

7004 Murray Ave. S.W., Apt. 401
Seattle, Washington 98136
October 14, 1980

Mr. Bert Nakano
National Coalition on Redress/Reparations
P. O. Box 3142 Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, Calif. 90051

Dear Mr. Nakano:

Although I shall not be able to attend your group's conference of mid-November, I earnestly wish you progress in your goal of obtaining individual monetary redress from our Government for the exile and imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

After going over your paper entitled "Uniting in a Common Cause", I feel that your organization will seriously weaken the cause of redress if it persists in adhering to the five points listed in your article. I am unable to understand how your group could have so completely failed to take into consideration the critical factor of time. The Issei and even the older Nisei are rapidly dying off. Any attempt now to seek full and detailed redress of injuries and losses inflicted on Japanese Americans by the Government during World War II would be doomed to failure because of the unavailability of documentary evidence and the endless time such an effort would require in meeting claim procedures. All the victims of that mass violation of Constitutional rights will have died before the amounts of redress payments could be determined. Of necessity, any redress payments at this late date can not be other than "token".

Moreover, it is extremely unlikely that your group could do anything truly effective "to insure that similar racist acts and violations of constitutional rights will not occur again". I can not imagine any persons on earth who could now make it impossible for a future generation of American politicians to commit a similar outrage.

Of your five points, point number 1 ignores the need to provide for some correlation between the individual sums to be paid and the time spent by each individual in the prison camps. A flat demand for "a minimum of \$25,000 per person" regardless of the length of confinement would be looked upon by the general public as essentially a mass raid on the Treasury instead of a reasonable request for justice.

Point number 2 should be dropped entirely. Who is going to determine the "needs of each respective community"? This kind of provision could lead to prolonged bickering and ill-will between various communities and would probably result in bitter lawsuits between such groups. I see no need for a special "fund that can speed payment to the Issei", or for the need for any other kind of special fund. As long as the method of redress payments follow the principles contained in the Lowry bill and all payments are first made by the Government directly to the individuals affected by Executive Order 9066 or their heirs, the possibilities for the mis-use or theft of large blocks of redress funds will be avoided.

Point number 3 should also be dropped for the present. It should be considered only after a genuine redress bill such the Lowry bill has been enacted and all payments to individuals have been made. To tie redress through legislation to future lawsuits against the Government will only serve to confuse the issue in the minds of the public.

Points 4 and 5 may be suitable as expressions of idealistic hopes for a distant future. They should have no place in a realistic drive seeking redress payments at the earliest possible date. Time is of the essence. Too much time has already been wasted by the National J.A.C.L.'s foot-dragging on the redress issue. Points 4 and 5 can only add to the general misunderstanding of the redress activities and aims.

It is not necessary or wise to start everything from scratch and waste time re-inventing the wheel all over again. Almost six years of careful research and study preceded the final wording of the Lowry bill which was designed to avoid needless complications and to be as simple as possible while respecting the principles of equity and justice for the victims of Executive Order 9066 and their immediate heirs. Congressman Lowry has promised to re-introduce his redress bill if he is re-elected. Your National Coalition should be helping Lowry win his present re-election campaign by publicly declaring its support for him both morally and financially.

Some California newspaper versions of my article entitled "Obstructing Justice" contained serious typographical errors. Enclosed are two copies of the article as I originally wrote it. Please feel free to make Xerox copies if you care to do so.

Best wishes for the success of your November conference.

Sincerely yours,

Shosuke Sasaki.

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