

NATIONAL COUNCIL for
JAPANESE AMERICAN REDRESS
1428 West Thorndale
Chicago, Illinois 60660



National Council
for Japanese American Redress
1428 West Thorndale, Chicago, Illinois 60660

October 3, 1979

Dear Friend:

Earlier the National Council sent to you a letter for a contribution. We've received many contributions for which we are very grateful. But now we've detected the probability that some of the contributions mailed to us were never received. Some of our mail has been stolen.

If you mailed a contribution and received a yellow button mounted on a card saying "Thanks a lot!" your contribution was received and you need not worry. But if you mailed a contribution and did not receive the button, please do the following:

1. Attempt to stop payment on your check, if it has not already been processed by your bank.
2. If the check has been processed and if it is not inconvenient, we would very much appreciate a Xerox or photo copy of both sides of the cancelled check.
3. Acknowledge the action taken with the form at the bottom of this letter and the enclosed envelope.

We have changed the mailing address to a more secure one. We would still like to send a button and a newsletter to all those who sent us a contribution regardless of this problem.

Peace,

William Hohri

Name:

Address:

City, state, zip:

- Yes, I did send a check for _____ and did not receive a button.
- I managed to stop payment on the check.
- I was not able to stop payment on the check but have enclosed copies of both sides of the check.

96TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1647

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DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

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SEC. 4. (a) It shall be the duty of the Commission to

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gather facts to determine whether a wrong was committed

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against those American citizens and permanent resident

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aliens who were subjected to relocation and/or internment by

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the issuance of Executive Order Numbered 9066 and other

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associated acts of the Federal Government.

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(b) The Commission shall hold public hearings in Los

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Angeles, San Francisco, and Fresno, California; Portland,

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Oregon; Seattle, Washington; Phoenix, Arizona; Salt Lake

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City, Utah; Denver, Colorado; Chicago, Illinois; New York,

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New York; Washington, D.C.; and any other city that the

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Commission deems necessary and proper.

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(c) The Commission shall submit a written report of its

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findings and recommendations to Congress not later than

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eighteen months after the date of the enactment of this Act.



National Council for Japanese American Redress

925 West Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614

September 25, 1979

Dear Friends:

I recently received a copy of what must be the very first redress proposal. It was written on June 1, 1943 by Joe Kurihara. Joe Kurihara was one of the baddest of the bad. He and fifteen other men were arrested in the aftermath of the Manzanar riot of December 6, 1942. Two internees were killed by the soldiers, but by the curious logic of the times, sixteen internees were arrested. After spending a month in jail, the sixteen were shipped by train, guarded by thirty-six soldiers, to a high security camp at Moab, Utah. All were arrested on the word of an informer. The promised hearings never occurred. Joe was born in Hawaii, a devout Catholic, World War I veteran, college educated, and a deeply patriotic American. Joe believed that surely he would not be taken to camp because he had demonstrated his loyalty. But he was taken. This disillusionment was exacerbated by his certain knowledge of informant activities. He turned on the system and became outspokenly pro-Japan. He confronted the informers. But he was pro-Japan in a unique way; he went to Japan, eventually, "with Democracy my goal." Joe Kurihara, in a letter to a friend in Manzanar, proposed that \$5,000 in reparation be given to every Japanese American internee of voting age.

Time does strange things to the good guys and the bad guys. Some of the informers were leaders of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). In the eyes of the JACL, Joe must have been the rottenest apple in the barrel. Yet, in 1978 the JACL did embrace his proposal, in essence, at their biennial convention. (It's too bad that Joe died in 1971 in Tokyo.) On March 3, 1979, the JACL leadership decided to contravene the 1978 decision and embarked upon an effort to establish a Study Commission instead. On August 2nd, the Commission bill was introduced in the U. S. Senate by Senators Inouye, Matsunaga, Hayakawa, Cranston, Church, and McClure. It is referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs which is chaired by Senator Abraham Ribicoff. Within the Committee, it has been referred to the sub-Committee on Civil Service and General Services which is chaired by Senator Pryor (Arkansas). I have asked Senator Ribicoff if I might testify before the sub-committee.

"SEC. 4. (a) It shall be the duty of the Commission to gather facts to determine whether a wrong was committed against those American citizens and permanent resident aliens who were subjected to relocation and/or internment by the issuance of Executive Order 9066 and other associated acts of the Federal Government."

That is the main duty of the Commission. Our own bill will be introduced in the House by Congressman Mike Lowry in mid-October. In my judgment, the passage of S.1647 will kill the Lowry bill. Once Congress decides to study a matter, an action on the same matter would probably be out of order. (I'm not on solid ground here. Another reason why we need help.) I don't think it takes much imagination to realize that given a choice between a three billion dollar redress bill and a Commission, most members of Congress will support the Commission. Once passed, we would have a forced hiatus of three to five years before redress could be considered.

September 25, 1979
page two

On September 13th, Redress was the topic of the Channel Two News feature, the Bill Kurtis Focus Report. Bill Kurtis, Chicago's leading anchor person, began with the story of Pearl Harbor and moved into the evacuation and camps. The story was supported by very effective pictures, moving and still, and by strong personal testimony by former internees, both Issei and Nisei, who spoke of anger and disbelief of the evacuation order, the cramped quarters of the barracks, the extensive depression and the efforts at suicide, the boredom, and the ambiguity and contradiction of joining the military from the camps which were guarded by soldiers. Kurtis then discussed the redress bill which is to be introduced in October. (He completely ignored S.1647.) He talked of the opposition of Sen. Hayakawa and of the payments by Germany to Jews.

The five-minute segment was shown twice and included interviews with Frank Sakamoto, Betty Hasegawa, Miki Uchida, Dorothy Kaneko, Aiko Kuramoto, Harry Nagaoka, and William Hohri.

Kurtis introduced the segment with the statement that Congressman Sidney Yates (Illinois 9th) was introducing a Redress Bill in October. I followed up on this. On September 17th, I talked with Mr. Yates by phone and he informed me that he was switching from his support of our Redress Bill to the Commission Bill. I expressed my deep disappointment and later wrote a letter rebutting his reasons for the switch.

This week the House will introduce their version of S.1647. It is very important that each of us write -- a postcard will do -- to our representatives and senators to express our opposition to the Study Commission. Be sure to state that your opposition is based upon your support for redress. The members of Congress have been led to believe the Commission is redress. Mention your preference for Congressman Mike Lowry's Redress Bill which will appear later.

Thanks y'all for your financial support. We're going through tough times. The Yates reversal was especially tough. But we can't complain about finances. We have had many contributions and some very generous ones.

Some of us will be journeying to the Minidoka concentration camp site for a Day of Remembrance on October 13th. We're going to burn down a guard tower, sing some songs, listen to poetry and speeches.

Peace,

William Hohri

William Hohri

5 Comments from the Midwest

On Evacuation and Redress

By MARILYN OWEN ROBB
(Chicago, Ill.)

"I had gone to the community shower and now stood outside my barrack door. A sentry tower loomed a few feet away. I was a prisoner in my own country.

"It was Christmas eve, 1942. Nine months before, during Holy Week, the United States government had moved all of us Japanese—both citizens and foreign born—inland from California, Oregon, and Washington. There had been no due process of law for individuals, no official charge placed against us, but we found ourselves herded into buses and trains.

"We could take only what we could carry. Caucasian Americans near us began to realize this limitation and descended upon us to buy for a pittance our cars, businesses, furniture, and other belongings. A few Americans had objected to our treatment but were passed quickly in the anxiousness to get us out of the Pacific Coast.

"I was in my early 20's. My college and career plans were interrupted. The future looked uncertain. Our civilization seemed at a dead end."

These words of one Japanese American minister echo through the unspoken memories of the 110,000 Issei and Nisei who the government forcibly removed to concentration camps under Executive Order 9066 signed Feb. 19, 1942.

Standing under the armed guard of the sentry tower and the abounding grace of the night sky, the Nisei youth looked upward on that usually hopefully Christian night.

"The stars sparkled very close at hand, almost as if they could be touched. The heavens looked quiet, peaceful, and orderly—in contrast to the turmoil within this earthly camp."

Surely there must have been a logical reason for the government to remove all the Japanese in the western United States to concentration camps. No one commits such an injustice without good cause or political necessity.

Idealism, not reality, govern such hopes. The Japanese Americans too, fell prey to this idealism as they "cooperatively" traded their freedom to prove their loyalty to their country.

But injustice and racism prevailed in the West against the Japanese when they arrived at the outset of the 20th century as it had against the Chinese two and three decades earlier. The reserved quiet of the Asians contrasted to the generally more aggressive nature of the European. A fear of the unknown turned to a "yellow" hatred. A white envy also turned to hate against the Issei for their farming efficiency—their ability to turn unwanted land into productive soil.

Anti-Japanese sentiment led first to acts of violence. Soon sentiment moved on to laws of prejudice—denying citizenship, prohibiting certain employment, integrated schools, and even some rights to burial.

Laws culminated in the Asian Exclusion Act of 1924 and the concentration camps of 1942.

The U.S. government claimed "military necessity" for the removal of its residents, but there had not been a single case of sabotage committed by Japanese Americans. Nor was imprisonment an action taken against those of German or Italian ancestry.

A Nisei of Seattle, interned in Washington and Oregon, remembers the loyalty of his people.

"The Japanese American denial of their freedom was to be an eloquent gesture of commitment to the U.S. Constitution and to the American people. We went on believing that someday America would apologize. We didn't expect barbed wire in America. Americans weren't born to live behind barbed wire with guns pointed at them. Of course, America has never come forward to apologize."

Issei die, Nisei grow older, and Sansei wonder why—

why did this happen, and why does it go unnoticed? Why does the United States hold apology back tightly in silence with seemingly no regret?

Yet some of us do regret. Some of us do want to apologize. Some of us do ask forgiveness for what we did to you, our brother and sister U.S. residents. We Caucasians are guilty, and we plead for your grace.

The imprisonment is not your "problem". It is not for you to work and wonder how to exact your due apology. You have been outwardly gentle with us long enough! It is now our time to come forward

to repent of our sins, to beg your forgiveness, and to hope we can move forward in action toward reconciliation.

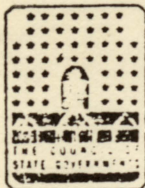
We honor those of you Nisei who served in the military of the U.S.—we are only able to partially understand the terrible anguish of having to prove your loyalty to the country of your birth while your families lived in prison.

We honor those of you who were young and were forced to take leadership in the camps when your elders were intentionally imprisoned elsewhere to weaken the community in their absence.

We honor you of Japanese ancestry who sought to maintain order in a world of chaos, dignity in a world of inhumanity, sanity in a world of insanity.

We of Caucasian heritage, born in 1942 or not, ask forgiveness for our sins of racism. We pray that we can join with you and our common God to rebuild the covenant of peace, justice and love.

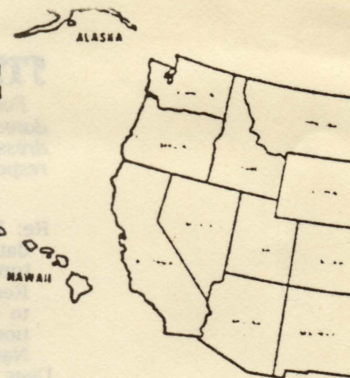
* * *
The Rev. Robb is pastor of The Chicago Parish of the Holy Covenant.



THE WESTERN CONFERENCE

of

The Council of State Governments



Conference Staff
The Council of State Governments
Western Office
165 Post Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, California 94108
(415) 986-3760

RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF WESTERN ATTORNEYS GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING

Resolution number 5

WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the wholesale uprooting, exile, and imprisonment of 120,313 persons of Japanese ancestry residing in the Pacific Coast areas, two-thirds of whom were United States citizens; and

WHEREAS, Records of the United States Department of Justice, Naval Intelligence, and the Executive Branch show that not one case of disloyalty existed amongst persons of Japanese ancestry prior to or during World War II; and

WHEREAS, The administration of Executive Order 9066 violated several Articles of the Bill of Rights and was contrary to the long established laws and traditions of our nation; and

WHEREAS, Citizens of Japanese ancestry contributed substantially to the war effort, served heroically in the U.S. armed forces, and suffered losses of life and limb despite the government's denial to them of the benefits of citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Redress for the victims of the wartime expulsion and imprisonment by the United States government is an appropriate method of recognizing the unique nature of the expulsion and imprisonment and of repaying some part of the losses caused thereby; and

WHEREAS, The defense of the constitutional rights of citizens of the United States and the principles of democracy is a matter of major concern to the members of the Conference of Western Attorneys General;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Western Attorneys General supports in principle the campaign of the National Council for Japanese American Redress to obtain reasonable compensation for the injuries and losses suffered by Japanese American evacuees, detainees, and internees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be forwarded to members of Congress represented by the Conference of Western Attorneys General.

Adopted July 28, 1979
Juneau, Alaska

The Kitazumi-Uyeda Exchange

Following "open letter" comes from a JACLER whose membership dates from 1932, concerned about the Redress campaign and addressed to Dr. Clifford Uyeda, national president, who has promptly responded within the week.

An Open Letter

Re: Revised Redress Proposal dated August 8, 1978 from Clifford I. Uyeda, then National Redress Committee Chairman to Committee members, National Council members and National Board members.

Dear Dr. Uyeda:

At long last I received a copy of the above described Redress document. I believe it is a well thought out, beautiful document that needs no further explanation. The only exception I may take could be in regards to #3 item in the opening paragraph, and the petition should be directed not only to our Congress but also to the President of the United States, the Justice Department, the War and Navy Departments and to the Interior Department. It isn't that "Persons of Japanese ancestry brought over from Central and South America and interned in the United States ..." do not deserve to be included under the Revised Redress Proposal the JACL National Council approved on July 19, 1978 as redress guidelines, but it seems that the JACL is going beyond the bounds of its involvement as its name, Japanese American Citizens League, signifies.

THE CRUX OF THIS LETTER is simply to point out that our current National Redress Committee is just not doing the job it was appointed to do. It seems a very clear case of misfeasance, malfeasance or just plain deviousness in the fulfillment of its job. As much as I respect my government, I, as a long-standing member of the JACL (since 1932 as a member of the Sacramento Chapter), cannot say that we as JACLers are an extension of our government in its function relative to the question of evacuation. Hence, for our National Committee to "pass the buck", so to speak, of duties assigned to it to the Congress or to function under suggestions from selected members of the House or Senate, whoever they may be, was not the intent of the National Council. I am sure, unless further verified.

I DON'T THINK such a verification was accomplished by the unauthorized poll-taking indulged in as possibly a convenient escape route for not doing their rightful duty. Additionally, the question must be posed to Congress as a whole and not to any J/A members as such.

MY PROPOSAL, in a nutshell, therefore, is to replace the present committee with another from Seattle or Chicago or elsewhere willing to do the job as assigned without further delay. If the current committee cannot stand the heat, they should be decent enough "to get out of the kitchen." This, I believe, they owe to our National Council which deliberated in all sincerity from 1970 through 1978, and to

those J/As who fought for the country out of barbed wire enclosures and especially to those who failed to return because they died in combat to uphold our right to live in this country as first class citizens.

HOWEVER INTELLIGENT or well-meaning the National Redress Committee members may be, they are not our supreme policy making body. They are not empowered to formulate a new policy instead of posing the question of Redress directly to our august government representatives. Should this be otherwise, the JACL will be reduced to an organization where the "tail will be wagging the dog". I believe that would be totally ridiculous and may even destroy our organization, and I cannot stand

by nonchalantly and see this done to an organization that could boast of unparalleled service to our nation in times of dire need.

I CANNOT SEE one legitimate reason why we as JACLers cannot make the kind of petition that the committee is commanded to make by our National Council.

EDWARD M. KITAZUMI
San Jose, Ca.

The Response

August 30, 1979

Dear Mr. Kitazumi:

For nearly a decade the mandated redress campaign remained at a debating phase because it was simply not possible to come to a full agreement on all details.

The redress proposal submitted to the National Council was accepted with an understanding that we would make known a broad demand from which we expected modifications.

Passing of a legislation which

will eventually require an appropriation of considerable sum must be done with careful attention to all details, with care, and realistically.

From all carefully researched indications, the chance of passing a huge appropriation bill for Nikkei at this time seems unrealistic and doomed to failure.

A satisfaction of a struggle in itself is not enough. Our responsibility to the Nikkei communities, it was felt, demanded much more.

The commission approach is a carefully planned strategy to seek redress. Nikkei are very aware of the Evacuation injustice. With few exceptions, the general American public is not aware of the full gravity nor the significance nor the injustice of the case.

We want our day in court. Nikkei will have the opportunity to state their case before the commission. The commission recom-

mendation will depend on how well we do our job.

We believe that at this phase of the campaign, our presenting our case to the commission rather than to the Congress at large is a more effective way to be heard. The commission recommendation will have to be heard and passed by the Congress. That is another phase, requiring another strategy.

Inflexibility in strategy is a sure ticket to failure. There is no change in the overall purpose of the redress campaign. We believe that the present strategy is well conceived, realistic and will succeed.

CLIFFORD I. UYEDA, M.D.
National JACL President

Pacific Citizen 9-14-79

Hokubei Mainichi Sept. 18, 1979

Letter to Editor

Chicago Reader Gets Into Controversial Redress Issue

Dear Editor:

The public exchange of letters between rank-and-file JACLR Edward Kitazumi (8-31-79) and JACLR president Clifford Uyeda (9-5-79) in the Hokubei Mainichi is an important event for the Nikkei Community. It demonstrates a very serious failure by the JACLR to respond to a legitimate question of its leadership. Mr. Kitazumi raises the complaint, "... our current National Redress Committee is just not doing the job it was appointed to do."

The complaint is based on his receipt of the "Revised Redress Proposal" dated Aug. 8, 1978, and signed by Clifford Uyeda. That proposal states:

"The National Council approved the concept that the Bill which will be presented to Congress of the United States, based on the above guidelines, provide the broadest possible coverage."

The guidelines referred to include eligibility, individual payments, Latin American persons of Japanese ancestry, claims processing, and a trust foundation. If I understand the English language, the Bill is to be based on these guidelines. But the fact is that S.1647, the JACLR's Commission Bill, contains none of these guidelines. Therefore, Mr. Kitazumi is quite correct in his criticism. The National Committee is "not doing the job it was appointed to do."

Clifford Uyeda, in response, attempts to provide persuasive reason for the Commission. But he has not answered Mr. Kitazumi's question. He has not explained how the National Committee, whatever its motives, is able to ignore the specific guidelines passed by the 1978 JACLR Convention. For obvious reasons, a committee may not act to change policy established by its parent body. What's the point of having a convention if its decisions can be over ridden by a committee?

Mr. Uyeda has written elsewhere (Pacific Citizen 6-15-79) that this question of contravention has been ruled upon by JACLR's Legal Counsel in favor of the National Committee. But I find it hard to believe that what has been recorded in plain English can be ruled to mean something else. We still lack a public explanation of this ruling. Given the controversy surrounding it, one would think a public statement would be in order.

Moreover, I think the persuasive reasons given by Mr. Uyeda fail to persuade. Mr. Uyeda uses terms such as "carefully researched" and "carefully planned strategy." A blind man walks very carefully, but without vision.

Many people who oppose redress support the Commission. Senator Hayakawa is the most notable of these. Bill Hosokawa is another. Many JACLR chapters that oppose redress support the Commission. (That's why the JACLR poll of chapters on this question is misleading. It's like asking how many people wear pantyhose without first determining the respondent's gender.) Mr. Uyeda states, "There is no change in the overall purpose of the redress campaign." If there is no change, why do opponents of redress support the Commission?

Mr. Uyeda believes "... a huge appropriation bill for Nikkei at this time seems unrealistic and

doomed to failure." What is his source for this gloomy assessment? Surely, it must be from the four Democratic Nikkei members of Congress with whom the National Committee met at the beginning of the year. Why can't this assessment be made public? Elected representatives are public figures. Redress is a public issue. What can't we know their opinion? Suppression is tantamount to denial of the First Amendment. Democracy does not do well when shrouded with secrecy.

Moreover, if redress can't pass now, does Mr. Uyeda have knowledge that it will pass in the future? What is the date? When should a redress bill be introduced? He ought to be able to state that by nineteen so-and-so such and such conditions will change thereby enabling redress legislation to pass. If he can't do this, what are we waiting for?

Is the Commission going to help? How? How many Commissions in the past have effected legislation? How about some examples? Does the JACLR or anyone else have any idea what kind of testimony will be presented before the commission in all ten cities?

The Commission approach raises a lot more questions that it answers.

Fortunately, genuine redress bill is being presented to Congress in the near future, thanks to the efforts of the National Council for Japanese American Redress. The bill will be based on the guidelines established by the 1978 JACLR Convention. The Council does not possess some magical crystal ball of the future. There is no time for justice that is more appropriate than now. We know we have a tough fight. But we've begun building a national coalition of mainline religious, civil rights, peace, and other groups. We have started a national media campaign. We have a started to organize political support for our bill. Interested persons can contact us in Chicago at 925 West Diversey Parkway, Chicago, IL 60614.

Confucius says, "To see what is right and not to do it is cowardice."

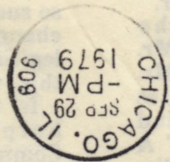
Peace,

William Hohri
4717 North Albany
Chicago, Illinois 60625

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



Sushe Hohu



Ho Kukai Mainichi 9-20-79
**House Leadership Agrees
To Introduce Evacuation
Commission Bill Next Week**

WASHINGTON — The leadership of the House of Representatives has agreed to introduce a counterpart to S.1647, calling for the creation of a fact-finding commission to examine the effects of Executive Order 9066 on American civilians. House Majority Leader, James C. Wright (D-Texas); House Minority Leader, John J. Rhodes (R-Arizona); Congressman Peter W. Rodino, Jr. (D-NY), chairman of the House Committee on Judiciary; and Congressman Frank Horton (R-NY), ranking minority member of the House Committee on Government Operations, will introduce the bill on Thursday or Friday of next week.

The bill, which is expected to mirror that of the Senate, will ask for the formation of a fact-finding commission to determine if any wrong-doings were committed by the United States government upon American

civilians as a result of Executive Order 9066. E.O. 9066 authorized the mass expulsion of American citizens from the West Coast during World War II on the basis of ancestry alone.

The drive to have the House leadership introduce this measure was spearheaded by Congressmen Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA), and Robert T. Matsui (D-CA). Both Congressmen have expressed their deep concern that the question of constitutional freedoms related to the Executive Order, are such that the introduction of the bill warrants the highest order of congressional sponsorship from the House of Representatives.

The Senate version of the Commission Bill (S.1647), was introduced by Senators Inouye (D-Hawaii); Matsunaga (D-Hawaii); Hayakawa (R-CA); Cranston (D-CA); Church (D-Idaho); and McClure (R-Idaho) on Aug. 2, 1979.