

September 5, 1979

Dear Aiko and Jack Herzig:

Thanks for your memo and the enclosures.

It is heartening to learn of your sympathetic interest in redress. I do believe it is important for us to have a branch of the National Council established in New York and Washington, DC. I'd like to express some opinions on your memo, if I may:

1. We need a commitment from you and others to join us before the dialogue can really become substantive. Dialogue, I think, tends to occur among those within an organization or with those outside with whom we, for one reason or another, ^{are} compelled to negotiate. Other comments tend to fall into the limbo of free advice, which can, of course, be made, but which usually is not taken seriously. I came away quite disappointed in New York because there really did not seem to be any interest in their doing anything; it was just talk. However, since then, I have found that people like George Yuzawa and Taxi Kusunoki and my daughter, Sasha, are interested in helping us out. George and Taxi have already been quite helpful. We are very much involved in an action. Our bill is about to be introduced. The JACL's bill has been introduced. We need action such as writing letters to senators and representatives, letters to the editor, op-ed statements, television news segments, etc. We need lots of help in coalition development and Washington lobbying.
2. I don't agree with all aspects of the Lowry bill (our bill which is to be introduced by Cong. Mike Lowry). But it was I who urged the group in Seattle to introduce their own bill through their congressman. (I take absolutely no credit for actually writing the bill or for having it introduced via Lowry; that was done by the people in Seattle.) The Lowry bill is so much better than S.1647. I am quite willing to subordinate my criticisms to its introduction. Nothing in politics is perfect. (My criticisms: I would tend to favor a single appropriation over the IRS method. But the IRS method may just work. Congressional reaction has been mixed. I don't care for the Nikkei Trust Fund. I think it ought to go back to the treasury. I'm cynical about its administration. Power does tend to corrupt us mortals.)
3. I strongly reject the notion of all-Nikkei control. Our Chicago board of the National Council is mixed and will remain mixed. It's non-negotiable. I have many comments here which I think ~~remain better~~ ^{un}stated ought to remain unstated. However, I do concede that the impetus and driving force for redress will most probably come from those who were victims and feel abused. This could be one of the problems with the JACL leadership. It may not be capable of outrage at something like S.1647.

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4. Organization is important. We need organization both for action and the resolution of conflicts in our thinking. New York and Washington contain many national headquarters. Washington is the center of the action. Long distance action is very weak.

Moreover, the differences that currently exist about the bill itself and about the organization can be resolved democratically through the organization. We can do this through a democratic assembly in which we can debate and vote. The democratic process means we must compromise. There's a certain amount of risk and frustration in that. But I've seen it work very well, even after many years of successive defeats for my particular point of view.

I do hope something materializes from this exchange of ideas. We've got a long way to go. I see this action as taking years of effort. However, we are now passing through a very critical time legislatively. It is quite possible that S.1647 will pass and with it our hopes for a redress bill for the next 3 or 4 years. We need help now.

Peace,

Welf

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cc: *George Yuzawa, Shouke Sasaki*