divided by region, with the allocation based on the regional populations.

Two deadlines have been set for applications: January 31 and May 31, 1990. It is expected that applications for Programs & Activities will continue to be received and processed in large numbers during the full five year period of the Community Development Program.

Hearings continued from page 4

within 60 days of the original letter.

Turner closed by stating, "I believe that we have established excellent rapport within the Japanese American community, and we are

gratified by their wholehearted support of our efforts....We will be fully prepared to begin payments in October 1990."

Aleuts continued from page 13

"Almost no one knew our story," said Dimitri Philemonof, executive director of the Aleutian-Pribilof Association. Some war histories don't even mention the Aleutian campaign, in which hundreds of soldiers died — much less the story of the Aleuts.

"People have asked, 'Is \$12,000 per person, is that just? Is it justice?'" said Philemonof. "There's no dollars that would heal the scars and replace the people lost. But we've wanted to see people with money in hand to show there was justice."

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