

ROBERT F. DRINAN  
4TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2452 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
PHONE: (202) 225-5931

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
400 TOTTEN POND ROAD, BUILDING 1  
WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02154  
PHONE: (617) 890-9455

PHILIP J. PHILBIN FEDERAL BUILDING  
881 MAIN STREET  
FITZBURGH, MASSACHUSETTS 01420  
PHONE: (617) 342-8722

FRAMINGHAM-AREA NUMBER  
PHONE: (617) 879-4566

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 23, 1980

COMMITTEES:  
JUDICIARY  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
CHAIRMAN—CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
CIVIL AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AND  
INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS  
MANPOWER AND HOUSING  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
HEALTH AND LONG TERM CARE  
RETIREMENT INCOME AND  
EMPLOYMENT

William Hohri  
4717 North Albany  
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Dear Mr. Hohri:

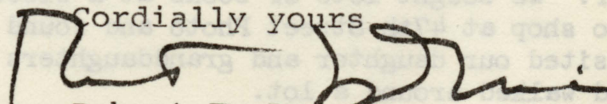
I thank you for your kind letter regarding the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. I would be most grateful to you if you submit my name to the President as a candidate to serve on the Commission.

As you know, I was an early supporter of the need to examine the injustices of our government's policies during the Second World War toward U.S. citizens of Japanese descent. The Commission, in my view, should undertake this challenge with the commitment that the congressional mandate demands of it. If appointed to serve, I would look forward to playing an active role in this challenge.

Thank you once again for offering to submit my name for nomination.

With every best wish, I am

Cordially yours



Robert F. Drinan  
Member of Congress

RFD:dc





# National Council for Japanese American Redress

925 West Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614

September 30, 1980

Dear Friends:

Yuriko and I stretched the Labor Day week-end into a 2-week vacation of driving to Washington, DC, thence to New York, and back to Chicago, about 1,800 miles. The driving was the most restful part. Well, not really. In Washington, we were the guests of Jack and Aiko Herzig who made us feel right at home. But, nevertheless, I read The Decision to Relocate the Japanese Americans by Roger Daniels and parts of the proceedings of a civil rights consultation on Pacific/Asian American issues which was held last year in Washington. I got mad and wrote a letter to the Pacific Citizen because I found these words from Min Yasui:

"The hope and dream of the Japanese American Citizens League is to build a trust fund which shall be used to protect and defend the human rights of all people in perpetuity in the name of Japanese Americans who underwent the unmitigated injustice of evacuation and incarceration during WWII in their own native land."

At the time, Min Yasui was a member of the JACL's National Committee for Redress. His concept of a trust fund was not part of the JACL's redress guidelines, which appeared elsewhere in the same proceedings. But he was clearly giving the persons gathered that impression.

We also did some vacation-like things like visit the Art Museum and the Air and Space Museum and some shopping. And we certainly did enjoy the Herzig's hospitality.

In New York, we went to the Picasso exhibit, which was a real experience and leg-bone tiring. We visited with Michi Weglyn and Takako Kusunoki and relations and saw "The Empire Strikes Back" in a theatre that had no water. We bought lots of books at a discount at Barnes & Noble and tried to shop at 47th Street Photo and found it jammed on Sunday morning. We visited our daughter and granddaughters (they've seen Empire 3 times) and walked around a lot.

Then back to Chicago for a few days of household chores, such as roof mending, furnace cleaning. Then a half day at the Loyola University library to read two volumes of the Earl Warren Oral History Project having to do with the evacuation. The Tom Clark interview was shocking. He describes an intimate co-operation by the Census Bureau with the Army. The Bureau pulled out its raw data files and showed, block by block, where we Japanese lived. Based on this data, processing centers were established which first were used to collect contraband (firearms, knives, cameras, short-wave radios), then to collect people. This is in clear violation of the law. It is bewildering to me that a former Supreme Court Justice so openly admits to a violation of the law. Is it ignorance or arrogance?



The Dillon Myer interview was also disconcerting. (Dillon Myer was head of the War Relocation Authority that administered the camps.) Myer refers to his opposition to the segregation program and his succumbing to pressure from the directors of the camps in June, 1943. The interviewer remarks that the internees, of course, were not in on such a decision. To which Myer responds that none were, except the JACL, who strongly favored it. I had always assumed that the role of the JACL had been limited to that of representing the Japanese American community in the early stages. It is disconcerting to learn that the JACL pushed for the segregation policy in secrecy with the government. Segregation was segregation of the loyal from the disloyal. It was one of the most excruciating events of the internment. Loyalty was to be determined by a questionnaire which contained two key questions. One required a willingness to serve in the armed forces. The other, swearing unqualified allegiance to the United States government and forswearing allegiance to the Emperor of Japan. The test was indiscriminate. It pitted Issei (parent) against Nisei (offspring) and both against their own conscience. (What does it mean for a Japanese citizen to forswear allegiance to the Emperor? Does one become stateless? What does unqualified allegiance mean? Suicide battallion? Must women bear arms?) I doubt if the JACL or anyone else understood the implications of the segregation policy in all its disastrous consequences (Tule Lake and its infamous stockade, physical and mental duress, repatriation and expatriation).

All internees were forced to affirm their loyalty in this extreme way if they wanted to be released and if they did not want to be shipped to Japan. For many, saying yes-yes was an expedient, a lie. And that hurts. I am glad I was given another chance to answer those questions when I was on the outside and turned 18, draft age. They sent the same questionnaire. I answered no-no and became IV-C, undesirable alien, for the duration and until 1950. (No government, I felt, should command any person's unqualified allegiance and I conscientiously objected to bearing arms.)

Well, the vacation was a vacation from my job, at least. I also got an idea of how much more study and thinking we need to do on this issue.

\* \* \* \* \*

The letter from Father Drinan is an occasion for loud joy. I became familiar with Father Drinan at the 1968 Convocation of Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam held in Washington, DC. He was an outstanding legal scholar at the time, being, I believe, Dean of the Boston College Law School. He's been in Congress since 1970 and was the first member of Congress to introduce a resolution to impeach President Nixon. He was also an early supporter of the Lowry Redress Bill. He would make an excellent commissioner. I hope y'all take the time to write to President Carter to endorse his nomination.

The Charles Z. Smith nomination is proceeding along. Both President and General Secretary of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. have submitted Prof. Smith's name to the President. Other denominations are being asked to endorse the nomination. Prof. Smith is an expert on the evacuation, involved in the Seattle JA community, a former judge, former President of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., and black. He, too, will make a fine commissioner.



And then I received a letter from Ralph Lazo, my former Manzanar buddy. Ralph is being nominated by his congressman to President Carter. Ralph has the distinction of being one of the few persons who volunteered to go to camp. (I doubt if he has the one-sixteenth Jap blood requirement.) He was in my Manzanar High "Class of '44" and one of its most popular members. Ralph, as an internee and as an ordinary working stiff -- he's a counselor at Los Angeles Valley College -- could do a good job of representing the internee/common person viewpoint.

These are my own personal recommendations for the Commission. If you have your own, you should certainly make them. Whatever our preference, it is incumbent that we act now. Just write a short letter to President Carter, The White House, Washington, DC which says:

"I am very pleased to endorse (Ralph Lazo, Charles Z. Smith, Congressman Robert F. Drinan, or \_\_\_\_\_) as a candidate for the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians."

Remember that there will only be a few letters written, so yours will be important, whether it's written or not.

(By the way, does anyone know who the JACL candidates are?)

\* \* \* \* \*

I appreciate the very perceptive letter by Ray Okamura. He has been a very effective crusader against government euphemisms relating to the JA internment. But I don't quite go along with eliminating "evacuation." The term does imply a level of voluntarism; it does imply that we volunteered to go to camp. And that's why I want it kept.

The persons who planned our internment were quite aware of the serious constitutional/legal questions involved in the indiscriminate, mass incarceration of U. S. citizens. Therefore, they schemed to have leaders of the Japanese American citizens community agree to a plan of voluntary internment. The JACL, probably naively, eagerly sought this role. So, when the JACL urged co-operation, they, again probably unwittingly, played right into the hands of the scheme. So, it was, in fact, an evacuation. And that makes the deed even more repugnant. It should also make us a little wiser.

\* \* \* \* \*

The reprint of Rep. Norman Mineta's comments on redress is old news but poorly remembered or unknown by many people. I reproduce it to let people know where he stands. I doubt if his position has changed. The exact date and source were not supplied to me. But I believe it was in June, 1979 and in the San Jose Mercury. Mr. Mineta is certainly entitled to his opinion. But I fail to see how he could ever be linked to a program for redress.

\* \* \* \* \*

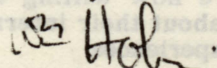


Finally, a word about money. In the year or so we've been in existence, we've spent over \$7,000 and received around \$4,000. This leaves around \$3,000 in expenses which have been paid but not reimbursed to me. That's OK with me, but probably not with you. So, it's time to send a check. Any amount will do. (Our biggest checks seem to come from those who can least afford it. Why?) Mail it to:

National Council for Japanese American Redress  
1428 W. Thorndale  
Chicago, IL 60660

And as the song goes, "If you don't have a penny, then God bless you!"

Peace,

  
William Hohri

## Years of Infamy

the untold story of America's  
Concentration Camps

by Michi Weglyn

"the best book ever on the camps" NCJAR

\$5.95 paperback

send check to:

National Council for  
Japanese American Redress

1428 W. Thorndale

Chicago, IL 60660

Illinois residents, please add 6% tax.



# Educate public on WWII internment

In reading the May 28 article on Harry Ueno's experiences at the internment camps during World War II, I was struck by an erroneous statement regarding my role in efforts to secure redress, and I would like to set the record straight.

I do not advocate payment of \$25,000 to each Japanese-American as redress for internment. Furthermore, there is no legislation either drafted or introduced in the U.S. Congress that would require these payments to be made.

Efforts to secure some form of redress for the internment experience stem from a resolution adopted to that effect at the 1978 national convention of the Japanese American Citizens League.

One of the proposals being studied by the JAACL is legislation that would designate a



Rep. Norm Mineta

commission on redress to educate Americans about the internment. There are now generations of Americans with no knowledge of this abrogation of civil and constitutional rights, and I believe that a commis-

sion with an educational approach would have a very important mission: to remind all Americans that the rights of all groups in our society must constantly be protected and maintained.

At present, there is no legislation before the Congress that would require financial redress, nor do I support such a proposal. I do think, however, that it is extremely important that so many Japanese Americans are now willing to tell others about their internment camp experiences.

The lesson we must draw from the internment experience is that our precious civil and constitutional rights must be protected, not just for Japanese Americans or other minorities, but for all Americans.

—Norman Y. Mineta  
13th Congressional District

Dear friend

September 20, 1980

I have requested an appointment to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (H.R. 5499) which is to investigate and evaluate the factors that led to the evacuation of 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry.

Congressman Corman of my district is willing to submit my name to President Carter and he has requested that respected members of the community express support of my nomination.

Would you consider writing to Congressman Corman in my behalf if you feel I would be a worthwhile member of that commission.

Regards

Ralph Lazo  
Ralph Lazo

L.A. Valley College  
5800 Fulton Ave.  
Van Nuys, CA 91401



1150 Park Mills Road  
Berkeley, Calif. 94708

September 12, 1980

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

Dear Coalition members:

I have been reading some of your literature (questionnaire and statement of goals) and I am distressed over your continued use of government euphemisms, especially the term "evacuation."

Government officials at the time--particularly army lawyers--were aware of potential legal challenges to the imprisonment of Americans without evidence, charges, or trial. Not wanting the internment program blocked by the courts, the army developed the use of deceptive terminology to camouflage the truth. Thus, the words they used to describe the events taking place were not consistent with the facts.

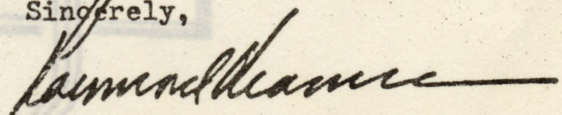
Even though Japanese Americans were evicted from their homes and incarcerated in concentration camps, the army called the procedure an innocuous "evacuation." "Evacuation" was chosen as the preferred term because it implies the people were moved for their own safety and protection (note that the term is usually used in connection with a natural disaster like a fire or flood). The army issued numerous directives and press releases ordering the use of such euphemisms. The propaganda worked to such a degree that the Supreme Court in the Korematsu case blindly insisted that only an "evacuation" was involved--not an incarceration.

I can appreciate why Japanese Americans who experienced the trauma of the concentration camps went along with the euphemisms. In order to shield themselves against the stark reality of the barbed wire and guard towers, they had to pretend they were merely "evacuees" in a "relocation center." If they were to preserve their sanity, they could not admit they were locked up like common criminals, prisoners of their own country.

But I do not understand why young people today, who did not go through the internment experience, perpetuate such distortions. The government has kept us Japanese Americans in linguistic enslavement long enough. It is about time to break the semantic chains and start using accurate and honest terms.

Redress/reparations simply cannot be justified on the basis of "evacuation" alone. But false arrest, unlawful eviction, unwarranted exclusion, wrongful detention, unjust incarceration, etc. can and should be compensated. If we expect to achieve the goal of monetary restitutions, we must accurately describe the damages incurred, and pay close attention to the nuances of our language.

Sincerely,

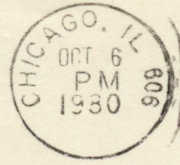


Raymond Okamura

cc: National Council for  
Japanese American Redress 7.



NATIONAL COUNCIL for  
JAPANESE AMERICAN REDRESS  
925 West Diversey Parkway  
Chicago, Illinois 60614



MS SASHA [redacted] HOHRI [redacted]

**Redress for Japanese Americans**  
-What For?  
special issue

**RIKKA** v.6 no.2  
cross cultural quarterly Fall 1979

partial contents: ■ Frank Chin: *Redress for Japanese Americans - What For?* ■ Minoru Masuda: *Japanese Americans: Injury and Redress* ■ Michi Weglyn & Betty Mitson: *Herbert V. Nicholson - Fountain of Joy*

Single Copies: \$1.25 postpaid  
To order:

"... an excellent collection of articles on the subject of Redress. Congratulations on an accomplishment worthy of becoming a part of the permanent history of Japanese America."  
- Shosuke Sasaki  
Seattle Redress Committee



mail check to:  
National Council for Japanese American Redress  
1428 W. Thorndale  
Chicago, IL 60660