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910:192

“No person shall...
be deprived of
life, liberty or property,
without due
process of law...”

Amendment V
Constitution of the United States

Japanese American Citizens League Legislative Education Committee

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The Japanese American Incarceration: A Case for Redress

Japanese American Citizens League
Legislative Education Committee

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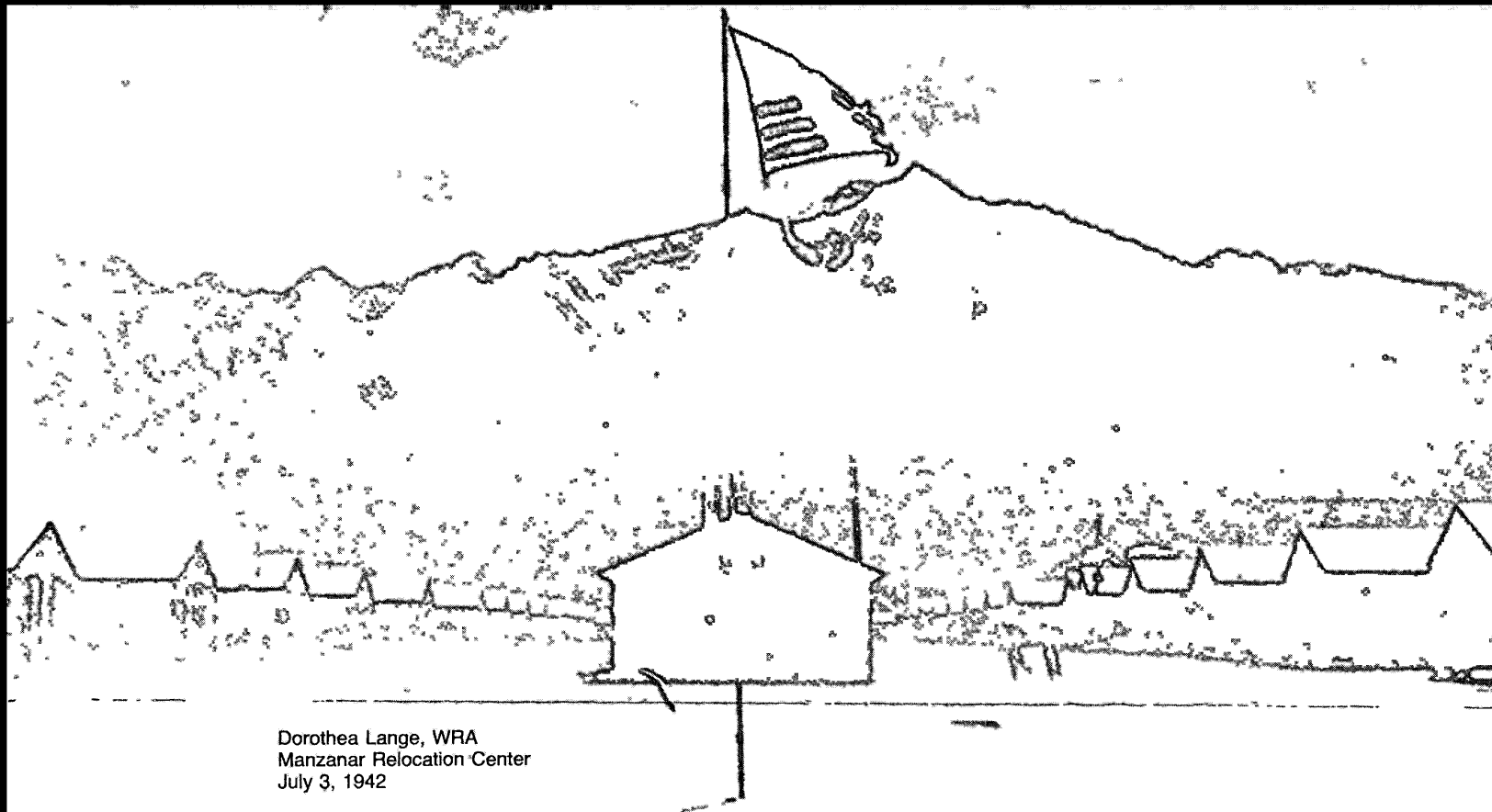
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Dorothea Lange, WRA
Manzanar Relocation Center
July 3, 1942

Manzanar. Minidoka. Heart Mountain.

Unfamiliar names of remote and desolate places, etched permanently in the minds of some, forgotten by many.

Yet history records in 1942, the forcible eviction of 120,000 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry from their homes on the West Coast.

Without trial, without charges of wrongdoing, without the basic protections guaranteed by law, an entire group of loyal Americans became the tragic victims of a government action solely because of their ancestry.

And in the course of their detention Japanese Americans suffered severe losses — freedom, dignity, income, careers, — and for some, a mental anguish that would last a lifetime.

Manzanar, Minidoka, Heart Mountain, Poston, Tule Lake, Gila River, Granada, Topaz, Jerome, Rohwer — these were America's concentration camps.

In 1980 the Federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians was established to review the facts surrounding the exclusion and detention of Japanese Americans and to recommend appropriate remedies. Following exhaustive research and hearings, the Commission, in part, concluded:

“The promulgation of Executive Order 9066 (the order which allowed for the Japanese American exclusion) was not justified by military necessity, and the decisions which followed from it — detention,

ending detention, and ending exclusion — were not driven by analysis of military conditions. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. Widespread ignorance of Japanese Americans contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan. A grave injustice was done to American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review or any probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed, and detained by the United States during World War II.”

This experience of Japanese Americans during World War II is a harsh reminder of the frailties of constitutional guarantees — that wherever and whenever civil liberties can be taken from one group or individual, they can be taken from any group or individual.

The recommendations of the Commission form the basis for congressional legislation — Senate Bill, S.1009, and House of Representatives Resolution, HR442 — which seek to redress civil rights violations against an American ethnic group. Passage of these bills will be a significant step toward rectifying a mistake of the past in the hope a similar tragedy will never again be repeated.

Your help is needed to gain passage of this important legislation. Please write to your Senator and Congressman and urge their support of S. 1009 and HR 442. **PASSED 8/10/88**

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