

JACL NATIONAL REPARATION COMMITTEE

Clifford I. Uyeda, M.D.
Chairman. San Francisco.

Ken Hayashi, Los Angeles.

Attorney Peggy N. Iwasaki, Portland.

The following ten presentations were prepared by the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) National Reparation Committee as part of the educational program to review and discuss the reparation issue specifically for Japanese Americans.

They appeared in the PACIFIC CITIZEN, beginning October 28, 1977.

Other presentations to follow.

CONTENTS

	Page:
TO JACLers	1
I WHY REPARATIONS?	2
REPARATION COMMITTEE	4
II WIEDERGUTMACHUNG (Germany's Restitution Program)	5
III REPARATIONS? NO!	7
IV COMMENTS ON REPARATION CONCEPT	9
V INDIVIDUALS VS TRUST FUND AS RECIPIENTS	11
VI PROPOSALS SUBMITTED	13
VII REPARATION BENEFICIARIES	15
REPARATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS	17
VIII COMMENTS ON METHOD OF REDRESS	18
IX REPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE	20
X JAPANESE CANADIANS	22



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: 1765 Sutter Street • San Francisco, California 94115 • (415) 921-5225
 REGIONAL OFFICES: Washington, D.C./Chicago/San Francisco/Los Angeles/Portland/Fresno
 Karl K. Nobuyuki, National Executive Director

TO JACLers:

In accepting the chairmanship of the JACL National Reparation Committee, I look upon it as an opportunity to contribute toward a phase of this campaign.

Although endorsed by the JACL National Council at every biennial convention since 1970, the concept of reparation is still not clear to many Japanese Americans. And adding to the confusion is the method of redress which to many determines their acceptance or rejection of the reparation idea.

The first and major task of this committee, as I see it, is to clarify the issue of reparation, then submit concrete alternative plans to the Japanese Americans for their review and comments. The pros and cons of not only the various plans but of the reparation concept itself must be fully explored and discussed for a clearer understanding of the issues. The issues are: 1) Why or why not reparation? 2) How?

The goal is the development of a single realistic proposal which had wide support not only of Japanese Americans but other Americans as well. Legislative passage is the issue to which the proposal must be addressed.

All efforts will be made to clarify the issues for Japanese Americans, without whose understanding and support the project cannot go into the next phase of educating and gathering support of the American public.

Hopefully a thorough educational phase for Japanese Americans can be completed by the Salt Lake City convention next summer, at which time I hope to relinquish the chairmanship to another person to carry on the next phase of the campaign.

. . . Clifford I. Uyeda.
 Pacific Citizen, October 28, 1977.

JACL NATIONAL REPARATION COMMITTEE

I

WHY REPARATION?

During the dark days of early 1942, JACL leaders gathered to decide whether they should cooperate in their own evacuation or whether they should resist it.

If it was the will of the President that evacuation might be a necessary contribution to the national defense, they reasoned, as good Americans they felt that JACL ought to cooperate. However, they said, that at some appropriate time, somewhere, somehow, the Japanese Americans would send a bill of particulars to the Congress of the United States and ask for redress for what they would suffer unjustly. (Mike Masaoka @ JACL National Convention, 6/23/76.)

Thus, as far back as the spring of 1942, JACL is on record for calling for a reparation campaign when the time is right. Many Japanese Americans think the time has come.

A report by the Special State Department investigator Curtis B. Munson (Munson Report, November 1941), certifying the extraordinary degree of loyalty to the United States among Japanese Americans, was known to the President, State, War and Navy departments. (Years of Infamy, M. Weglyn, p. 34.)

Executive Order 9066 (2/19/42), approved by Congress in March 1942, ordered the exclusion of most Nikkei residents from the three West Coast states and Alaska. Persons of Japanese ancestry were deemed national security risks although there was no evidence or record of sabotage or espionage. Japanese in Hawaii were not evacuated en masse although located in a highly strategic area.

The government of the United States, therefore, without an evidence of misconduct or disloyalty, uprooted and imprisoned practically all Pacific Coast residents of Japanese ancestry (112,000).

Losses sustained by the evacuees were far reaching, not only in monetary values but the psychological and emotional damages from the

...over

evacuation experiences were to plague Japanese American communities well into the next generation.

Property losses alone sustained by the evacuees were estimated by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco at \$400 million in 1942. Through the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, claimants received only 8½ cents on each dollar lost.

By custom and tradition, any American who has been injured by false accusations is expected to bring those responsible into court and obtain a judgement clearing his name and awarding him monetary damages from the offending parties.

Although loss of freedom and injustice can never be equated monetarily, a meaningful redress is a tangible expression of our government's acknowledgement of the injustice and wrong committed against persons of Japanese ancestry in this country. It serves to warn against future similar abuses.

The concept of federal monetary compensations for injustice and injury perpetrated upon Americans by the U.S. government is an established fact.

Alaskan natives (U.S. citizens with one-quarter Eskimo, Aleut or Indian blood can qualify) have been awarded a one billion dollar settlement by Congress in 1971.

The mass arrest of 1200 demonstrators on the steps of the U.S. Capitol in May 1971 resulted in a court verdict in 1975 of awarding \$10,000 per person for violation of their rights under the First and Eighth Amendments.

During the same World War II in Europe, Jews became victims of Nazi persecutions. What the Federal Republic of Germany has done about this will be the subject of our next presentation.

Pacific Citizen,
November 4, 1977.

JACL NATIONAL REPARATION COMMITTEE

I

WHY REPARATION?

During the dark days of early 1942, JACL leaders gathered to decide whether they should cooperate in their own evacuation or whether they should resist it.

If it was the will of the President that evacuation might be a necessary contribution to the national defense, they reasoned, as good Americans they felt that JACL ought to cooperate. However, they said, that at some appropriate time, somewhere, somehow, the Japanese Americans would send a bill of particulars to the Congress of the United States and ask for redress for what they would suffer unjustly. (Mike Masaoka @ JACL National Convention, 6/23/76.)

Thus, as far back as the spring of 1942, JACL is on record for calling for a reparation campaign when the time is right. Many Japanese Americans think the time has come.

A report by the Special State Department investigator Curtis B. Munson (Munson Report, November 1941), certifying the extraordinary degree of loyalty to the United States among Japanese Americans, was known to the President, State, War and Navy departments. (Years of Infamy, M. Weglyn, p. 34.)

Executive Order 9066 (2/19/42), approved by Congress in March 1942, ordered the exclusion of most Nikkei residents from the three West Coast states and Alaska. Persons of Japanese ancestry were deemed national security risks although there was no evidence or record of sabotage or espionage. Japanese in Hawaii were not evacuated en masse although located in a highly strategic area.

The government of the United States, therefore, without an evidence of misconduct or disloyalty, uprooted and imprisoned practically all Pacific Coast residents of Japanese ancestry (112,000).

Losses sustained by the evacuees were far reaching, not only in monetary values but the psychological and emotional damages from the

...over

evacuation experiences were to plague Japanese American communities well into the next generation.

Property losses alone sustained by the evacuees were estimated by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco at \$400 million in 1942. Through the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, claimants received only 8½ cents on each dollar lost.

By custom and tradition, any American who has been injured by false accusations is expected to bring those responsible into court and obtain a judgement clearing his name and awarding him monetary damages from the offending parties.

Although loss of freedom and injustice can never be equated monetarily, a meaningful redress is a tangible expression of our government's acknowledgement of the injustice and wrong committed against persons of Japanese ancestry in this country. It serves to warn against future similar abuses.

The concept of federal monetary compensations for injustice and injury perpetrated upon Americans by the U.S. government is an established fact.

Alaskan natives (U.S. citizens with one-quarter Eskimo, Aleut or Indian blood can qualify) have been awarded a one billion dollar settlement by Congress in 1971.

The mass arrest of 1200 demonstrators on the steps of the U.S. Capitol in May 1971 resulted in a court verdict in 1975 of awarding \$10,000 per person for violation of their rights under the First and Eighth Amendments.

During the same World War II in Europe, Jews became victims of Nazi persecutions. What the Federal Republic of Germany has done about this will be the subject of our next presentation.

Pacific Citizen,

November 4, 1977.

REPARATION COMMITTEE

A great deal of research and thoughts have already been expended by many concerning reparation for Japanese Americans incarcerated by their own government during World War II.

With much comprehensive studies available, especially by members of the Pacific Northwest District, we wish to present them to JACLers in a systematic review. We hope to review and clarify the pros and cons of the issues presented.

We are indebted to the many concerned JACLers who have spent enormous time and energy in the preparation of their particular views. They will be relied upon heavily in our presentations.

We are looking forward to many comments from the readers. Please address them in care of the Pacific Citizen or the JACL National Headquarters. These will be reviewed for future presentations.

- - - Clifford I. Uyeda.

Pacific Citizen, November 4, 1977.

II

WIEDERGUTMACHUNG

It is the German word for restitution, meaning literally: to make something good again. It is the word used by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in the payment of compensatory damages to "those who suffered in mind and body, or had been deprived unjustly of their freedom."

After World War II, Occupation Powers restored properties confiscated by the Nazis but it did not take into account personal damages. The Federal Republic of Germany has stated that restitution, both moral and material, for acts committed by the Nazis was one of the most important and urgent obligation of the German people.

In the Luxemborg Agreement of 1952 Germany agreed to pay three billion marks to the State of Israel and 450 million marks to various Jewish organizations (exchange rate: \$1 = 4 marks).

Subsequent legislation went far beyond the responsibilities assumed in earlier agreements. Both the number eligible and the assistance offered were substantially increased. Survivors of deceased victims were also guaranteed compensations.

Of over 4 million claims submitted 96.5 percent were settled by 1971 with the payment of 29.3 billion marks (1971 exchange rate: \$1 = 3.3 marks). Of the recipients approximately one-third lived in Israel, one-third in West Germany and the final third in other countries.

The 1957 Federal Restitution Law recognized Germany's obligation to pay compensatory damages for all objects confiscated by the Third Reich, including those destroyed or lost. The law also applied to properties confiscated outside the territory of Germany. The international agreement had limited Germany's financial obligations to 1.5 billion marks; but the amount paid has exceeded 4 billion marks.

In addition, lump sum payments had been made to former concentration internees who were objects of medical experimentations by the Nazis. Lump sum payments were also made to Palestinian prisoners of

war with Jewish background.

Between 1959 and 1964 Germany paid 900 million marks (\$225 million) to compensate citizens in eleven European nations who were not eligible under the earlier compensation laws. Their survivors also became eligible for compensations.

By 1975 a total of 52.4 billion marks had been paid by Germany, and another 25 to 30 billion marks will be paid under the Compensation of Victim Law. The grand total of compensation monies will be at least 75 to 80 billion marks. (Today's exchange: \$1 = 2.3 marks.)

The purpose of the Nazi concentration camps for Jews was extermination; the purpose of the American concentration camps for Japanese Americans was imprisonment. Both were carried out by the government against its own people. Both were based solely on race and without individual charges. Although there was no similarity in their treatment inside the camps, the issue which placed them there was the same--the unjust incarceration and deprivation of freedom to their own people based solely on ancestry.

The fact that the victorious Allied Powers imposed on Germany the concept of reparation to the victims of Nazism does not diminish the righteousness nor the justice of the reparation act. The Federal Republic of Germany has stated that it is giving precedence to restitution of injustices caused by the earlier German government against persons of Jewish ancestry. United States is the world leader in human justice and rights. Her actions must parallel the goal she advocates.

The concept of reparation does not have the unanimous support of the Japanese Americans. Our next presentation will explore the reasons why.

Pacific Citizen, Nov. 11, 1977.

III

REPARATIONS? NO!

The concept of reparations for Japanese Americans imprisoned without charges during World War II does not have the unanimous support even of those once incarcerated. They are, however, unanimous in believing that evacuation was an outrage, unnecessary, illegal and was a racially inspired injustice. But--

There was a war going on; and wars are noted for unjust human treatments. World War II took the lives of estimated 55 million lives, and civilians suffered greater casualties than men in uniform. American military deaths were more than 400,000. Japanese suffered more than 2 million military deaths. At Pearl Harbor more than 3,000 Americans died. At Hiroshima and Nagasaki nearly 200,000 died. Many civilian deaths came from forced migrations. Among those civilians who were forced to migrate were the 110,000 Americans of Japanese descent.

The principle of reparation is unacceptable because it is placing a price tag on our freedom and our rights--rights that should be regarded as priceless. We cheapen freedom by putting a price tag on it.

Japanese Americans have earned the respect and admiration of the American people by the dignity and diligence with which we have fought back from injustice. Demanding reparation would diminish the grace and realism with which our Issei parents made the best of an impossible situation. The patriotism and courage with which Nisei fought for America when given a chance would be depreciated. We would be foolish to sacrifice these heritage for a few dollars.

Japanese Americans are the most prosperous of the so-called minorities. Their education and income are higher than the national average. We will dissipate the good will built among our fellow

...over

citizens when they see us standing outside the halls of Congress with palms outstretched for a handout. As Japanese, we find this behavior beneath our dignity.

President Ford in officially terminating the Executive Order 9066 apologized on behalf of the American people. We should put aside what happened to us 35 years ago and get on with the present and the future. There is much to be done.

The reparation campaign is costing the Japanese Americans dearly--cost in terms of energy expended, time spent, important programs neglected, good will dissipated, and a split in the Japanese American community.

The campaign will turn off many JACL members who will see it as an artificial attempt to bolster up the organization. The reparation issue has become an emotional one. When emotion dominates reason, there is always the danger of bad decisions.

* * *

The first three articles presented the pros and cons on the concept of reparation. The fourth article will deal with comments on various points brought up.

Pacific Citizen,
November 18, 1977.

IV

COMMENTS ON REPARATION CONCEPT

The first three presentations focussed on the why and the why not of reparation for Japanese Americans incarcerated here in the United States during World War II. There is very little doubt today that the act was unnecessary and a racially inspired injustice.

Many Americans are not aware of the extent of the German reparation (restitution, as the Germans prefer to call it) to the Jewish victims of the Third Reich. We are not implying that the conditions were the same in Germany and in the United States. We are not that naive.

Jews experienced the horrors of death camps. The Japanese Americans experienced the agonies and frustrations of innocent prisoners incarcerated for indeterminate time. Both were behind barbed wire compounds with armed guards. Both were prisoners of their own country. Both were there without charges and only because of their ancestry.

Japanese Americans and others who are against reparation point to the horrendous casualties of the war due to enemy actions. Sufferings of the Jews in Germany and the Japanese Americans in the United States were at the hands of their own government, not enemy actions.

Would reparation place a price tag on freedom and justice? Does a damage suit awarded for homicide put a price tag on life? Hardly. A monetary award, however, is what the American judicial system uses to compensate a victim because it cannot bring a person back to life. Freedom and justice, once taken away, also cannot be fully restored. Reparation is not a handout.

... over

To argue that many Nisei are not impoverished and, therefore, do not deserve monetary compensations is to argue that Japanese Americans can be denied their rights as American citizens with no repercussions. The wealth or poverty of Japanese Americans has nothing to do with their right to be free from imprisonment, their right to constitutional safeguards. In the legal arena economic status is irrelevant to the damages given a deserving plaintiff.

The bottom line on some Nisei's reluctance to ask for reparation is fear--fear of what their non-Japanese friends would say or think, fear of reawakening their own feelings which have been so long suppressed, fear of becoming the center of controversy again, fear of being thought of as an aggressor.

The Nisei's desire to be quiet and infinitely patient in the face of unjust hostility had its place. This is 1977. We need not continue to unjustly punish ourselves in order to gain the respect of other Americans. The admiration of the American people will be greater as we become more responsive citizens, not only toward others but to ourselves as well.

* * *

The manner in which reparation is sought is important to many Nikkei. Individuals versus trust fund as recipients has generated lively discussions. These will be reviewed in our next presentation.

Pacific Citizen,
November 25, 1977.

V

INDIVIDUALS VS TRUST FUND AS RECIPIENTS

To many Japanese Americans the method of distributing reparation is a critical point in their acceptance or rejection of the entire concept.

Individuals as Recipients

Direct payments to individual evacuees is the most equitable method of distribution because it will ensure that damages are paid to each person who suffered the injustices. Since individuals were mistreated and humiliated, and since individuals lost property and economic opportunities, reparation should be used to compensate individual victims.

This method of distribution would reach every Japanese American who suffered from wartime evacuation and detention. Trust fund benefits, on the other hand, is most likely to be established in areas with large Japanese American populations. Thus, the activities and projects created by trust fund monies would not benefit Japanese Americans in remote areas.

If reparations are given to individuals, then each individual can choose how the money received is to be used. This decision should be made by the individual, not by an anonymous group.

Indeed, payment to a trust fund may not only be the unauthorized misappropriation of funds, but it may also create endless lawsuits involving how the monies should be spent. Japanese Americans have waited long enough for reparation; they should not be made to wait even longer by squabbles among themselves.

Furthermore, questionnaires given former evacuees revealed that an overwhelming majority favored payments to individuals. (Details of JACL reparation questionnaire survey will be presented as Part IX in January 1978.) And JACL political advisers have stated that Congressional

approval for individual payments would be no more difficult than to obtain passage of a block payment to a group or a trust fund.

Finally, the concept of reparation is to compensate for past injustices done by a government who refused to consider individual Japanese Americans, but, instead, held that an entire ethnic group was guilty of disloyalty. Let us not perpetuate this practice by failing to consider each individual's right--the right to his/her compensation.

Trust Fund as Recipient

A trust fund established for and controlled by Nikkei could be used to have a widespread effect on thousands of Japanese Americans.

Projects such as Issei retirement homes or redevelopment of inner city Japanese American communities could be funded. Moreover, a meaningful scholarship fund, established exclusively from the accruing interest, is possible. This method of distribution affords a continuous and constant reminder of the injustices suffered by Japanese Americans in the past, and a warning that to keep America strong all minorities need to be watch dogs in the future.

In obtaining Congressional approval for reparation, Congress will surely consider the high cost of administering and settling each individual claim. The information necessary for settlement would make the process long and tedious. The bureaucratic procedure could take indefinitely, and many Issei would never benefit from the reparation.

The unsatisfactory experiences of the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 must not be forgotten. Many families were unable to file claims because they could not document their losses. It took 13 years to process and settle only 23,689 claims, and the administrative costs were exorbitant. A Nikkei corporation formed specifically to handle claims would be more expeditious than any federal agency.

* * *

Six proposals for method of reparation have been submitted to JACL for consideration. These will be presented next.

Pacific Citizen,
December 2, 1977.

VI

PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

The following proposals have been submitted to JACL for consideration. Their essentials are:

For Individual Payments--

- 1) Seattle Plan - to set up an Internal Revenue Service Trust Fund with guarantee that individuals as well as organizations can file claim against Fund.
Beneficiaries - Those sent to relocation or internment centers in mainland U.S.A. or in Hawaii, or their direct heirs if principals deceased.
Payments - Fixed sum per individual plus an amount for each day of detention. Unclaimed portion to be placed in special trust to be used for educational and cultural purposes by Japanese Americans.
- 2) Shimomura Plan - to amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide a Federal income tax credit for evacuated Japanese Americans.
Beneficiaries - Limited to those who were evacuated, detained or interned during World War II by the U.S. government and are still living.
Payments - As tax credit. Different sum for adult (age 15 or over on 12/7/41) and child. A person with little or no tax liability can file for a refund.
- 3) N. Calif.-W. Nevada Plan - to allocate a sum to the Japanese American Claims Corporation for the purpose of administering payments to individuals.
Beneficiaries - Those who voluntarily evacuated, were evacuated, detained or interned during World War II by action of U.S. government.

...over

Payments - To individuals on priority basis, beginning with the eldest. Payment rights may be passed from individuals to stated beneficiaries. Unclaimed portion to be put into trust fund for organizational usage.

For Trust Fund Payment--

- 1) Yasui Plan - Lump sum payment into trust (not to organization) to be administered by a quasi-governmental commission. Commission would control distribution.
Beneficiaries - Payment to worthy causes, including individuals based upon standard guidelines to be adopted by the commission.
- 2) Columbia Basin Plan - Amount to be placed in a trust fund and administered by a Nikkei corporation.
Beneficiaries - All Nikkei who resided in the Western Defense Command area, internees from Hawaii, and South American Japanese interned in the United States.
Payments - Half earmarked for human services which includes needy Issei as well as other indigents, scholarships, aid to aged and to youths. Other half earmarked to finance public relations programs in both U.S. and in Japan to promote U.S.-Japan friendship.
- 3) Oshiki Plan - Trust foundation to administer disposition of the payment received.
Beneficiaries - Only those who were evacuated from their homes and sent to assembly and/or relocation centers.
Payments - to needy and/or deserving individuals as well as to organizations and/or community projects to benefit persons of Japanese ancestry.

* * *

Who is eligible for reparation? The subject is not simple, as you will next note.

Pacific Citizen,

December 9, 1977.

VII

REPARATION BENEFICIARIES

For the basic concept we go back to the memo prepared by Barry Matsumoto, JACL Washington Representative, in 1973. We must first define injustice for which we seek compensations.

If defined in terms of evacuation and detention, then those entitled to compensation will be limited to individuals (or heirs and devisees) who were evacuated and detained.

If defined in broader terms of pain, suffering and the unjust loss of freedom undergone by Japanese Americans during World War II directly attributable to the acts of the U.S. government, then the class of individuals entitled to compensations will be expanded.

Will we be seeking compensations for any real or personal property losses sustained by Japanese Americans as a result of evacuation and internment? The Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 was to compensate the Japanese for their property losses. It was less than a token compensation. It would be difficult to clearly substantiate uncompensated property losses at this time. It will be equally difficult to substantiate lost wages, lost profits and other financial losses.

There appears to be no doubt in all the proposals submitted that they desired those evacuated and detained in various camps to be beneficiaries. Many feel that there are others who are also entitled to reparation.

How about those who were advised to voluntarily relocate, did so and encountered untold humiliations and degradations besides economic losses?

How about those who lived outside the restricted military zones and escaped evacuation but who suffered severely due to their

...over

government's policy of mistrust which encouraged harsh treatments by other fellow Americans? At Bonners Ferry, Idaho, the entire Nikkei community was boycotted out of existence.

How about internees from Hawaii, brought over and incarcerated in mainland camps? How about those arrested and confined in Hawaii?

How about some 1,200 South American Japanese forcibly evicted from their homeland and brought to the United States for internment?

Some state that only American citizens should be compensated. Issei were aliens, not by choice but because of the discriminatory law which prohibited their naturalizations. It was not until 1952 that they became eligible for American citizenship.

Well over 50 percent of the Issei who were incarcerated in camps during World War II are now deceased. Should their survivors be eligible?

Should age limitations be placed in considering reparation? Should those born in camps be entitled to compensations?

Chances for passage of a bill are best when eligibility requirements are strict, restrictive and most easily defined. Justifications for filing claims, however, have stirred lively discussions.

The next article will deal with comments on the method of redress presented in the preceding reviews.

Pacific Citizen

December 16, 1977.

REPARATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The present JACL National Reparation Committee represents new faces in the JACL's seven year history of commitment to this campaign.

It is not by accident that committee members are unknown among JACLers on reparation issues. After seven years of campaigning, most well known names are identified with particular views on reparation.

These concepts have been articulated by different individuals and groups. We wanted members uncommitted to any particular views so that we can review them with an open mind.

Valuable ground works have been laid by the previous committees over years of research, studies and deliberations. Our committee will look them over, summarize and compare the views presented. You make the decision on whether you wish to or do not wish to accept any of the various proposals that will be presented.

We will need the aid of all veteran reparation campaigners and we shall also go national as we expand the scope of our activities. At the beginning we are three: Ken Hayashi of Los Angeles, editor of Santana Wind published by the Orange County JACL. Ken went through the entire evacuation experience, not as a child but as a young adult. Peggy Iwasaki will bring in a Sansei perspective. She is from Portland, Oregon, and recently passed the Oregon bar exams. Clifford Uyeda was outside the Western Defense Command on December 7, 1941. My family was evacuated; I tried desperately to visit them in camp, but was refused permission.

. . . Clifford I. Uyeda.
Pacific Citizen, December 16, 1977.

VIII

COMMENTS ON METHOD OF REDRESS

The conflict between individuals versus trust fund payment does not appear serious. There is no reason why the best of the two methods cannot be combined. Claims could be for both individuals and for a group or organization, just as in the German restitution scheme.

Fund earmarked for individual payment at a specified per capita basis, processed through a Nikkei trust foundation, could well satisfy both sides. Fund earmarked for organizational use can be administered by the same Nikkei trust foundation for educational and cultural purposes by Japanese Americans.

What is an equitable sum of compensation? The purpose is not to put a price tag on freedom or human rights, an impossible and a foolish task. The sum should be sufficient to discourage future abrogation of freedom and human rights in a manner used against Japanese Americans during World War II.

The various proposals submitted have varied considerably in the amount being sought. Would it be wise to ask the Washington, D.C. court to decide on the sum, as it did in the case of 1200 demonstrators arrested in May 1971?

The concept of per diem payment for time spent in camp has many opponents. Those who braved the hostile world outside the camp earliest would receive the least; those who sat out the war in camps would receive the greatest amount of payment. Among the latter, however, were most Issei who had nowhere to go and with little prospect for jobs on the outside.

The simplest definition for beneficiaries would be to limit compensations only to those evacuated from the Western Defense Command area and incarcerated in camps. But the injustice of

abolishing freedom and civil rights to persons of Japanese descendants during World War II extended to many beyond mainland U.S.A. Those from Alaska, Hawaii and South America came under the same injustice at the hands of the United States government. Should they be ignored?

A common view is that being a child in camp had no ill effects. This may be disputable, as will be explained in later presentations. "Camp babies" are reminded of the evacuation incident throughout their lives whenever their birthplace is asked. They cannot escape the label.

The use of the Internal Revenue Service mechanism to finance reparation (Seattle Plan; Shimomura Plan) is an ingenious proposal, but apparently unpopular in Congress because it would set a precedent for other groups to do the same.

Justice does not require unanimity. It would, however, be helpful if Japanese Americans in general and their fellow citizens understood the true motive behind the reparation claim--that the event such as the evacuation and incarceration of Japanese Americans did happen, that should it happen again it will be costly, that the successful restitution of the tragedy and the mistakes of 1942 will protect the future liberties of all Americans.

* * *

Reparation questionnaire has been circulated by various JACL groups. We will gather them all together and compare their findings in our next presentation.

Pacific Citizen,
January 13, 1978.

IX

REPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Five JACL districts have conducted a community survey on reparation through questionnaire. They are the Pacific Northwest, Northern California-Western Nevada, Pacific Southwest, Midwest and the Eastern districts.

Ninety-two percent of the results tabulated came from the West Coast, the largest being from Northern California-Western Nevada district which contributed 62 percent of the total 3,904 respondents. The respondents were 54 percent males and 46 percent females; 7 percent were Issei, 83 percent Nisei and 10 percent Sansei and others.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents had experienced evacuation. Less than a third had filed claims with the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act. Many could not document their losses. Ninety-two percent of the claimants received some form of settlement, which collectively came to 8½ cents to a dollar lost on 1942 evaluation.

Of the 3,904 respondents 94 percent were in favor of reparation from the Federal government as redress for the World War II evacuation and imprisonment. In the Eastern district 80 percent were in favor of reparation, and in the midwest 84 percent; but they were only 1.2 and 5.1 percent respectively of the total respondents answering this question.

* * *

How meaningful are questionnaire results? As in all statistics their value is directly proportional to the clear understanding of the issue. The dilemma of the reparation issue to most Japanese Americans lie primarily in the method of redress which seems inordinately complicated with conflicting opinions.

The survey, however, shows two results which are statistically significant. We believe they are valid.

...over

Ninety-four percent of the respondents said that reparation should be paid by the U.S. government for the evacuation and detention of persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II. Respondents were 90 percent Issei and Nisei, and 92 percent had experienced evacuation. Therefore, the statement that reparation is being asked mostly by Sansei and others who had not known the agonies of evacuation is not a true statement. Thirty-five years have not erased the harsh memories of being imprisoned without charges or trial, and the indignities they suffered.

Eighty-three percent favored payment to individuals rather than to a trust or an organization. An overwhelming majority was expressing their fear that with the foundation or an organization controlling the disbursement of the fund, individuals will be ignored. To prove their individual needs claimants will have to go through the humiliation of declaring themselves indigents--which, to them, makes the redress received a charity.

Since before World War II many Issei and Nisei at poverty level had clung to the dignity of work, however meager the remuneration. Their pride would not allow them to be classified as charity cases. They will not, now, allow themselves to be so classified, even if it meant living out their remaining few years in continued poverty and want.

Their pride and their dignity must be respected. It was their dignity and diligence that helped make it possible for the rest of us to reach our present status.

These surviving Issei and elderly Nisei deserve restitution for their war-time incarceration. Administrative red tape should be minimized. Restitution should be given to them in all haste.

* * *

Next week we shall look into the Japanese Canadian experience, and see what they are doing about this today.

Pacific Citizen,
January 20, 1978.

X

JAPANESE CANADIANS

On February 24, 1942, Canada ordered the removal of all 22,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the Pacific Coast. The evacuation order was issued in direct opposition to the assessment of Canada's senior military and police officers, and in the absence of any evidence of disloyalty by any Japanese Canadian.

Their "assembly center" was the overcrowded Livestock Barn at Hasting Park in Vancouver. There many families were separated and dispersed. Men between 16 and 65 years of age were shipped to road camps. Women, children under 16, and the elderly were confined in detention camps in interior British Columbia.

Evacuees were ordered to sell their property immediately. All unsold property was placed under the care of the Custodian of Enemy Property. A year later the government ordered the agency to liquidate all evacuee property, both real and personal, without consulting the owners.

In April 1945 evacuees were given the choice of immediately resettling east of the Rocky Mountains, or of signing to go to Japan after armistice. Divested of all their property, despaired of re-establishing themselves in a hostile eastern Canada, and embittered by their treatment 6,500 evacuees signed to go to Japan. Only those who signed to go to Japan were permitted to remain in British Columbia.

A full franchise was not granted to Canadian citizens of Japanese ancestry until March 1949. Japanese Canadians were excluded from the Pacific Coast until April 1, 1949.

...over

Even today many Canadians still look upon the actions of the Canadian government as prima facie evidence of the disloyalty of Japanese Canadians. No amount of protestations of innocence seems to disprove the false accusation of disloyalty.

The Japanese Canadians are organizing and planning to submit a request to the government of Canada for a proper and reasonable compensation.

Although no amount of legislative action, they acknowledged, will ever completely undo the injustices which have been committed, they felt that the action by the parliament can go a long way toward providing both vindication and material compensation for the victims of the evacuation.

* * *

This closes the historical presentations of the reparation issue to the present. Beginning with the XIth presentation we shall look at the issue from different views and perspectives.

Pacific Citizen,
January 27, 1978.