

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Phillip H. Ginsberg, Vice Chairperson
of the American Jewish Committee,
Washington Chapter

TO: The Commission on War-Time Relocation
and Internment of Civilians

DATE AND PLACE: September 9, 1981, Seattle, Washington

I. INTRODUCTION

I appear on behalf of the Washington Chapter of the American Jewish Committee. My membership is committed to the implementation of the constitutional principals that distinguish us as a nation. The denial to any individual or group of these basic rights is an affront and a threat to all. The American Jewish Committee has met with representatives of the Japanese American Community, attended meetings concerning relocation and internment and reviewed the relevant literature.

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ERROR

We respectfully suggest that the Commission report to the Congress that the nation erred in repudiating our Constitution by the relocation and internment. Incarceration without charge and without trial is a denial of due process as well as human dignity. We urge that this Commission propose that Congress register its commitment to the Constitution and its determination that no matter how great the temptation or persuasive the rationale, our nation will never again engage in such conduct. Our society today is even more diverse than it was in 1940 and our aspirations should be, at least, as high.

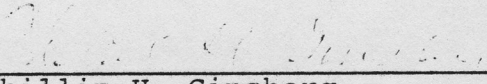
III. FORM OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although we have no doubt that effective action must be

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taken, it would be presumptuous for us to specify the mode and substance. As Commission members you are gathering an impressive array of evidence as to the consequences of our government's conduct and will undoubtedly develop a sensitivity as to the best means of tangible acknowledgement. We cannot help but be moved by the plight of senior citizens and the disruption of their lives. Similarly, in many locations there has been the destruction or impairment of a cultural heritage. Speaking personally, I would urge the Commission to carefully consider the provisions of HR 5977, introduced by Congressman Mike Lowery in 1979.

Respectfully submitted,



Phillip H. Ginsberg

PHG:lfs
cc: Mike Lowery