



National Council for Japanese American Redress

925 West Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614

March 17, 1981

Dear Friends,

You may tire of hearing about the Redress Legal Fund, but it's here to stay. We passed through our little moment of truth. It was neither glorious success nor poignant agony. It was more like temporizing. We have not reached \$30,000, our goal for March. We're at \$21,000. We have nine Ronin (contributors of \$1,000 or more). We've received a grant of \$7,500 from the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ. (But this becomes available only after we've reached \$30,000.) Nor did we decide we had failed. We simply gave ourselves more time. We extended our deadline until May, 1981.

We think we can reach our initial goal of \$30,000 by May. But much depends on you -- yes, you -- the readers of our newsletter. Contrary to what might be expected, only a few of our regular readers have pledged or contributed to the Fund. It's 40 from 500. In contrast, about 110 from a cold mailing of 800 responded to our fund appeal. What's up out there? Could it be that this newsletter discourages support? There ought to be another 200 or 300 of you out there who are willing to join with us. Now is when we need your help.

The claim of financial stress is not really a very good excuse. For one Ronin, the pledge is 20% of his annual income. We have retirees -- quite ordinary ones -- who have contributed \$100 to \$200. We have received substantial support from the clergy whose salaries compare to secretaries and retail clerks these days.

And about 20% of our contributors are non-Nikkei. Two of our Ronin are non-Nikkei. We have one woman Ronin, a secretary. Ultimately, to reach our final goal of \$75,000, we will probably need the poetic number of forty-seven Ronin.

This is a movement of ordinary people. So, don't wait any longer. Do it today!

For those who've been waiting for tax deductibility, we've even established a Redress Legal Fund within the United Methodist Church. Just make and mail your check to:

Redress Legal Fund
United Methodist Foundation
77 West Washington Street, #1806
Chicago, IL 60602

* * * *

We're working on building a list of sponsors of the Fund. We want big names and little ones. If you have suggestions for persons who might be willing to lend their names -- and contribute some money -- to the Fund, please give us their names and addresses.

Right now the Fund is part of the program of my local United Methodist Church, Parish of the Holy Covenant. Later this year, we're going to try to make it part of our annual conference, the Northern Illinois Conference of the UMC. Our earlier attempt with the General Board of Church and Society did not work out.

* * * *

Just so you won't think it's all fund-raising these days, I am pleased to report that I delivered a lecture at Northeastern Illinois University today. It was on the history of the redress movement. It was a good session. Later, I taped part of a radio show for Chicago's public radio station, WBEZ. It'll air (is that the term?) on April 11th at 11:00 A.M.

We've also set a date for a two-day conference at Northeastern for July 10-11. The University will sponsor it. NCJAR will conduct a panel discussion on the redress movement. We anticipate much community involvement. We'll keep your informed through these pages.

* * * *

There has been strong reaction to Lillian Baker's letter which appeared nationally in the "Dear Abby" column. Ray Okamura and I and I'm sure others have responded. I think it's important to respond on such occasions. While I do believe that Ms. Baker is "strange," to be charitable, we need to remind ourselves that Adolf Hitler was also "strange" and very effective.

* * * *

Also, Ray Okamura's story on the Census Bureau got lots of play in many newspapers across the nation. I was pleased to see even a tiny reference to it in our Chicago Sun-Times. The Washington Post did a full fledged story. It just goes to show what a well-researched piece can do.

Thanks, Ray.

* * * *

The Study Commission appointments were finally made and announced. The group is not particularly impressive. We were, of course, delighted to have our nominee, Father Robert F. Drinan, appointed. I suspect, however, that it was more "Tip" O'Neil's doing than any recommendation we made or obtained. The failure of Prof. Charles Z. Smith's nomination, which received probably the broadest support, indicates that we, the people, don't have much to say about these things.

I'm a little concerned about the sloganeering: this is our chance to tell our story to the government so they will do something about it. If we do our show-and-tell well, teacher will give us a good grade. It's not healthy. The whole thing needs a massive infusion of skepticism, even cynicism.

* * * *

We've published the JACL's Redress Guidelines. As far as I know, they have not been published by the Pacific Citizen, the JACL's newspaper. The 1978 Redress Guidelines were never published. I've commented on them.

I think they're a disgrace. But they are clever and will probably receive lots of support. I can see J-A organizations drooling over all those foundations. What really bugs me is their attempt to make do-good-Quiet-Americans of all of us Nikkei.

Frankly, I'd rather be a Jap.

Peace,

William Hohri

William Hohri

P. S. Some last minute corrections and updates to the letter.

First, the woman Ronin is not a secretary but has an administrative/executive position.

Second, we have reached \$24,000.

Third, we now have ten Ronin. Our latest is a 72-year old man from Los Angeles who says he is poor and cannot make the payment in a lump sum. This probably brings the average of the Ronin to around 60.



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NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR REDRESS

REDRESS GUIDELINES

February 6, 1981

- I. PURPOSE: a) To achieve redress for all persons who suffered injustices by official actions of the United States Government during World War II, as a result of the issuance of Presidential Executive Order Number 9066 and other associated official actions of the United States Government.
- b) To deter the reoccurrence (sic) of such future arbitrary action by the government which is contrary to the principles upon which this nation was founded.
- II. BASIS FOR CLAIM: Individual and community injustices and losses suffered arising out of the issuance of Presidential Executive Order Number 9066 and other associated official actions of the United States Government.
- III. ELIGIBILITY: Beneficiaries of any remedies enacted by Congress, in connection with the exclusion and subsequent internment of civilians during World War II, shall include those who were forcibly expelled by the military and detained, or who were compelled to move because of military orders in force or pending, and all those who were affected by Executive Order 9066 and other associated actions of the United States Government.
- IV. REDRESS: a) The United States Congress shall be called upon to appropriate a total monetary sum based upon:
- 1) Property damages incurred by those affected by the forced expulsion and incarceration, determined by agencies of the United States Government. This amount shall be appropriately adjusted for the intervening years since 1941.
 - 2) Personal losses and injuries suffered as a consequence of the actions of the government.
 - 3) Payment and receipt of any monies appropriated by Congress shall be free from any federal, state or local taxes, and shall not escheat to any state or from any federal, state or local taxes, and shall not escheat to any state or municipality, and shall not affect eligibility to receive any benefits.
- b) In addition, the United States Government shall be called upon to appropriate or otherwise make available funds or resources in special programs for the benefit of those classes and groups excluded and/or interned under Executive Order Number 9066 and associated official actions of the United States Government.
- DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS: Congress shall establish perpetual, non-profit foundations to administer such funds appropriated by the Congress. Disbursements from such funds shall be in accordance with such rules and regulations to be established by said foundations, it being explicitly understood that individual payments shall be made from such funds, as well as other disbursements, such as social, civil rights and educational programs in redress of those communities which were physically and sociologically disrupted as a direct result of the issuance of Executive Order Number 9066.

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An Analysis of the 1981 JACL Guidelines for "Redress"

1. In its Purpose it sounds fine, but the term "redress" as it appears later on needs careful examination. No where, for example, is there a dollar amount associated with it. It's not \$25,000 per person as it was in 1978.

The idea of deterrence is simply fanciful. How does one deter evil? The death penalty, some argue, will deter homicide. But this proposal is no death penalty. It may not even be a slap on the wrist.

2. What is a community injustice? This ambiguous idea does become important in the Disbursement of Funds section.

3. What's wrong with identifying us as Japanese-Americans? There were a whole lot of folks who were forced to move because of military orders and who were affected by associated acts of the government, such as the MP's who guarded us.

4. It is significant that their notion of redress does not included false imprisonment and a miscarriage of justice. I'm afraid I would have to argue against redress as they have defined it. Property damages were taken care of, however inadequately, with the Evacuation Claims Act. And personal losses and injuries were suffered by many during the war. Without the violation of our civil rights, without the violation of the Writ of Habeas Corpus and other constitutional rights, there is no case for redress.

What about people who suffered no property damage because they owned none or very little? Many of us were very poor. And how many suffered personal losses and injuries?

5. "Escheat", by the way, means "the reverting of property to the government when there are no legal heirs."

6. The most serious problems are in the Disbursement of Funds, the famous bottom line of redress. Note carefully ". . . that individual payments shall be made. . ." How many and to whom? That requirement could be fulfilled by payments to two persons. It could be fulfilled by payments made to the indigent or disabled. But will payments be made to enable the recipient to buy a Cadillac?

How many foundations will there be? If they are to be perpetual, does that not imply that most of the money appropriated shall form a base of capital and that disbursements shall be made from the interest earned from that capital? How much of the administrative costs will suck up such interest? How much, as the bottom line, will trickle down to the victims?

7. Finally, there is the curious extension of the term "redress" in the phrase, "as well as other disbursements, such as social, civil rights and educational programs in redress of those communities which were physically and sociologically disrupted as a direct result . . ." Redress now becomes extended to include social, civil rights and educational programs. Isn't this really the new bottom line? Has not the Foundation-for-good-works proposal of Masaoka-Marutani-Yasui-Oshiki (the JACL old guard) at last emerged as the position of the JACL?

William Hohri

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\$7500 to NCJAR From Church Body

A grant of \$7,500 has been made by United Church Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ to the Redress Legal Fund of the National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR). The grant pushes the fund closer to its goal of \$75,000, the estimated sum needed to underwrite an historic class action lawsuit against the United States to obtain compensation for the victims of World War II internment camps.

The Council plans to initiate legal preparations for their lawsuit as soon as \$30,000 has been raised from individuals. Twenty thousand dollars has been raised to date. The grant of \$7,500 will be available once the \$30,000 has been raised and the legal activity has begun.

In addition to this support from the United Church Board, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church took action last April to make Japanese American redress a program for its Board of Church and Society.

The Council was able to obtain the endorsement of United Methodists and other church leaders for the nominations of Professor Charles Z. Smith and Father Robert F. Drinan to the Study Commission. Father Drinan was recently announced as Commissioner.

The Council continues to seek contributions from the Japanese American community for its class action suit, through a mail campaign and in advertisements in the vernacular press. The NCJAR has to date received seven responses to its call for "47 Ronin" (a ronin being anyone who pledges \$1,000 or more), two of them from New York, it was announced this week.

One of the seven "ronin," the NCJAR's latest newsletter disclosed, is Ralph Lazo. Reads the newsletter,

"Ralph may be the only person who actually volunteered to be interned and had no extenuating reason to do so (such as having a J-A spouse), except that he wanted to go with his Nisei friends. As fate would have it, Ralph, a high school student, was shipped to Manzanar... As Ray Okamura wrote so movingly in his letter of support for Ralph as a Commissioner [for the Congressional Study Commission] if more people had followed—maybe even heard about—Ralph's simple act of courage and love, history may have been changed. His act was extraordinary in 1942. And we can see that he hasn't changed much since."

Pledges of contributions may be sent to the National Council for Japanese American Redress at 925 West Diversey Parkway, Chicago, IL 60614.

Sansei Congressman Warns JAs

Not to Raise Redress Expectations

BERKELEY.—Congressman Robert T. Matsui of Sacramento, who is a dynamic speaker, gave an unusually low-keyed speech to a packed audience of Japanese American Citizens League members and friends at the annual Berkeley JACL Installation recently at a local eatery.

Acknowledging Nikkei who contributed to his difficult 1978 and 1980 campaigns by walking precincts and coming to Sacramento, he said, "These things mean a lot when you are a candidate running as an underdog. To be an underdog can be lonely..."

Reporting on the progress of the redress effort, Matsui said, "Congress appropriated \$1.4 million for the commission to hold seven hearings in different cities across the country to determine the causes, reasons for internment and the consequences during the World War II period."

Congressman Matsui said everything seemed to be going well on the redress effort except that on Nov. 4, 1980, "We probably elected the most conservative House and Senate in many years. The interesting thing is that the 96th Congress was considered to be the most conservative; the 97th will be more conservative."

Although many Nikkei in this state and in other states across the country had spent time in the camps and should be entitled to monetary redress, Matsui said, "I hope those of you who have leadership positions will not raise expectations. I find it difficult to believe this Congress will reimburse those who were interned. I cannot see individual redress happening."

Matsui said that he did not want to be totally negative, but he said, "Think about what happened 12 months ago when the junior senator from California in January 1980 called for putting Iranians into camps as hostages."

"The conservatism of the new Congress is a definite shift to the right. Many people say to the far right. Now we are beginning a new decade."

Shifting to a more positive stance, Matsui said that the Japanese American redress effort should give us new opportunities and lend credibility to the Japanese Americans. He said, "All of you are children of immigrants. My grandparents came, 6000 miles to settle in this country. In spite of discrimination, racial

prejudice and being unable to own property they gave their children an education."

He also reminded us that the new chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Strom Thurmond "eliminated the consumer interest anti-trust committee and instituted another committee, the anti-subversive and terrorist committees."

Back in the 1940s, during the anti-Japanese period, when the Nisei were coming out of the camps and their Nisei brothers were fighting in Europe and in the Pacific for the United States Army, "The Japanese American Citizens League was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee and suffered contempt of Congress."

Matsui continued: "A few days ago was the birthday of Martin Luther King. The very first bill that I was asked to co-sponsor and with a great deal of pride was to declare Jan. 15, Martin Luther King's birthday, a national holiday. I saw Coretta King sitting in the gallery."

An electronic vote was taken and the bill was defeated by a margin in excess of 75 votes.

"The fact that the national press, TV, radio stations did not make that day a holiday shows that this country has lost some of its ideals. That is the danger I see," said Matsui.

"We're going to have to stand up and speak out for those not as fortunate as us. There are many areas in Berkeley where people are afraid to walk at midnight and unemployment is the highest in California. I don't think that poverty is eradicated. These are exactly the things to be concerned about."

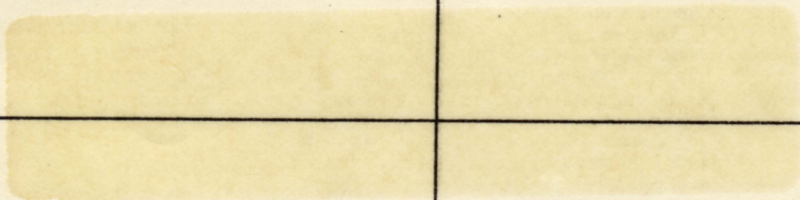
In concluding his remarks, Matsui said "It will be a very difficult year facing issues like redress..."

—JOE OYAMA

Rafa Shi...
March 6, 1981

New York Nichibei March 6, 1981

You can help in our fund-raising by submitting names of friends
& relatives and mailing them to us at, NCJAR
1428 W. Thornedale
Chicago, IL 60660



If you haven't, you must read
Michio Deguchi's

Years of Inward

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