

FROM: PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN, 17th Biennial National Convention Headquarters,
JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE (JACL),
318 Sixth Avenue South, Seattle 4, Washington

SEATTLE, WASH., The 17th Biennial National Convention of the Japanese American Citizens League will be held at the Olympic Hotel from July 26 to 30, with James M. Matsuoka, realtor, as convention chairman, and William Y. Mimbu, attorney, as host chapter president.

Seattle is the "birthplace" of this only national organization of American citizens of Japanese ancestry. It was here in Seattle in 1930 that the initial convention held with a dozen chapters represented and the name adopted and constitution ratified. The JACL has now grown to 90 chapters in 32 states. Washington has four: Seattle, Puyallup Valley, White River, and Spokane.

"To Bridge and to Build" has been selected convention theme on the basis of its emphasis toward the continual responsibility of bringing together all men of all backgrounds, technically and geographically, and to further develop this ethnic togetherness in the fast-growing years ahead.

The national parley has been planned to have a complete program of business sessions to implement organizational policies and to elect new national officers. Takeshi Kubota, Seattle civic leader, has been nominated as National Second Vice President. Time has been scheduled, too, to allow the visitors to visit the Seattle World's Fair and to take in sights of the area.

Dillon S. Myer, wartime director of the War Relocation Authority, will be speaker at the Issei Pioneer Testimonial Dinner on Friday. It is to honor the Issei, first generation Japanese, who came to this country 50 or more years ago to make their contribution to the development of the American West.

U. Alexis Johnson, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, will deliver the main address at the Convention Banquet on Monday. He is an authority on the Orient and probably no other foreign service officer today is better qualified by personal experience and knowledge to advise on American foreign policy in that vital area of the world and to suggest ways and means in which citizens may be most helpful to their country in

these times of international tension.

Miss Ellen Kimura, last year's JACL-Japanese Community Queen for the Seafair, will be on hand to be an official hostess for the Convention. Others include Patricia Baba, Penny Beppu and Janet Hoshide.

"JACL - To Bridge and to Build" is the theme for the essay and oratorical contests for youth between 16 and 21 years of age. Finals of the oratorical contest will be held on Saturday with winners of the eight geographical districts to compete for the national award.

The Youth have been encouraged to participate in these national conventions to learn more about the organization and function of JACL. They will hold sessions of their own, but will join the adults for the main banquets.

"Nisei of the Biennium," the person of Japanese ancestry who has contributed the most to the "American way of life," and "JACLer of the Biennium", the member who has done the most to promote the effort of the Citizens League are to be announced at the Convention Banquet.

Nominees for the former include many persons associated with the Northwest and include: Minoru Yamasaki, internationally known architect and graduate of the University of Washington; Hiram Hachiya, Portland accountant and first Nisei believed to have served as district governor in Lions International Service Organization; Mrs. Kimi Hara, Seattle-educated Army nurse now with the Minnesota Public Health Dept., and Tom Kitayama, prominent nurseryman formerly of Port Townsend and mayor of Union City, California.

Harry I. Takagi, associate of the Veterans Board of Appeals, is one of three nominees for the "JACLer of the Biennium." He has given faithful service and leadership to the organization in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C. for many years.

Due for citations at the Recognition Luncheon on Saturday are three pre-war leaders - Clarence T. Arai, one of the founders of the organization; Suma Sugi Yokotake of Los Angeles, and Tokutaro Slocum Nishimura of Fresno; others include Dr. Ralph P. Merritt and Lever Brothers Company.

The new Pacific Citizen Award in memory of the late Jimmie Sakamoto of Seattle, an early leader and courageous editor of the pre-war Japanese American Courier, forerunner to the present national organ, will be awarded to chapters distinguishing themselves in club newsletters, articles and features.