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Friday, February 20, 1987

JACL Makes Contacts

Japan Govt. Responds to 'Jpn' Effort

Japan's Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone has praised efforts by JACL to promote "Jpn." instead of "Jap." as the abbreviation of "Japan" or "Japanese," but has stopped short of promising direct action to support the campaign.

A resolution designating "Jpn." as an official abbreviation, introduced by Rep. Mike Lowry (D-Wash.) at the urging of Seattle JACL, was passed by Congress in July. Seattle JACL International Relations Committee chair Ken Nakano, in a Dec. 15 letter to Japanese Ambassador Nobuo Matsunaga, asked that Japan's Diet pass a similar resolution, and that the Education Ministry and dictionary publishers be encouraged to use the abbreviation.

Nakano also sent a letter about the campaign to Matsunaga's American counterpart in Tokyo, Mike Mansfield.

'Not Our Language'

In a Jan. 9 reply to Nakano, Nakasone said, "I highly appreciate such a resolution as a demonstration of American conscience rooted in the ideal of democracy. I also wish to pay tribute to your commendable efforts... [which are] undoubtedly an important step toward the elimination of any social discrimination."

But, Nakasone continued, "I have to inform you that it is not in the practice of the Japanese Diet to pass a similar resolution and render judgment upon the propriety of a certain word in the English vocabulary, which is not our national language."

He expressed hope that "this congressional resolution, coupled with your ardent efforts, will sensitize Americans and Japanese alike to this issue."

In his Jan. 16 reply to Nakano, Matsunaga said, "I have requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs... to promote the recognition in Japan of the JACL's worthy efforts"

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SIGN OF THE TIMES — The target of protests from local Japanese Americans since it opened in 1984, the J.A.P.S.S. hair salon in West Hollywood, Calif., is now known as J.A.D.S.S. The salon was picketed by members of National Coalition for Redress/Reparations and Marina JACL for several weeks, and the West Hollywood City Council urged a name change in April 1986. In May the owners, whose first initials made up the acronym, agreed to change the name. Two of the owners, Shuji Kida and Peter Nagai, were from Japan.

'Hate Crimes': Fight Goes on in Congress, on Streets

Bill Seeks More Data on Crimes

WASHINGTON — A bill that would require the Department of Justice to record and publish statistics on crimes motivated by racial, religious and ethnic prejudice has been reintroduced by Rep. Barbara Kennelly (D-Conn.), announced Rep. Norman Mineta (D-Calif.) on Feb. 13.

Currently, the Justice Department's Uniform Crimes Reports record and categorize crimes reported each year, but there is no category for "hate crimes."

"Such crimes of hate leave people shocked and bewildered that something like this can even happen in America," Mineta said. "America likes to believe that it has turned the page of history on

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Asians Hurt in Two Incidents

NEW YORK — Two incidents of anti-Asian violence have been reported locally in recent weeks. In one, the accused attackers are students; in the other, they are police officers.

On Jan. 30, three male Chinese American students were beaten with fists and a cane by 10 to 15 white students near New Utrecht High School in the Bayridge area of Brooklyn.

The altercation reportedly began in a coffee shop across the street from the school when one of the white students, 16-year-old Peter Capobianco, told one of the Asian students there to get out of the way. The Asian student replied, "You could say excuse me,

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Progress Made on House, Senate Bills, LEC Reports

SAN FRANCISCO — LEC executive director Grayce Uyehara and LEC legislative chair Grant Ujifusa reported progress on both the House and Senate redress bills during the Feb. 14 JACL National Board meeting.

Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) has assured Uyehara and Ujifusa that he will move the House bill, H.R. 442, from his subcommittee to the full Judiciary Committee by April. Frank chairs the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations.

The LEC representatives further quoted Frank as saying, "Though nothing can be regarded as absolutely certain in politics, I am determined to have the bill reported out of the full Judiciary Committee and onto the House floor by summer recess in August." He stressed that supporters of the bill must take advantage of the fact that 1987 marks the bicentennial of the Constitution.

Uyehara and Ujifusa said Frank wants to hold a brief set of hearings in early spring on the payment package, but not on the WW2 internment itself. "Reasonable people agree on the facts and the merits," they quoted Frank as saying, "so I want to focus on the remedies."

"Frank, one of the most talented and effective members of Congress," said Ujifusa, "is in a position to act, and he will. Our community, which has long lived and worked on faith alone, can now expect real institutional movement within Congress."

Introduction of Senate Bill

Uyehara told the board that the number of Senate co-sponsors had climbed to 40 due to the efforts of Sen. Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii). The Senate bill has not been introduced, she said, because there is a possibility of introducing it with 51 co-sponsors.

The most important new co-sponsor, said Uyehara, is Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.), a probable presidential candidate.

Continued on next page

JACL Treasurer Predicts Massive Deficits in '87, '88

by Harry Honda

SAN FRANCISCO — A grim projection of unprecedented deficits was presented by National JACL secretary-treasurer Alan Nishi during the National Board meeting held Feb. 13-15 at the Masao W. Satow Building in Japantown.

Judging by the 1986 budget experience, it appears that 1987 will end with a \$27,012 deficit and 1988 with a much greater \$123,485 deficit, budget papers indicated.

"This is being projected on the basis of a 3 percent drop in membership revenue each year and accompanied, therefore, with a 7 percent cut in operations," Nishi, a banker by profession, declared when the 30-hour agenda called for his report.

"It means we need to boost membership," Nishi stressed. He also warned that there are some built-in losses in the 1987 budget as revised and projected.

"Let's get this message out to the chapters, too," he added.

JACL revenues are broken down into national membership (70 percent), Pacific Citizen (20 percent), and others (10 percent). PC revenue is based on advertising and non-member subscriptions.

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Hongo Offers a Poet's View of JA Experience

by J.K. Yamamoto

Garrett Hongo describes his upcoming book of poetry, *The River of Heaven*, as "a good mix of incredible romanticism and urban cynicism—just like me."

The Hawaii-born Yonsei writer grew up in Gardena, Calif., and now teaches English at University of Missouri at Columbia. He is the author of *Yellow Light*, co-author (with Lawson Inada and Alan Lau) of *The Buddha Bandits Down Highway 99* and founder of the Seattle-based Asian Exclusion Act (now known as Northwest Asian American Theatre).

He talked about his next book, which he expects to be published in early 1988, while in Los Angeles to do poetry readings last month.

River is divided into three parts, the first of which is about Hawaii. "That part of the book has to do with prewar Japanese American history," says Hongo. "A history of incredible hardship... the difficult choices they had to make, which is to say survival over loyalty, loyalty even to husbands and wives, loyalty to children."

'Self-Repression' of JAs

The second part deals with the legacy of the wartime relocation, which he considers to be one of "self-repression and censorship... within Japanese America."

"It taught us a good deal of reticence, withholding, stoicism. Ultimately, I think it might operate to strangle the culture," comments Hongo, whose grandfather was

picked up by the FBI and incarcerated during the war.

The third part is about the mix of cultures in Los Angeles. For Hongo, an important part of JA culture is "the way we had to learn how to grow up in L.A. and in Gardena, which is how to get along with Black people and Chicanos and whites, or how not to get along with them. And how we mediated our own home world with the world we ran into at school and out there on the streets."

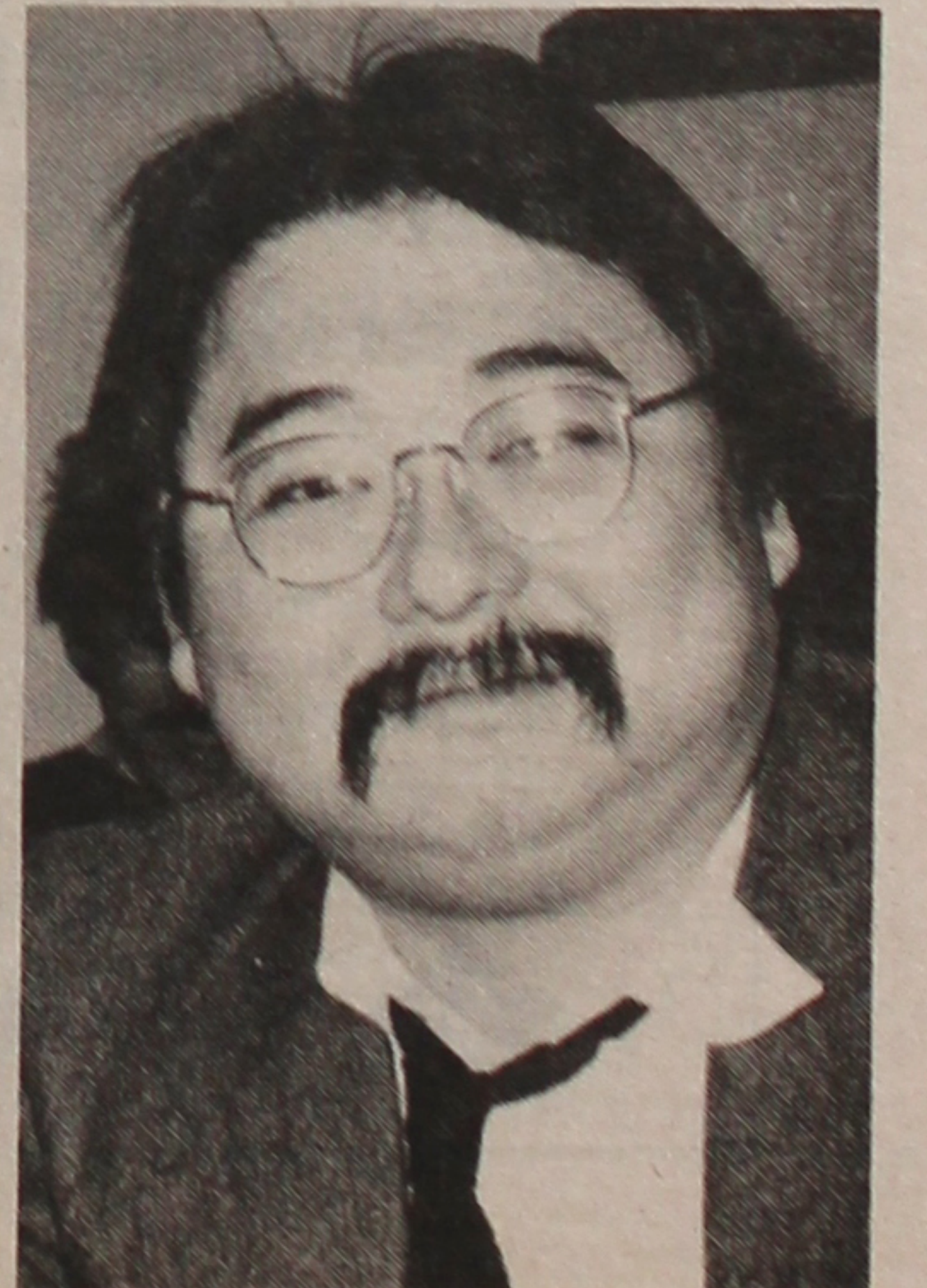
The inspiration for one of the poems came from Hongo's junior high school days. "I used to belong to a boys' glee club," he recalls. "There was this Black guy who taught me... gospel singing. He would teach us the parts and

we would sing them to warm up before class. Of course, the teacher caught us doing that one day and stopped it, but I learned a lot. It was a rich life that way."

'Too Local'

Having lived in different parts of the country, Hongo is intolerant of regional as well as ethnic prejudices. "I have a running argument with some friends of mine from Hawaii who are writers and poets. They always talk about 'local culture'... It doesn't mean anything to me. I think to some extent you can become too regional, too local... There has to be some kind of effort to make a connection with other kinds of people, not just simply to reinforce one's

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Garrett Hongo

LEC UPDATE

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Another new co-sponsor is Steven Symms (R-Idaho), considered one of the most conservative senators. Uyehara credited JACL Inter-mountain District Gov. Hid Hasegawa with persuading Symms.

Also supporting the bill are Sens. Bennett Johnston (D-La.) and Jim Sasser (D-Tenn.).

"We are beginning to see and feel genuine momentum, so we must redouble our efforts," said Uyehara, who urged JACLers to write letters of thanks to the co-sponsors. She also recommended constituent meetings with representatives and senators during the next district work period, Apr. 11-20.

Uyehara placed special emphasis on contacting members of Frank's subcommittee in the House and of the Governmental Affairs Committee in the Senate.

If the redress campaign succeeds this year, she said, "Americans of Japanese descent will be able to join in the celebration of the bi-centennial of the Constitution. Our efforts will bring to reality the ideals of the Constitution and insure that they will remain in place for all Americans."

'Break the Silence'

Violence in Bay Area Schools to Be Discussed

SAN FRANCISCO — "Violence in the Schools," the first in a series of educational programs on anti-Asian violence, will be held Feb. 24, 7 p.m., at JACL National Headquarters, 1765 Sutter St.

Sponsored by the Break the Silence Coalition, the program will focus on student, parent and school district response to the increase of violence on school campuses, the role of the criminal justice system in the issue, and what the community can do to reduce campus attacks.

Speakers will be Gary Yee, assistant vice principal at Franklin Elementary Year-Around School in Oakland; Keith Choy, director of Chinatown Youth Services; and David Kakishiba, director of Berkeley Asian Youth Center.

Future presentations are still in the planning stage. For more information, call Rachel Shigekane at (415) 982-0801.

The coalition publishes a newsletter as well as the proceedings from a conference on anti-Asian violence held last May in Berkeley. For more information on the group, call Chinese for Affirmative Action, (415) 982-0801, or Asian Law Caucus, (415) 835-1474.

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N.Y. INCIDENTS

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and I'll be happy to move," and a shoving match ensued. The Asian students soon left the restaurant to avoid trouble.

But as they left, they were followed by a group of white students, who began to throw snowballs and shout such epithets as, "You f—ing Chinese, get out of this neighborhood."

Wai Min Wong, 17, was struck on the head and neck with a cane wielded by Capobianco. Wai Fung Chan, 19, and Wing Chung Ng, 17, were assaulted by the mob, suffering numerous minor injuries.

The injured students ran into the 79th Street stop on the B line and alerted the token operator, who called the transit police and an ambulance for Wong. Transit Authority officer Vincent Valerio searched the area with Chan and Ng and managed to locate Capobianco, who was charged the next day with discrimination,

assault, and criminal possession of a weapon.

A joint investigation between the 62nd Precinct and the NYPD Bias Investigation Unit was initiated. A second suspect, Ricardo Otero, 16, was arrested Feb. 9; a third suspect, whose name was withheld because of his age, has also been arrested.

Police Brutality Alleged

A March 26 hearing has been set for four Chinese Americans accused of assault, resisting arrest, and theft of services; they, in turn, have charged the arresting officers with misconduct.

The incident took place on Jan. 2, when Hung Wong Wong of Chinatown was told by Mike Santiago, an employee of Manhattan Cable Company, that illegally connected wires had been found leading to Wong's apartment. Wong, who said he did not

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