

TED STEVENS SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
August 16, 1984

Rachel Kawasaki, speaking as a former evacuee who spent four months at Santa Anita Assembly Center in Arcadia, California, and one year at the Amache Relocation Center in Granada, Colorado, for a total of 16 months.

Senator Stevens, I am here representing no one but myself. I belong to no organizations or political parties since I resigned from the Republican party because of this REDRESS issue and the arrogance of certain politicians in April, 1981. I am here as a citizen of the United States and as a former evacuee during World War II. I consider myself qualified to give expert testimony about the evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry from the Western Defense Zone of the United States in 1942. Because of the discourtesies and arrogance of the staff members of many politicians whom I have encountered over the past few years, I have developed a very contemptuous attitude toward all politicians. Though I may not have any degrees that would give me a Ph.D. after my name, I feel that I am a person of above average intelligence and resent someone talking down to me and others like myself as though we had less intelligence than an amoeba. I have come to the conclusion that not all this country's enemies are in foreign countries. I think there are many enemies of this country in Washington, D.C., and mayors, supervisors and city councilmen in other Municipalities. I am appalled at how ready and eager our media (T.V., newspapers and magazines) is to hear anything negative about our country. I find most politicians are also very eager to hear any and all negative garbage about the very country they are elected to serve and protect. At the present time the only politician in Washington D.C. that I would give the time of day to is Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. When I contacted his office in 1981, his staff members listened objectively and courteously to what I had to say, which is more than I can say for Former Congressman Barry Goldwater Jr.'s office, former Congressman Robert Dornan's office, Congressman Dan Lungren's office, Congressman Mervyn Dymally's office, Senator Slade Gorton's office, Congressman Ed Roybal's office, former Congressman Mike Lowry's office, Senator Paul Laxalt's office, Senator Alan Cranston's office, former Senator Sam J. Erwin Jr.'s office, former Senator Frank Church's office, Congressman Jim Wright's office, Congressman Sam Hall's office, Senator Alan Simpson's office, and HOST of others, including your office, Senator Stevens. About two months ago I called your office and talked with Pam Thompson. When I tried to discuss the relocation issue with her, she parroted a Civil Rights lecture to me and belittled me for my lack of "legal expertise" on civil rights laws. The way a politician's staff members treat the constituents of this nation tells something of the politician himself.

From my observations this past forty years there has been numerous subcommittee hearings starting in the late forties and continuing to this very day. IN BETWEEN ALL THE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS OF COURSE THERE WAS THE FARICAL STACKED COMMISSION OF 1981 WHO HAD THEIR PREDETERMINED CONCLUSIONS AND USED OUTRAGEOUS GESTAPO TACTICS TO ACHIEVE THEM; plus there were three of the commissioners sitting on that commission that had a conflict of interest: Judge William Marutani, Chairperson Joan Bernstein and Father Ishmael V. Gromoff.

I have observed that politicians and media do not always research thoroughly an issue before they write or speak out on it. Today there is nothing but a lot of rhetorical word play and semantics surrounding this REDRESS issue that happened over 40 years ago.

It angers me when the so-called intellectuals use the definitive terms "concentration camps, internment camps, incarcerated, etc."

We evacuees and/or relocatees were never interned, never incarcerated and never resided in a concentration camp because there has never been a concentration camp in the United States of America, and he who projects this is projecting a fallacy to discredit this country of ours in international eyes. The only persons that were ever interned in this country were persons who were F.B.I. suspects, mostly alien males. These individuals were detained at internment centers which were entirely different than the relocation centers. The internment centers were under the jurisdiction of the Justice Department. The relocation centers were under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority, a civilian agency. Persons at the internment centers were released to join their families at the relocation centers or to relocate inland once they were cleared by the F.B.I.

The evacuation and relocation of the Japanese communities in Washington State, Oregon, California and Western Arizona served dual objectives. (1) The United States Government was protecting the Japanese community from over-zealous patriots. (2) National security of the Western Defense Zone because there was a huge population in the Japanese community of aliens from Japan and after Pearl Harbor they became enemy aliens no matter how you look at it. Any and all persons of Japanese extraction, including aliens, could have relocated to the other forty-four-1/2 states on their own. Thousands desired to do so, and they did. Only after these thousands of evacuees ran into difficulties, rejection and adversities from the communities and states they were going to, did the centers come into existence. They were organized to assist the relocation of evacuees to find employment and housing in communities away from the Western Defense Zone that would accept us. Any person other than a minor child who chose to stay at the centers for the duration did so of their own volition. No one was forced to do anything other than evacuate

a designated area of these United States. We were not forced to stay at the centers, they were only to be a temporary way station in the process of implementing the relocation program.

I would like to say to any and all the politicians in this nation who are supporting this REDRESS issue that they are supporting an unwarranted cause and are being very unfair to the other taxpayers of this nation who have entrusted their hard earned tax money to them. The evacuees and/or relocatees have been getting government money with the help of politicians in Washington, D.C. and other Municipalities ever since 1942 with an initial \$4,000,000 loan which was granted within approximately four months after the beginning of the evacuation and relocation program. The loan was used as an initial investment in profit making Co-ops which were owned by a group of evacuees. These evacuees also sold shares to other evacuees and paid dividends on the shares. The Co-ops included general merchandise stores selling everything from greeting cards, funny books, and clothing to packaged food stuffs; dry cleaners; soy sauce factor; fish markets; barber shops; beauty shops; etc. This was some "Concentration Camp" wasn't it? Any person that has an ounce of business acumen, or shall we say "moxie", would have loved a piece of this kind of action where they had thousands of patrons at their front door and no competition. Some Project Centers had their own Bank of America branch.

The Project Center was a community within itself which was run and controlled by the evacuees. The Caucasian administrative staff was very small. The evacuees worked in all capacities throughout the centers and were paid wages. A skilled person received \$19 a month which was only \$2 a month less than a Buck Private fighting at the front received. A semi-skilled person received \$16 a month and the unskilled \$12 a month. Each individual received a clothing allowance, and at the Assembly Centers we were given free coupon books to purchase personal items at the Co-op general merchandise stores. All of this nonsense that has been propagandized about how we were rounded up at the point of guns and uprooted and herded from our homes is a lot of "hog wash"! Hundreds of thousands of other people had to leave their homes, too. Because of the prevailing conditions after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, there was not one person in this nation that was not inconvenienced in some manner. The Japanese community was not the only one who had to suffer inconveniences. Are the politicians in this nation ready to give REDRESS money to other segments of the nation who were uprooted and had to leave their homes and families at that particular time in history? (G.I. Bill notwithstanding.) I am Caucasian and it was not compulsory for me to evacuate. I did so to be with my husband and two month old daughter. From my own personal experience and knowledge, the primary concern of the United States Government was not to separate the families of the evacuees and/or relocatees. It has been propagandized that any person

with one ounce of Japanese blood had to evacuate. This is only a half truth. In the beginning mixed blood persons did have to evacuate, but by July, 1942, a mixed-blood person could ask for an exemption. This is never told to the public as many other things are never told to the public, especially about the pro-Japan element that existed in all of the Project Centers. These pro-Japan evacuees and the pro-U.S. evacuees had numerous violent riots including one at the Santa Anita Assembly Center where I resided for four months. Finally there was a segregation program implemented to separate the loyal from the disloyal evacuees. There were several thousand who refused to sign a questionnaire stating their allegiance to the United States. They were segregated and sent to a Segregation Center at Tule Lake, California. Those evacuees who refused to sign allegiance included aliens and citizens alike. The aliens wanted to be repatriated to Japan; and American citizens who renounced their American citizenship wanted to be expatriated to Japan. There was also another group of evacuees which is never mentioned. They were the draft evaders. A number of them were sent to McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary in Washington State where Gordon Hirabayashi spent some time. Should these individuals who shook their fists and thumbed their noses at the United States back in those years be given REDRESS money?

This REDRESS issue is nothing but propaganda. The politicians and the media in this nation can't see the forest for the trees, and as far as I am concerned they are being manipulated like puppets on a string. REDRESS as the advocates are calling it today is for their supposedly traumatic psychological scars. It is only another ploy to get more of the taxpayers' money, since the evacuees and/or relocatees have been paid for any and all losses, real or personal, that they incurred because of the evacuation. Public Law 886 which went into effect in 1948 paid reparations to all legitimate claims. This was the second chunk of money that was doled out to the tune of approximately \$40,000,000. The REDRESS advocates will tell you they were only paid ten cents on the dollar, but that's not true either. They were paid the difference between 1942 market value and what they received at the time of a sale, i.e., if they sold a car with a 1942 market value of \$800 for \$500, the government paid them the \$300 difference under Public Law 886. So I say they received full compensation. They did not lose one dollar.

Then there were more subcommittee hearings at the taxpayers expense. After these hearings more concessions and more money was given to the evacuees when the politicians amended Public Law 886 in 1951, and it became Public Law 116. Then again in 1954 and 1955 more subcommittee hearings were held, more concessions made, more money given. Public Law 116 was then amended and became Public Law 673. It seems that this group of REDRESS and/or reparation advocates have been given CARTE BLANCHE to

milk the taxpayers of the United States again and again on nothing but lobbied propagandized fallacies year after year. I have a complete volume of these claims that were adjudicated by the Justice Department, and some of them are so petty they are ridiculous, such as asking to be repaid for tarpaulins, bamboo fishing poles and other nonsensical items.

The general public has been told that the centers were in remote desolate areas away from everything. This is another lie which has been perpetrated. They were in rural farming areas. Many farmers and their families had been living in these areas for years. At the inland relocation centers, we were free to walk in and out of the center. Many people had their own cars at the centers. We had no military guards and our movements were not curtailed in any way. At the assembly centers, while still in the Western Defense Zone, there were military guards on the outside perimeters, but we were still able to get special permits and could leave the center to go inland at any time we wanted. The only time that the military was ever involved in the internal affairs of the centers was when they were called in to contain the rioting between the pro-Japan evacuees and the pro-U.S. evacuees. At both the assembly center and the inland relocation centers we had more than adequate hospital and educational facilities. In fact, I would say that we had better than many of the rural farm communities had then ~~and~~ possibly today. Religious services for all denominations represented were held. Every week we had movies, talent shows, arts and crafts shows, drum and bugle corps, Girl and Boy Scouts, all kinds of sports competition, and many other fun community activities. We had 4th of July parades, Labor Day parades, Christmas and Easter celebrations and many others. Again I say, "Some Concentration Camp?"

The REDRESS advocates and the politicians that support them would lead the general public to believe that all rights were suppressed and that we were locked up behind barbed wire, and try to project that it was similar to what happened to the Jewish people in Europe. Earlier in this dissertation I said word-play and semantics was playing a great role in this issue, let me say that again. The REDRESS advocates refer to themselves as survivors of the American Concentration Camps. Many of these advocates were not even born at the time of the evacuation and others were teenagers or younger at the time of the evacuation; such as Congressman Norman Mineta and Congressman Bob Matsui of California. Matsui was only a baby and Mineta a 10-year old school child. Its sickening to see Mineta choking up and almost shedding crocodile tears on T.V., when in all probability he was like every other 10-year old, going to school, playing ball and running around the project with total freedom. I would like to suggest that if Congressman Mineta does not have a Screen Actors Guild card, possibly he should get one since he is such

a great actor. Isn't it strange how Mr. Mineta and Mr. Matsui became congressmen in this terrible racist nation. Some of the people from the antagonistic racist society, as Mr. Mineta calls it, must have voted for them, because there sure are not enough votes in the Japanese community to send them to Washington. Judge Marutani, one of the Commissioners on the farcical 1981 Commission is anti-white. I said it in 1981 to his face and I say it again in 1984. John Tateishi's father who was an American citizen gave an anti-U.S. diatribe in 1942. Now Mr. Tateishi, who was only 3 years old at the time, is spreading his propaganda. In a recent book of his that was published by Random House "And Justice For All," he states: "The Japanese community was portrayed as a social nest of spies and saboteurs and yet not one Japanese American was brought to trial for disloyal activities; none were ever charged with any crime except being ethnic Japanese. I would like to ask John Tateishi "What about Tokyo Rose and Tomoya (Meatball Kawakita) both American citizens, plus there were three sisters at the Amache Center where I resided for one year that were arrested and found guilty of conspiracy to commit treason. They were sentenced to West Virginia Women's Federal Penitentiary in the Denver, Colorado District Court August 18, 1944. They also were U.S. citizens. I am leaving their names and other data out for personal reasons. Many of the REDRESS advocates claim that the evacuation came about because of racism, but they themselves are promoting racism and any politician who supports them is promoting racism too.

Everything that I have said here about all the previous money that has been paid out, the \$4,000,000 loan and etc., I can prove with documentation. Everything that I have said about the centers, their facilities, I can prove from personal pictures and etc. In closing, I say the politicians owe a duty to this nation to stop all this false propaganda about the evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry from the Western Defense Zone in 1942. The list of politicians that know that they have been paid before is very long. At the head of this list I would put Peter Rodino who is now the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. Since he was on the House Subcommittee hearings of 1954 and 1955 he knows very well that they have been paid any and everything and sometimes more than they may have had coming to them. Former Mayor Sam Yorty knows that they have been paid before. I have all these politicians words that they spoke over 30 years ago saying "Pay them - Give them what they ask". This was not only the incumbents but also the candidates vying for the incumbents' seats. How come all of these politicians who have been at all these hearing over the years are sitting back quietly such as Milton Eisenhower and Leland Barrows, who obtained the \$4,000,000 loan for the profitmaking co-ops. I hear no politicians speaking out against this GUILT TRIP BLACKMAIL called REDRESS. WHY ! ! ! ! !

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SUMMARY

1. Riots between Pro Japan and Pro U.S. evacuees which led to a segregation program, Santa Anita assembly center where I resided for 4 months had such a riot.
2. Generosity of U.S. Government to evacuees, including giving cash grants to evacuees leaving the center for jobs the Government obtained for evacuees, also a 4 million dollar government loan given a group of evacuees to start profit making Co-ops which included general merchandise stores, selling everything from greeting cards, funny books, and clothing to packaged food stuffs; dry cleaners; soy sauce factory; fish markets; barber shops; beauty shops; etc. This loan was obtained for this group by President Eisenhower's brother, Milton Eisenhower, who was the first War Relocation Authority Director, appointed by President Roosevelt. These profit making Co-ops were privately owned by the evacuees; the U.S. government did not own them. The evacuees that owned them sold shares to other evacuees and paid dividends.
3. Labor contractors that were evacuees, made much money recruiting other evacuees to harvest crops, cut timber and other types of work. i.e., Employer tells labor contractor he needs x amount of employees and he will pay labor contractor x amount per person per day. Labor contractor, recruits workers for less than the employer is paying him. Labor contractor keeps the difference for himself. There were several such labor contractors at both the assembly center and relocation center where I resided for 16 months.
4. Centers had grammar and high schools plus a student relocation program for college students.
5. The freedom we had to go approximately 18 to 20 miles to a town to shop, go to afternoon movies or just go walking to a small town about 3 to 5 miles from the center or out into the desert searching for arrowheads and/or rocks especially at the inland relocation centers was never denied us. We had no guards; our movements weren't curtailed in any way.
6. Our freedom of choice to relocate away from the center with a cash grant and other government assistance, especially with employment. We were not forced to stay at centers and if an evacuee chose to stay at the center it was of their own volition. If the evacuee was a minor child, which of course would be a U.S. citizen, the choice to stay or leave was made by the minor child's parents, not the U.S. Government.