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## National Council

### for Japanese American Redress

925 West Diversey Parkway  
Chicago, Illinois 60614

VOLUME VI  
NUMBER 5

Eddie Sato  
Editor

Dear Friends,

August, 1984

**L**AST NOVEMBER, Frank Chin invited me to participate in an August 17-19 dramatists workshop at East West Players, a Los Angeles theater for Asian American writers and actors. The idea, typical of Chin's fertile imagination, was to invite persons, who had been part of the draft resistance and other resistance movements among Japanese-American internees of World War II, to provide their first-hand accounts as knowledge and insight for actors and writers. The workshop proved to be unpredictable, moving, enlightening, and historic.

More recently, Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) announced a one-day U.S. Senate hearing on S2116, a redress bill, in West Los Angeles for August 16, the day before the three-day workshop was to begin. I decided to include the hearing in my visit to L.A.

I arrived in L.A. armed with tape recorder, camera, and a tight schedule. The Senate hearing on Thursday was an exhausting test of patience. Originally, I had decided to ignore the hearing. I changed my mind when I learned that Jack Herzig was appearing with a rebuttal to David Lowman's concoction from "Magic" cables (decoded intercepts of Japan's prewar diplomatic cables) which attempts to resurrect the doctrine of military necessity. Jack and Aiko Herzig had put together a thoroughly researched point-by-point rebuttal of a long paper Lowman had presented before an earlier House subcommittee, the same paper, as it turned out, he would present before the Senate subcommittee, I decided to provide whatever support I could for Jack.

AFTER THE HEARINGS, Jack and I were invited to dinner with a group of NCJAR supporters Dwight and Hannah Holmes brought us and the dinner to the home of Joyce and Stan Okinaka, who had invited some other friends. Joyce had also invited me to preach at her church, Sage United Methodist Church, in Monterey Park on Sunday. Jack and I enjoyed a lovely evening with friends, new and old, and then managed, as two strangers, to find our way back to Jack's daughter's home in Gardena and to my daughter's home in West Los Angeles.

The three-day segment on the "resistance" of a two-week workshop started at two each afternoon and ran into the evening. I found my way there from Little Tokyo via the freeway. (I began to sense that driving on the freeways is like the magical method of transport used in Star Trek: you leave one area of the city, enter a special state of freeway-time-space, and emerge into another part of the city.)

THE "RESISTANCE" was brought to life by a gathering of former resisters and their remembrances. These included Mits Koshiyama and Yosh Kuromiya, who spent two years at the McNeil Island prison, and Frank Emi, one of their leaders, who was first convicted, then released, on charges of conspiracy. I was struck with their ordinary quality; they were not of any particular persuasion: political, ideological, or religious. If they had anything in common, it was sports: baseball or judo. They were not pacifists who opposed the draft; they supported the draft. They refused induction because they were being denied their basic rights of citizenship: freedom to live and move about as they pleased. (The inconsistency of drafting internees had been noted by Elmer Davis of the Office of War Information when, in October 1942, he wrote to President Roosevelt recommending an all-volunteer combat unit:

It would hardly be fair to evacuate people and then impose normal draft procedures, but voluntary enlistment would help a lot.)

The conversational accounts by resisters were then transformed into drama as actors read aloud official transcripts of the grilling of resisters by WRA officials. I was impressed with the way the actors, without preparation, could bring alive flat, dimensionless transcripts. In the hands of Frank Chin, Project Director Robertson's words become those of a white bureaucrat, alternately authoritarian and cajoling, as he tried to get information and an admission of guilt. Robert Ito, of television's "Quincy," read for Frank Emi, who was suffering from a cold, and made the Frank Emi of the transcripts seem carefully evasive, while standing firm on constitutional protections and guarantees. You could feel the resistance becoming the Japanese-American experience. The actors asked many questions.

ALTHOUGH THE workshop emphasized resistance, the discussion inevitably gravitated towards life in the camps, with occasional doses of history. The actors wanted to know how we thought and felt in camp. I was given the opportunity to discuss life as a high school student and used the occasion to describe the erosion of family life, loss of morale, gangs, extremism ranging from Christian fundamentalism to violence, and the temporary freedom from racial limitations in sexual pursuit, coupled to the difficulty of sexual fulfillment due to the absence of privacy.

Hiroshi Kashiwagi, a Tule Lake inmate who renounced his U.S. citizenship, provided insight into the dilemma caused by the loyalty oath and renunciation. Roger Shimomura showed slides of paintings he had done depicting the Japanese-American experience, including those recorded in his grandmother's lifelong diary. Poet Lawson Inada pushed the discussion along whenever it bogged down.

Jimmie Omura spoke briefly about his experience as a journalist and his stand against policies of the JACL and against the camps and in support of the Heart Mountain draft resisters. There was some discussion of a wartime editorial he wrote about Japanese espionage. Should that have been written? Two views were expressed. Some worried about the unscrupulous use of such admissions. I argued for honesty and supported the editorial.

I was also invited to speak about NCJAR. I spoke of the early abortive moves for redress as coming from James Omura, Joe Kurihara, World War I Nisei veteran who renounced and denounced his U.S. citizenship, and Kiyoshi Okamoto, leader of the Heart Mountain draft resistance movement. I thought the actors would understand the excruciating contradictions of Kurihara, who, in response to his treatment as a "Jap." vowed to become a true "Jap," to the point of ending his long essay, "Niseis and the government," with exclamations of "Tenno Heika, banzai!" (May the Imperial Son of Heaven live a thousand years!), and signed it, "Joseph Y. Kurihara, citizen and veteran."

I ALSO SAID how important I thought it was for Japanese-Americans to concentrate their attack on their real nemesis, the United States, even as we must continue to live through, not ignore, some of the side issues, such as the unwillingness of the JACL to apologize for its wartime misdeeds. The NCJAR lawsuit, I pointed out, identifies the United States as defendant in 22 causes of actions raised by 125,000 plaintiffs of Japanese Americans. I said that we did not file our lawsuit because we expected to win—it's not an investment—but rather because our rights were violated, the Constitution breached, and the consequent need for repair. In a way, the lawsuit is a continuation of resistance. Both stand on the affirmation of constitutional principles.

Frank Chin is one of the people who, in 1979, asked me to assume leadership in the redress movement. He persuaded me in part by invoking the Chinese deity, Kwang Kung, god of both war and the arts. Fight with the arts. Thus it was at East West Players;

we were telling dramatists about the Japanese-American history of resistance during the camp experience. Thus, it may be with my book, "REPAIRING AMERICA: An Account of the Movement for Japanese-American Redress." (I've finally finished and wait for criticism and polish.) A day may arrive when NCJAR will have to trade in its movement for an institution. But as long as we remain a movement, we can embrace the resisters, whom no one will ever own, and Frank Chin, whose imagination, defying institutionalization, makes wonderful things happen.

WHILE IN LOS ANGELES, I had the chance to meet named plaintiff, Ed Tokeshi, and ronin supporters, Brooks and Sumi Iwakiri. Hannah Holmes, also a ronin and a named plaintiff, has finished her Raggedy Ann and Andy dolls for NCJAR to sell. They are her contribution to the fund appeal to help us finance our appeal of the district court's decision to dismiss our lawsuit and our effort to introduce enabling legislation in Congress. For a lucky 25, you can get a doll and support the appeal by purchasing one of Hannah's dolls. Like her, they're precious!

Meanwhile, we have received the briefing schedule from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Our brief and those of any amicus (friends) are due on October 12, 1984. The Dept. of Justice has until November 13, 1984 to respond. We may rebut by November 27, 1984. Oral argument is estimated for early spring 1985.

IF YOU HAVEN'T made your contribution, do it now.

Peace,  
William Hohri

#### NCJAR SUPPORTER ELECTED BISHOP

**R**EV. ROY ISAO SANO was elected Bishop of the United Methodist Church at their Jurisdictional Conference held in Boise, Idaho from July 17 through July 20, 1984. Rev. Sano, professor of theology and Pacific Asian ministries at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, was formerly chaplain of Mills College. He will head the Denver area in his new role as Bishop.

Among the nineteen new bishops named to the 46-member Council of Bishops at the five regional conferences were two women and thirteen members of minority groups. The broadening of the church's leadership is in part, due to the liberal outlook and emphasis on human rights in the United Methodist Church.

Bishop Sano and Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt, northern Illinois and Chicago area jurisdictional leader, are both NCJAR supporters. Bishop DeWitt was among those who testified at the hearing of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians held in Chicago at Northeastern Illinois University in September, 1981.

#### WELCOME FRIENDS!

**F**ROM TIME to time, we have friends and supporters of NCJAR dropping by. Sometimes, in the hustle-bustle of our redress movement, we neglect to mention their presence. Therefore, we would like to say that it was indeed a pleasure for the board to have met David Moore of Phoenix, Arizona who attended our June meeting. His words of encouragement have appeared in the newsletter. Closer to home, we were pleased to have with us, Kay Takagishi and Mike Katsuyama. Another NCJAR supporter and ronin who has quietly stepped in to assist members of the board in mailing the newsletter is Kiyoharu Aburano.

#### CORRECTION:

In the closing segment of the SYNOPSIS OF COURT'S DECISION—III Conclusion pp. 57-59, which appeared in the May newsletter (pp.2) regarding Judge Oberdorfer's decision to dismiss, it reads as follows:

The Court concludes that the government's action to dismiss must be granted. This decision is expressly not a "fresh appraisal of the merits of the wartime decision," which was based on what "now appears to be a questionable rationale of military necessity." The Court says timely claims have prevailed, but too much time has passed

It should read: "The Court says timely claims might have prevailed," instead of "have prevailed."

G R I Z Z L Y I N T E R N M E N T

**T**HE AUGUST 1984 issue of LIFE magazine featured an article about the grizzly bear population living in or near the region of Yellowstone National Park. On page 42 of this magazine, there are pictures of a bear contained within a cage. The description accompanying these pictures explain that the photos were taken at the Border Grizzly Project in Missoula, Montana.

The bear was photographed in a cell, which is located within a former Department of Justice internment camp, and was used during World War II for the confinement of persons of Japanese ancestry. No mention of the internment of Japanese Americans appears in the article. It is ironic that cells once used for the confinement of people are now being used for the protection and control of wildlife.

Wildlife must be protected from rampant destruction of both their lives and environment. However, the government did not provide the same degree of protection for Japanese Americans during World War II. This comment is my personal viewpoint.

Doris Sato  
NCJAR Board member

C O M M E N T S O N T H E D I S M I S S A L

**"O**NE WONDERS WHY the Japanese American lobby waited so long in filing this suit. Was it reluctant to arouse the memories of those still living who still remember the death marches and brutal treatment by Japan of captured American soldiers?

NEWSDAY June 3, 1984  
Long Island, N.Y.

"I dismiss this (CWRIC) report as an insult to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the American people.

"Not one of the sponsors of this (redress) bill has made mention of the American servicemen and women who also sacrificed three and four years of their lives away from families, jobs and business. Nor have they requested that Japan offer an apology, long overdue, and pay compensation for those killed and crippled as well as for the naval units destroyed in their unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor."

John Cabot Grampp  
Woodside, N.Y.

R E B U T T A L

June 13, 1984

**"W**HETHER OR NOT the nation of Japan owes the American people an apology for atrocities committed during WW2 has no bearing whatsoever on the unprecedented and unconstitutional treatment accorded thousands of American citizens by their government.

"Despite the fact that these hapless souls had done nothing of a criminal or treasonable nature... they were surrounded by gun towers and bayonet-wielding soldiers (paid for in part by their taxes).

"When given the opportunity, the sons and brothers of internees... went on to compile one of the most glorious chapters in American military history.

"Had German Americans been treated in similar fashion, there might have been the equally ludicrous spectacle of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gen Carl Spaatz and Adm. Chester Nomitz being treated as criminals because their parents or grandparents chose to live in the U.S.

"Grampp asked why the Japanese Americans waited so long in filing the suit. The reason is the Freedom of Information Act did not allow the release of many important documents concerning the illegal internment until 40 years after the fact.

"It's really incongruous that a protest against the injustices of yesteryear should be considered by Grampp as 'an insult to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the American people.'

"The insult—and injury—was committed against the American people when Roosevelt signed the infamous Executive Order 9066."

John Kumpel  
Hempstead, N.Y.

Excerpted from the PACIFIC  
CITIZEN  
August 17, 1984

## MEET THE PLAINTIFFS

**T**HIS IS THE FIRST of a series of articles on our named plaintiffs, both living and dead. This introductory account is about Nelson Yuji Kitsuse, vice-chairman of our organization, and his father Takeshi Kitsuse, whom he represents in the lawsuit. Nelson is extremely quiet, self-effacing, but solid, consistent in his views and actions. We are glad to give him recognition for the many things he has done, both in and outside NCJAR. Emi K. Fujii



He was a pharmacy student at the U. of Southern California at the time of Pearl Harbor. Though he had not quite finished his senior year, interrupted because of the impending incarceration, the university later sent him his diploma. In March 1942, he returned to his hometown of Brawley, California in the Imperial Valley to join his family: his parents, a brother, and two sisters.

Takeshi Kitsuse was a foreman for the American Fruit Growers Association, a national corporation dealing in fruits and vegetables, with headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio. He supervised Mexican labor in working with crops like cantaloupe, honeydew, honeyball and watermelon.

Born in 1879 in Miyazaki, Kyushu, Japan, he came to this country in 1900. Takeshi's father, who spoke several languages, including English and German, took Japanese immigrants to Alaska, South America, as well as to California and Washington. Takeshi had started at Waseda U., but was not interested in school. He quit and came to the United States. He then later married Toki Kita, and the couple had five children, Nelson being the second child and older son.

WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066, Nelson states that the family's normal way of life became a "nightmare." His father's job was terminated, and the children were forced to quit school. The family's personal property was sold or stored in a Methodist Church; it was later stolen or destroyed. Overnight, his father became a "terrible enemy of this country," simply because of his ancestry.

In May 1942, the family was imprisoned at Poston, Arizona, and the older Kitsuses spent three years there. Then, they relocated to join their daughter, Mrs. Pauline Yoshioka, in Washington, D.C. After two years, they came to Chicago. By then in his late 60's, Takeshi worked as a janitor for the Curtiss Candy Company. His wife was a maid at the Edgewater Beach Hotel. He died in 1960 at the age of 81. His wife died in 1970.

Nelson speaks with sadness and eloquence as he describes his parent's life. Like so many Issei, he said, "They led a low key life, were hard working, law abiding, adopting America as their home. They spent their lives raising their family. Certainly, they were no threat to U.S. security. They were treated like a real enemy."

WORKING IN THE hospital pharmacy, Nelson stayed a year in Poston. He relocated to Chicago in July 1943. He did odd jobs the first year, then worked in the pharmacy at Children's Memorial Hospital. In September 1944, he was drafted by the Army, and sent to Texas where he was assigned to the 86th Evacuation Hospital. The unit was scheduled to go to the Philippines. Orders came, stating no Japanese Americans were to go there, except those in military intelligence. Nelson questioned the orders to no avail and was told: "Our own men might shoot you!" He was then transferred and trained for the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps), and sent to Hokkaido, Japan in October 1945. He was discharged in September 1946. The older Kitsuses were very supportive of Nelson and his brother, Dick, when they were in the army.

Returning to Chicago, Nelson worked at Wesley Memorial Hospital of Northwestern U. and took graduate courses at the U. of Illinois. He also worked at Michael Reese hospital and the U. of Chicago clinics. When Weiss Memorial Hospital opened 30 years ago, Nelson joined their staff as chief pharmacist. He will retire in October of this year.

He is thinking of going into a small business, but has not decided what form it will take. His wife Taka will continue as a teacher at the McPherson Elementary School. They have two sons and a daughter. Bruce is a teacher at Pulaski Elementary School in Chicago. Alan is a foreman in a food plant in Los Angeles. And Mari is a lawyer in San Jose, California. Nelson's sister, Pauline Yoshioka, now lives in Glenview, IL.; brother Dick, in Los Angeles; and sister, Mrs. Betty Fujiwara, in Seattle, Washington.

NELSON HAS BEEN involved with NCJAR since its very beginning. He, William Hohri and others were members of JACL and were active with the redress issue in 1978 and earlier. When JACL changed its course in 1979 and opted for a fact finding commission (later the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians) Nelson, William, and others continued separately to press for monetary redress through the United Methodist Parish of the Holy Covenant Church. The Seattle Redress Committee of JACL also continued their interest in redress. William travelled to Seattle where NCJAR was formed, and he became national chairman. The earliest organizational effort was the support of the first redress bill introduced in Congress by Rep. Mike Lowry (D-Wash.).

Last year, Nelson was voted vice-chairman and re-elected to that post this year. He is on NCJAR's promotion and newsletter committee. On September 30, 1983, he went to Washington, D.C. to attend the hearing for oral arguments regarding the lawsuit, and on numerous occasions, has gone to Los Angeles for other NCJAR events.

He is a trustee of the Parish of the Holy Covenant Church, active with Asian Human Services, and will work in the human rights area with the American Friends Service Committee.

Nelson has a long history of involvement in the civil rights and peace movements. In April 1965, he was part of the voters' registration drive in Montgomery, Alabama. As a member of a Presbyterian Church group, he joined with some teachers, spending a week in Montgomery. Two other Nisei who participated were George Inadomi and Gilbert Kimura. Nelson visited blacks in their homes, taking them to city hall to register. He felt because he looked different from whites, blacks were more inclined to register. If he were voting, they could, too. He says of Montgomery: "It was such a satisfying experience for me because with the right to vote, you have some kind of power. When you have a community of voters, you have a whole lot of power." He went to Washington, D.C. at least three times and took part in demonstrations opposing the Vietnam War. He and Taka were in many demonstrations for E.R.A. in Springfield and Chicago. And in June of 1982, both were in New York City for the mammoth anti-nuclear weapons peace march.

WHY IS HE a plaintiff? Nelson responded: "We have a unique opportunity to enrich America because of the internment experience. Through our experience and culture, we are able to turn adversity to opportunity to better America by doing what we can to prevent happenings like that which occurred in 1942. We were able to cope with the most trying of times. There was much injury, but we were able to live through it. We can make life easier for other groups that may in the future face adverse happenings. We can strengthen the Bill of Rights, the constitutional guarantees that all of us are endowed with. These have been shattered. We can contribute to the health of the Bill of Rights, by working to right the wrong which took place over forty years ago. An apology by itself would hurt rather than help. That would be a disservice. All our efforts would be in vain. It will hurt other generations to come. An apology will be the precedent for dealings with any wrongdoing.

"MONETARY REDRESS would be my number one goal. In monetary redress, an apology is implied. Secondly, our efforts would be to go as far as we can in quest of justice, hopefully to the Supreme Court, even if we are turned down. It's better for history to say that a small bunch of people went all the way to right an injustice, even if they fail. That is a better legacy than getting just an apology."

Personal interview  
written by  
Emi K. Fujii.

LETTERS

■ AM ASHAMED of my small contribution. However, this is all I can afford--sorry, I am nearing 90 and medical bills are high.

George Tabata  
Long Beach, Calif.

GO FOR IT! Sorry to be late. Best wishes.

Kazu Iijima  
New York, N.Y.

I'M SORRY to send so little, but my wife's family is in El Salvador and we're trying to help them.

John Walsh  
Chicago, Illinois

OH HOW I wished I could send more, but I am crippled for life from a stroke and have no income.

May Yoshinaka  
Seattle, Wash.

WILL TRY TO get others to give also.

Chiyo Horiuchi  
Denver, Colorado

WISH I COULD do more, but am retired on limited income.

Shigeko Uno  
Seattle, Wash.

SINCE YOU'VE decided to appeal, I thought the least I could do was send in a contribution toward the Redress Legal Fund. I hope others too will join us to share the expenses. Your latest newsletter was very heart-warming and heartening, especially the list of many contributors.

Mary Tani  
Los Angeles, California

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NOTE: Some donors wish to remain anonymous. If you do not wish to have your name listed, please indicate when you remit.



● WE WELCOME your notes—whatever that's on your mind—feel free to write. e.s.

The article (below) is excerpted from the August 17th LOS ANGELES TIMES story: "Japanese-Americans Share Bitter Tales of Internment"--by Marita Hernandez. It is a report on the recent public hearing on redress bill S2116, held at the Veterans Administration complex in Brentwood on August 16, 1984.

## ANGER AND BITTERNESS

**G**EORGE TAKEI WAS too young to understand, but the images of barbed-wire fences, high guard towers and rifle-carrying soldiers have not faded. After the war, he said, "my growing understanding of these events... produced in me a strange and gnawing sense of shame..." Takei, an actor best known for his role as Mr. Sulu in "Star Trek," was joined Thursday at a Senate hearing by other Japanese-Americans in recounting the bitter memories of being forced to leave their homes and their possessions for internment in government camps.

For many, the scars have not healed. Dr. Mary Oda of North Hollywood said it has been difficult to overcome the anger and bitterness that has gradually surfaced over the last 39 years. She recalled the release of years of pent-up emotion with a flood of tears that would not stop when she saw a photo exhibit a few years ago of the camps. To her, the camps had been "death camps," she said explaining that her father, a 30-year-old brother, and a 26-year-old sister all died within three years after leaving the camps. She attributed the deaths to the poor diet and living conditions at the camps, as well as to the stress of their disrupted lives.

MANY OF THE witnesses present favored the bill, but there were several who opposed it and challenged the findings of the commission report. Among the bill's opponents was former U.S. Sen. S.I. Hayakawa. He said Japanese-Americans endured humiliation "with stoicism and dignity, making the best of an unjust situation," and he criticized younger Japanese-Americans for rallying to the cause of financial retribution. Hayakawa later maintained that most older Japanese-Americans "would just as soon forget the whole thing."

He said he "objects profoundly" to any financial redress, because it would set a dangerous precedent.

"Once this starts, American Indians and blacks are going to sue... How about redress to all the boys and fathers killed in the war?" he asked.

Frederick Bernays Wiener, a retired U.S. Army colonel from Phoenix, said passage of the bill based on the commission's findings would constitute "a solemn public lie." Wiener said the government should offer a public apology to Japanese-Americans "only after the government of Japan apologizes for Pearl Harbor."

## DEMOCRATS ENDORSE REDRESS

**D**URING THE DEMOCRATIC National Convention in San Francisco, a redress plank in the final draft of the Democratic Party's platform was ratified on July 17, 1984. The platform's statement on redress reads:

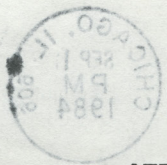
"We owe history and ourselves a formal apology and promise of redress to Japanese Americans who suffered unjust internment during WW2. No commitment to curb (sic) liberties could be complete without a formal apology, restitution of position, status, or entitlements, and reparations for those who suffered deprivation of rights and property without due process forty years ago."

California congressmen Norman Mineta and Robert Matsui, who attended the convention as delegates, issued a joint statement hailing the passage of the plank:

"The Democratic Party's ratification of the plank on redress is a clear and strong statement that the Party will move forward on the issue with justice and compassion for those who suffered from the outrage of internment."

PACIFIC CITIZEN  
July 27, 1984





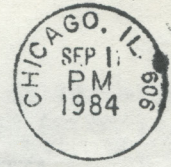
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<u>Quantity</u>	<u>All prices include postage</u>
JUSTICE AT WAR: — The Story of Japanese American Internment Cases by Peter Irons \$20.00	T-Shirts: 100% cotton blue - yellow - tan small - medium - large extra large with NCJAR logo \$8.00
YEARS OF INFAMY — The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps by Michi Weglyn \$12.00	Buttons: 1-7/16" round and yellow with NCJAR logo .50
OBASAN — The Internment of Canada's Issei and Nisei by Joy Kogawa \$14.00	Briefcases: 11½" x 14½" in taupe vinyl \$7.00
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