

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

October 30, 1980

Dear Michi: (Weglyn)

As far as I know, "Nisei Lobby" is not a real organization. I remember about 10 years ago, Masaoka himself told me that "Nisei Lobby" is just a front name for him to use whenever he wanted to testify at congressional hearings regarding a Japanese American issue.

Note that Masaoka became "president" of the "Nisei Lobby" in 1970. That year he announced his retirement as JACL Washington Representative effective July 1971; and David Ushio was hired as his assistant and heir-apparent. Over the next year, Masaoka had to gradually relinquish control to Ushio.

Masaoka knew that when he lost the title of JACL representative, he also would lose his credentials to influence legislation about Japanese American concerns. With younger people taking over JACL leadership, Masaoka predicted that he would not always agree with the JACL position and wanted to preserve some outlet to express his views.

He could not testify as a representative of his business firm because Masaoka-Ishikawa & Associates, Inc. was too closely connected with overseas trade interests (he is a registered foreign agent). So he invented a fictitious organization called "Nisei Lobby" as a device to make his statements sound more credible. No more than a handful of people are "members" of this supposed organization--mostly Masaoka's business partners and long-time friends. Thus, when Masaoka testified at the recent hearings on the redress commission bill, he was basically representing only himself.

On one hand, Masaoka wanted to be relieved of the job of JACL representative because he thought it did not pay enough (\$18,000 plus expenses); but on the other hand, he desperately wanted to retain his influence on matters close to his heart. In particular, he did not want a new generation of Japanese Americans to denigrate the collaborationist role of the JACL during the war years. In many ways, I think Masaoka is paranoid about how he will be judged in history.

The foregoing information was told to me verbally. Unfortunately, I do not have anything in writing for documentation. Therefore, please do not

publish any accusations using me as your sole source. I simply will not be able to "prove" the allegations if Masaoka decides to sue. But if you get the same information from numerous other independent sources, you will be on firmer legal ground to expose the "Nisei Lobby" as a fraud.

Roy

CC: William Hohri

Shosuke Sasaki ✓