



National Council for Japanese American Redress

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DEAR FRIENDS,

Well, as I said in my last letter, it wasn't easy. It was impossible. The \$250 million for redress payments in the 1989 supplemental appropriations (for "Dire Emergencies") was cut to zero. A bare one million dollars may survive to help pay for administrative costs. So we now focus our energies on the 1990 budget.

While we still confront Gramm-Rudman-Hollings and our nation's effort to bring our debt under control—it will top three trillion in 1990—our task will not be so difficult. In the 1989 supplemental, we tried to "rob Peter to pay Paul" by seeking funds from other programs to pay for redress. For the 1990 budget, we have a different problem and metaphor: we must slice a piece from a shrinking pie. It will not be whether but how much.

A budget resolution has been passed that includes payments for redress. But I must say that I do not understand the relationship of this resolution to appropriations. Under the resolution, redress payments are in something called discretionary programs of general government. And so are many other items. Neither the items nor their amounts spelled out. Appropriations, on the other hand, are made by departments and agencies of the U.S. government. As an item for appropriations, redress payments fall within the U.S. Dept. of Justice. I do not understand who gets how much of this discretionary spending. In my mind's eye, I see a feeding trough, labelled "Discretionary Spending, General Government," at which squealing and pushing pigs, labelled as various departments and interest groups, are trying to dine.

The House version of the budget resolution, however, does state:

With respect to Japanese American reparation payments, the Committee assumes that the funding level in the fiscal year 1989 Supplemental Appropriations Bill and the fiscal year 1990 Appropriation Bill will be sufficient to compensate those eligible individuals 70 years old and above.

The reference to the 1989 Supplemental clearly indicates that the resolution was written before redress payments were removed. The dollars required to fulfill this goal are 350 million, as I will explain.

Continued

An Issue for All Americans

Continued DEAR FRIENDS

On June 8, 1989, the regulations for implementing redress were signed. These "regs" spell out who is eligible and who is ineligible. They define procedures to verifying, notifying, and paying victims, including the forms to be used. I am favorably impressed with the sensitivity of the Department of Justice in formulating the "regs." We have until around July 12, 1989 to submit comments about them. (I write this on June 10 so that the "around" dates are estimates, not actual.) Robert Bratt, the director of the Office of Redress Administration, is traveling around the nation to meet with Japanese-Americans and to hear their comments. The "regs" have been published in the Federal Register of around June 12, 1989. Inquiries for copies should be sent to the Office of Redress Administration, P.O. Box 66260, Washington, DC 20035-6260.

My only disappointment is the regulations' failure to include all persons of Japanese ancestry who were taken from Latin American countries and brought to the U.S. and interned for use as trade bait for Americans held by the Japanese government. As the law states, they are excluded because they are not "aliens lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence." Did the U.S. government admit them unlawfully? Having been kidnapped from their homes in Latin America, transported in U.S. ships to the U.S., and interned, are they not entitled to be redressed for the injuries they suffered? We will try to get this failure corrected.

I sense that working in the legislative branch of government consists of many little steps or victories rather than the series of definitive decisions such as impelled our class action lawsuit through the judicial branch. For example, even though most of the J-As from Latin America are not included, a significant fight was fought for their inclusion, thanks to the staff of ORA and the research accomplishments of Aiko and Jack Herzig of NCJAR and Mary Walton Livingston of the National Archives. As a result, at least some were included.

Also, ORA did commission an actuarial projection of the wartime victim population of 120,000 from 1942 to the present. This projection corrects the number of survivors as of August 1988 from the often-used 60,000 to 64,205. It also corrects my own, admittedly amateur projection of those aged 70 and older as of 1988 from 12,500 to 17,367. (I had used a smaller base population and had but one mortality rate.) In order to fulfill the purpose of redressing such persons in fiscal year 1990, \$350 million must be appropriated.

Also, Rita Takahashi and Jack Herzig have been trying to get the Office of Personnel Management to write the rules to implement Section 103 of the Civil Liberties Act. Section 103 is headed "Consideration of Commission Findings by Departments and Agencies" and applies to "the restitution of any position, status, or entitlement lost in whole or in part because of any discriminatory act of the United States Government." Since Takahashi has resigned from JACL-LEC, Herzig continues to try to have the rules written. But over the past several months, OPM has proven exquisitely adept at avoiding Herzig's inquiries by responding to two of his letters with "What letter?" and ignoring eight telephone calls with, in effect, "Sorry, not available." Once these rules are written, if ever, both we and they will know what to do with Section 103.

Continued

Continued DEAR FRIENDS

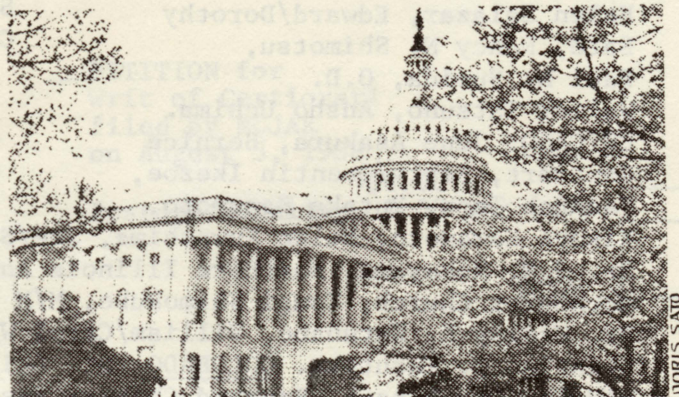
Also, on June 8, a meeting was convened of persons interested in appropriations for redress. It included the staff of interested members of Congress, representatives of NCJAR, JACL-LEC, and ACLU. Its purpose was to co-ordinate our separate efforts towards our common goal.

Also, the idea of a personal letter of apology to accompany each payment moves forward within the Office of Redress Administration. So does the idea of a public ceremony in Washington, D.C. for the first recipients of payments.

I sense that these and many other efforts will coalesce to bring about a successful resolution of our ten-year struggle.

Peace,

William Hohri



**A chance
to ask
questions**



WASHINGTON—Officials responsible for the implementation of redress payments from the U.S. Department of Justice and Canada met for the first time on April 27, 1989. Staff members from the Canadian Secretariat who met with Robert Bratt, administrator of the Office of Redress Administration and Shirley Lloyd, deputy of ORA, were Anne Scotton, executive director; Harry Diepenveen, unit head responsible for all managerial activities under Scotton; and Anne Daniel, legal counsel.

"We had a chance to ask questions and to gain insight from a program that is further along," said Bratt. Redress payments have already been made by the Canadian government.

"The details of our program are somewhat different," said Scotton, "but we share the historic opportunity to help right a past injustice to our citizens of Japanese ancestry. After meeting with Bob and his staff, I know that we also share the same enthusiasm and dedication."

The officials met for a full day to discuss redress issues and procedures, and were pleased with the support and cooperation provided by the Japanese American and Canadian communities.

While in the nation's capitol, the visitors from Canada toured the Smithsonian Institution's exhibit of "A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the United States Constitution." The purpose of the tour was to gain insight on developing a similar exhibit highlighting the experience of Japanese Canadians during World War II.

Edited: THE RAFU SHIMPO
May 22, 1989

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Samuel/Matsue Watanabe.

You are doing
a great job! I support
your effort.

GEORGE H. NISHIMURA
Haddonfield NJ

Many thanks
for your dedicated efforts
on behalf of all Americans—not
just Japanese Americans—to "repair
the constitutional breach,"
(William Hohri et al. v. United
States). Shame on the Supreme
Court!

NORI LAFFERTY
Oakland CA

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NCJAR newsletter
editor: Eddie Sato
Doris Sato

Edited: THE KANU SHIMO
May 22, 1982

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Particularly excited!

A television movie based on the story of Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga is being developed for CBS by UBU Productions. Heading the production are Mitchell Semel and Jay Fukuto of UBU.



Semel is "particularly excited about their first television movie" which is still in the early stages of development.

Fukuto has been associated with Paramount Pictures for the past ten years and was more recently associate director of comedy for Network Television Division. Semel was manager of specials and comedy programs with NBC prior to joining UBU and worked as production executive on "Cheers," "Family Ties" and "The Golden Girls." Having been with UBU since 1985, Semel and Fukuto are developing new series and television movies for the networks.

Screenwriter for the Yoshinaga film is San Francisco playwright Philip Gotanda who is best known for his stage play "Yankee Dawg You Die," a satire on Asian American movie stereotypes, and the motion picture, "The Wash."

During World War II, Yoshinaga was interned at Manzanar. She called it a "prison " camp.

Edited excerpts:
HOKUBEI MAINICHI
May 13, 1989

Book award for Repairing America

The National Press Club in Washington, D.C. was the scene of the 10th annual American Book Awards held on June 4, 1989.

Works by Asian Americans were among those announced by the Before Columbus Foundation. Among those present were William Hohri, for his book, *Repairing America: An Account of the Movement for Japanese-American Redress* (Washington State University Press). Others receiving awards were:

- Floating the River in Melancholy* by Shuntaro Tanikawa, translated by William I. Elliott and Kazuo Kawamura (Prescott Street Press, Portland, Oregon).
- The Chinaman Pacific and Frisco R.R.* by Frank Chinn (Coffee House Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota).
- Wade Shuofa (My Way of Speaking)* by Carolyn Lau (Tooth of Time Books).

The Before Columbus Foundation had a booth at the American Book Sellers Association convention at the Washington Convention Center from June 3 to 6. The foundation is an independent non-profit educational organization dedicated to advancing American writing from every community, region, background and literary tradition.

Founded in 1978, the American Book Awards are intended to provide wider recognition for outstanding achievements of authors representing the breadth of America's literary and cultural traditions. Works selected represent both small and large publishers.

The awards are not a competition, and there are no categories, fees, restrictions or qualifications other than literary excellence.

Edited excerpts:
HOKUBEI MAINICHI
May 18, 1989

A
BOOK
REVIEW
by
William
Hohri

When the Machine Stopped:
A Cautionary Tale from Industrial America
by Max Holland
Harvard Business School Press

Our capacity for mischief

On the day I stopped working to begin early retirement, I read Max Holland's When the Machine Stopped and knew others shared my disaffection with the American business ethic, my reason for leaving the rat race. In addition, I realized that while I was spending much of the 1980s seeking to redress the injuries caused by the World War II myth of military necessity—hoping among other things to prevent the recurrence of such myth-making—America was "Jap-bashing" (*their* term) using facts every bit as fictitious as those supporting its mass exclusion and detention of Japanese-Americans. Holland's tale is cautionary. Our capacity for mischief is boundless.

Holland begins with an engaging, well-researched account of the entrepreneurial success story of immigrant Fred Burg, who felt "born a machinist" but found himself in 1943 at age 47 managing a small department store. He "retired" and became a machinist. Beginning in his garage, Burg soon unleashed his considerable skills, drive, and inventiveness to devise significant improvements in machine tool design. By 1945 his Burg Tool Manufacturing Company moved to a double garage and then moved some more and by 1961 had grown into a machine tool enterprise with sales of \$4.8 million and secured a reputation for innovation, precision, and reliability. It was not without conflicts and risks. Fred Burg was a "hands on" entrepreneur who encouraged his workers to speak their minds, not with slogans, such as "my door is always open," but by facing a worker who had disagreed with him and admitting that he had been mistaken. Burg Tool invented and produced the turret drill that enabled several different drill bits to be mounted and readily switched, thereby reducing costly setup times. Burg was among the first to grasp and incorporate numerical control—indirectly computer control—into machine tools and led this industry into a wave of the future.

In 1961 Burg Tool became a publicly owned company and changed its name to Burgmaster. At about this time, Burgmaster became involved with its counterparts in Japan through a patent infringement action. Chukyo, a Japanese company, was making an exact duplicate of one of Burgmaster's turret drills. Fred Burg went to Japan, stopped the infringement, and ultimately established a licensing and sales arrangement with Chukyo and expanded Burgmaster's market to Japan and Asia. Burgmaster also established markets for its products in Europe. By 1964, its sales had grown to \$7.4 million.

In 1965 Burgmaster merged with Houdaille Industries (pronounced WHO-dye), a conglomerate, and then began its entrepreneurial descent even as it ascended into the super-wealth of leveraged buyouts and the glitz of congressional hearings, a White House power struggle, and television's "60 Minutes." The close-knit, innovative style of Fred Burg was replaced by projections, MRP (materials requirement planning via computer), added layers of bureaucracy, and the bottom line. The new top management confused its

Continued

Continued BOOK REVIEW: When the Machine Stopped

power with knowledge and wisdom. Key employees left. Innovation disappeared. One design engineer recalled, "I got along a lot better in the organization when I started doing less." Quality sagged. Reliability became a joke. Burgmaster tools were "to be avoided at all costs." In fulfillment of what I perceive as the American credo, "take care of Number One," and its corollary, "The trickle down will take care of the rest." Burgmaster's goals became those of Houdaille's chief executive officer. When the time came in 1978 for the CEO to retire, his primary concern was to maximize his return on his 130,000 shares of Houdaille.

He was seduced into a leverage buyout, an ingenious but risky scheme whereby a publicly held corporation borrows huge sums of money at generous interest rates, buys back its stock at an attractive price, and becomes privately held. It pays back its debt with cash flow in a few years. A critical ploy to providing sufficient cash is for the firm to shield its income from federal taxes with its interest payments and other devices. If all goes well, the new owners become debt-free, go public, issue stock, and realize huge personal profits. But the risks are real and the pressures acute. Houdaille did not make it. The firm was confronted by "a triple bind of debt, recession, and competition." It couldn't do much about the first two, but it could try to reduce fierce competition from Japan.

Houdaille mounted a vigorous and costly (\$1.5 million) lobbying effort with a "petition for redress" to President Reagan that charged Japan with unfair trade in machine tools and sought revocation of the investment tax credit for any U.S. purchaser of Japanese machine tools. Revoking the tax credit was, of course, the same as raising the price of the Japanese product. By 1981 Japan had captured a significant share of the U.S. machine tools market. It had succeeded in the U.S. much as Burg Tool had earlier succeeded in Japan, through perfecting its technology, innovation, and providing timely delivery and less cost for a more marketable product. Houdaille's petition alleged that the Japanese machine tool industry, with the active co-operation of the Japanese government, had formed an international cartel with the express purpose of seizing the U.S. machine tool market. Holland describes the growth of the Japanese machine tool industry, the wildly inaccurate projections of Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and the vigorous independence of one of its chief machine tool manufacturers, Yamazaki Machinery—all contradicting these allegations. Despite this, Houdaille was able to convince the U.S. Senate, U.S. Trade Representative, and U.S. Department of Commerce of the righteousness of its cause. Fortunately, the U.S. Departments of State, Treasury, and Justice remained unconvinced. Finally, the Japanese government had to warn the U.S. that were the petition to be granted the "political and economic risks * * * would be incalculable." In April 1983, President Reagan denied Houdaille's petition.

But the allegations continued as facts in the press and in television's "60 Minutes." They were the bravado of a dying conglomerate. Houdaille died in 1985. The charges of Japanese unfair trade linger. The Bush administration recently revived the charges. Perhaps these new charges have merit. Still, if the U.S. Senate, parts of the Reagan administration, and the press could have been so misled in the case of the machine tool industry, one wonders.

When the Machine Stopped must be read by anyone who wants to understand the history and background of Japan-bashing and the decline of American manufacturing enterprise.

WILLIAM HOHRI

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