

M I N U T E S  
SPECIAL NATIONAL BOARD MEETING  
JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

National Headquarters, San Francisco  
Sunday, March 8, 1942

Meeting was called to order at 9:15 A.M. by National Secy. Mike Masaoka.

Roll call disclosed the following attendance:

President Saburo Kido  
Vice-President Ken Matsumoto  
Executive Secy. James Sugioka  
Treasurer Hito Okada  
Natl. Secy. & Field Executive Mike Masaoka  
Past Natl. President Dr. T. T. Yatabe  
-- do -- James Sakamoto  
-- do -- Walter T. Tsukamoto  
Northern California D.C. Chairman Tom Shimasaki  
Southern California D.C. Chairman Fred M. Tayama  
Intermountain D.C. Vice-Chairman Shigeki Ushio

Guests - George Inagaki, Exec. Secy. S.C.D.C.  
George Shigekawa, on Governor Olsen's staff

BIDS FOR NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

Bids were presented by the chairman on behalf of the following chapters:

Berkeley	Big Horn Mountains
Delano	Fort Lupton
Lompoc	Mt. View
North Platte	Pasadena
San Fernando	San Jose
Santa Barbara	Stanislaus-Merced
Venice	Ventura County
West Los Angeles	Gilroy
Arizona (under special consideration)	

Mr. Tom Shimasaki moved that the above 16 Chapters be recognized by the National Board provided they pay 1942 dues and obligations; motion seconded by Mr. Fred Tayama and passed unanimously.

Mr. Fred Tayama moved that Arizona be permitted to enter into the discussions as a regular chapter, providing that they meet the National obligations, past and present; motion seconded by Ken Matsumoto and passed unanimously.

FUTURE ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITY OF JACL:

The following three-point program was presented by Mike Masaoka for discussion:

1. Maintain organization among the Japanese and Japanese-Americans for unity, such as welfare projects, etc.
2. Constantly keep in touch with the government in order that we may receive humane treatment.
3. Outside contacts necessary for public relationship.

Mr. James Sugioka moved that the JACL be continued inspite of all developments; seconded by Ken Matsumoto and passed unanimously.

Mr. Ken Matsumoto moved that the JACL be carried along three lines:

1. Home front.
2. Government front.
3. Public Relations front.

Seconded by Mr. James Sakamoto and passed unanimously.

It was moved by Mr. Ken Matsumoto the National Headquarters be moved to Salt Lake City as temporary headquarters of the JACL; seconded by Mr. James Sakamoto and passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

President Saburo Kido appointed the following:

1. Ways and means of continuing the JAOL -- Mr. George Inagaki.
2. Budget -- Mr. Susumu Togasaki.
3. Resolutions -- Dr. T. T. Yatabe.
4. Survey -- (to draft uniform questionnaires regarding real and personal property) -- Mr. Fred Tayama.

These men approved by the Board and the members of the committees were to be selected by the respective Chairmen.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS:

The nomination of the officers was referred to the Ways and Means Committee. Mr. Walter Tsukamoto suggested that extraordinary powers be given to the above committee.

WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE:

It was moved by Mr. Hito Okada that we send a representative to the East, seconded by Mr. Walter Tsukamoto and passed unanimously.

SPECIAL REPORT, GEORGE SHIGEKAWA. (ATTACHED TO GOV. OLSON'S STAFF) ON EVACUATION:

Chairman Mike Masaoka introduced George Shigekawa, representative from the Governor Olsen Staff on evacuation. He stated that the Statement of Policy from Governor Olsen will be here by Monday if not by noon today which will be presented to the Board Members. He could not obtain Statement of Policy from Governor Olsen, but obtained permission from Mr. Neustadt, Social Security Administrator, to find out the opinion of the Japanese People about establishing some common meeting grounds for both Japanese and Federal Agencies in regards to the matter of evacuation. If necessary an informational booklet will be published, giving the answers to the various questions regarding the Japanese evacuation problems. Mr. Shigekawa stated in answer to Mr. Tayama's question that the finances for this publication are already available. In Conference with Mr. Neustadt, Mr. Shigekawa obtained the following results:

- Q. Is there any possibility of getting the military zone changed?  
A. There is not a possibility in the world.

- Q. How about these people who have nothing to eat and no place to sleep?  
A. There are legal difficulties on this problem, at the present time; however, everyone is entitled to food and shelter. Beginning Monday the County Welfare Commission will have funds for the Japanese in the State of California in regard to this matter. However, Oregon and Washington will not be considered in this matter in other words, the condition will remain as heretofore. In order to carry out this plan they have suggested that we bring all Japanese groups together on this problem in order to disseminate the information and the government will thus compile data to meet its own requirements.

Mr. Shigekawa stated that he had requested Mr. W. J. Cecil, director of State Department of Agriculture, Office #1, to take an account of the Japanese who are going into other states, immediately, as a result of which the California Population Committee will work on these statistics.

The most important problem at the present time is the question of where we going, when we are going and how we are to go. Undoubtedly such questions are for the military authorities, however, the only reason why these problems have not been completed is because General DeWitt is very social minded on these problems. Owens Valley has been suggested by the Federal authorities but proved to be very unsatisfactory due to the intense heat.

In regards to the Japanese assets, Mr. Lawler has been appointed the Conservator of Japanese assets and no person can liquidate without his permission.

Mr. Shigekawa informed the Board that all social problems will be taken care by Mrs. Aaron and property problems will be taken care by Mr. Neustadt, and it is up to us to work out the details within the limits of the Federal authority.

Mr. James Sakamoto suggested that the army should get in touch with the states and have them see to it that the sentiment will not be against us, also have the Governors get in touch with the mayors and leaders of each community and work up public opinion in favor of the evacuees.

Mr. Shigekawa stated that the Government wants one organization that represents the majority of the people to work in cooperation with them. Mr. James Sakamoto stated that J.A.C.L. does reach most of the Japanese family. Outside the JACL there is no National organization. JACL is recognized by both first generation and the second generation in all communities. No other organization can do what the JACL is doing.

Before leaving, Mr. Shigekawa asked for the opinion of the Board members, representing the entire JACL, whether we are willing to concede this evacuation as a matter of military necessity and expediency, which was thoroughly understood by all. Mike Masaoka stated that the above is understood, however, before the evacuation of Japanese Americans is ordered, the military should publicly explain that the American citizens of Japanese ancestry were requested to leave certain designated areas, not because the government questions the loyalty of the group, but because military expediency requires their removal.

Mr. Walter Tsukamoto gave a word of thanks for Mr. Shigekawa's report and that we should from time to time give him information and cooperation.

DISCUSSION ON GENERAL EVACUATION PRINCIPLES:

Mr. Mike Masaoka read the evacuation problem sheet presented to the meeting by Mr. James Sakamoto, as follows:

- "1. Survey agents to go out and look for settlement sites. Would it be possible to put these men, Nisei, on the government payroll, or send them out together with agents of the Resettlement agencies?
- "2. Physical check-up for all evacuees before leaving their homes. Danger of epidemics in reception camps, possible danger to lives of aged still apparently in good health, and others due to strain, physical hardships, worry, change of habits, food and water. Suggest Army doctors be made available for free and compulsory physical check-up of all persons to be evacuated, with inoculation and vaccination if advisable.
- "3. Transportation. Trucks, special trains, private cars, caravans with government protection.
- "4. Order of evacuation. Farmers, merchants, aliens, citizens, city workers, laborers, domestics? Or by districts? Assurance and information necessary for adequate preparation.
- "5. Local anti-Japanese movements. Need for proper preparation and education in areas surrounding reception centers. Need for instructions to local authorities from federal sources.
- "6. Transfer of licenses for physicians, pharmacists, dentists, opticians and other professional men under reciprocity act between states.
- "7. Position of inter-racial marriages and children resulting thereof.
- "8. National JACL register of all Japanese. Seattle chapter has started work already. Necessary to provide clearing house for location of individuals, tracing families, distributing mail, etc. Post-war problem of delivering mail from Japan to families who have left old homes.
- "9. Property custodians.
- "10. Policy of JACL as to returning to homes after war. Should such hopes be encouraged, or should efforts be made to encourage permanent settlement in new communities.
- "11. Anti-alien land laws. Where can land be purchased?
- "12. Moratorium on debts, payments due, mortgages, insurance payments, etc. for duration of war. This aimed to protect investments of Japanese in business

properties, automobiles, to avoid foreclosures, seizure of properties for non-payment of accounts due or non-payment of taxes, cancellation of insurance, etc.

"13. Special consideration for farmers who can harvest crops by early summer. For instance, first crop in Seattle area can be harvested by early July if given assurance to go ahead with work now."

Mr. Mike Masaoka also read the statement of the National Board in regards to the evacuation, as follows:

"The stated policy of the Japanese American Citizens League regarding the problem of evacuation has been and is:

"1. We are opposed to the principle of evacuation, unless it is so ordered by the military as a national defense measure and is applied to all persons, citizens and aliens alike, indiscriminately and without reference to race, color, or creed.

"2. If the military authorities believe that national safety requires the removal of "enemy aliens" from any regions or areas, we believe that all "enemy aliens" from all countries with which the United States is now at war should be removed, and that no one group or nationality be singled out for special attention.

"3. If it becomes necessary to remove citizens from these areas or regions, as designated by the military, we believe that all citizens should be treated alike and that no single block of citizens be singled out for special consideration or attention.

"4. Even though our beliefs may not be recognized by the military and they should single out the American citizens of Japanese extraction, as they have done, for special attention, we believe that, as good American citizens, we ought to accept the word of those charged with the responsibility of national safety and that we should cooperate with them to the best of our abilities, trusting that our cooperation will inspire a reciprocal cooperation on the part of our government in the humane and reasonable treatment of our mutual problems.

"With the above thoughts in mind, we have recommended the following to the appropriate government agencies:

"1. The federal government, and the federal government alone, through its various agencies should conduct and supervise not only the actual evacuation but also the resettlement and allied problems relating to the evacuation of all Japanese from the Pacific Coast.

"2. Before the evacuation of Japanese Americans is ordered, the military authorities should publicly explain that the American citizens of Japanese ancestry were requested to leave certain designated areas not because the government questions the loyalty of the group but because military expediency requires our removal."

Mr. Mike Masaoka also gave out a brief idea of what the National has been working for in regards to evacuation. The following were mentioned:

1. Alien property Custodian should be appointed.
2. A citizen property Custodian should be appointed. \*
3. Release of all community funds.
4. Government pays all expenses on transportation, food, and shelter. People who receive such relief from Government are not obligated for such.
5. Active advisory board should be appointed.

\* Comments in regards to Citizen property custodian were heard from Nobumitsu Takahashi. He stated that if you have American friends who can be Custodians for you, give these people the power of attorney and those who have not such friends should fall back as stated above.

6. Proper housing be contemplated before moving.
  7. Family units must be preserved.
  8. Churches, organization, recreational facilities, and educational facilities should be retained at the Camp.
  9. Zones be militarized for protection of Japanese.
  10. Civilian observers be sent out to aid military liaison officers.
  11. Means be provided for the dissemination of news.
  12. Freezing or moratorium of mortgages and debts. Comments on this were that no exception be made.
  13. People to get jobs to which they have been accustomed if possible.
- Mr. Walter Tsukamoto made an announcement that citizens with jobs with proper identification from military authority may travel freely in the non-prohibited zone.
14. Medical aid and facilities, dentist and farm equipment be moved to evacuation destination as community units.
  15. Water supply adequate for housing, culinary, agricultural irrigation be assured.
  16. Electricity, gas, telephone utilities be provided wherever practical.
  17. Immediate food supply be available.
  18. Position and constructive work for National Defense was requested.
  19. Demand for allotment of farms.

Mr. Masaoka informed the National Council that the FBI requests all delegates to write today reports of actual or rumored cases of mob violence, such as lynchings, tarring and feathering, burning of Japanese schoolhouses, churches, business, homes, etc. Be as specific as possible. If causes of fire are unknown, give circumstantial or known evidence or facts. If persons have been lost "en route" to any destination, report same.

Mr. Walter Tsukamoto asked the Board to excuse him from the Monday session and permission was granted.

Mr. Masaoka also announced the request of the Federal Social Security agencies to all chapters to file written reports giving estimated number of persons and families who have left their homes to date; also approximate number by counties of destination if they remained within the state; also approximate number by states for those who left their home states.

Mr. Fred Tayama stated that in order to have some sort of a strong tie, we should impress the people that the JACL is the recognized organization and representative of the people and request them to give all information to the JACL in order that we may be of greater service to them.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.