

Responding to Coble Internment View

by Bill Tashima, President-elect

In February, Congressman Howard Coble (R-NC) made the outrageous statement that he supported President Roosevelt's decision to intern Japanese Americans during World War II. Representative Coble was responding to a suggestion that Arab Americans be similarly incarcerated. While Representative Coble disagreed that Arab Americans be interned, he asserted that the Japanese American internment was for their own protection. He further stated, "Some probably were intent on doing harm to us, just as some of these Arab-Americans are probably intent on doing harm to us."

Thus, even after a formal presidential level apology was issued to JA internees and the US Government spent billions of dollars in symbolic redress, a US Congressman cannot see the folly of his thoughts. Perhaps even more appalling is the fact that Representative Coble is the Chair of the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

We urge all JACL members and friends to write Representative Coble in protest to his recent remarks. We further urge writing your local Congressman, demanding Representative Coble rescind his subcommittee chairmanship.

National JACL has automated the letter writing procedure. Log on the JACL website at <www.jacl.org>, click on ISSUES in the left-hand column, enter your zip code, and select the issue you wish to address. You may choose a pre-written standard letter or customize the wording of your letter. Once submitted, your letter will be delivered by e-mail.

A letter sent by former Seattle JACL President Bob Sato is reprinted below. Bob's letter is direct, articulate, and moving. We hope it inspires other members to write.

Reference; AP Article, WW-II Internment called Justified:

Congressman Howard Coble, R-N.C.

I understand you head a homeland security subcommittee and during a radio call-in program on Feb. 4, 2003 on Station WKZL-FM you said you agreed with the internment of Japanese Americans during WW-II. This is an astounding and stupid remark coming from an elected official who has sworn to uphold the Constitution of the United States. Don't you know by now the true facts behind the 1942 forced removal and internment of 120,000 person of Japanese ancestry? The US Government forced men, women, infants, the infirm, even immigrants who had served in the US Armed forces

Seattle Chapter 2003 College Scholarships

by Ann Fujii Lindwall, Scholarship Committee Chair

It's that time of year again. Our chapter's Scholarship Committee is busy working on publicizing and accepting candidate applications for our three yearly scholarships.

The first is the Aki Kurose Memorial Scholarship (\$2,000) for graduating Seattle Public School seniors. This scholarship is awarded to a student best exemplifying the character and values of Aki Kurose and who will attend a Seattle Community College or Washington State public university.

The Minoru Tazuma Scholarship (\$1,000) and the Bunchiro Tamesa Scholarship (\$1,000) are awarded to a student or a JACL member that best understands the Japanese American legacy in American society.

Please help the Scholarship Committee get the word out about these scholarships. Tell your friends, relatives and neighbors about efforts in our search for young talent in Seattle and among our Japanese American community.

Scholarship details and application forms may be picked up at respective high school scholarship coordinator's offices or downloaded from the Seattle JACL Chapter website <www.jaclseattle.org>.

Please send all completed scholarship applications to:

May Namba
2324 NW 9th St.
Seattle, WA 98117

All application submissions must be postmarked or received by the committee by March 31, 2003.

Aki Sogabe: Japanese Farmers at the Pike Place Market

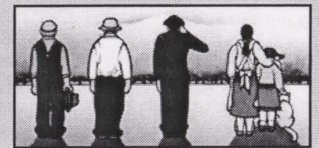
Please send me _____ sets of "Japanese Farmers at the Pike Place Market," a five-card set. I have enclosed \$15 for each set, plus a \$1.50 postage and handling fee."

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____



Please send completed form to: Seattle Chapter JACL
PO Box 18558, Seattle, WA, 98118-0558

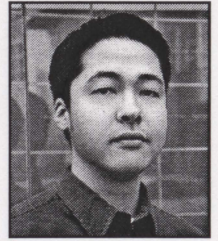
www.jaclseattle.org
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SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

JACL

President's Message

by Tatsuo M.W. Nakata, President



Having in mind an ever-growing need for continued perseverance in protecting civil rights and advocacy for equality, the Seattle JACL Board held our annual planning retreat on Saturday, February 8th. Our planning retreat gives us the opportunity to begin dialog on some very complex issues that must be looked at from a long-term perspective. A couple of notable issues that arose in preparing for the retreat and throughout the retreat were: continuous erosion of civil liberties and civil rights of all Americans, and the challenges of community work in light of a changing Nikkei population.

Among some of the items of discussion were: advocating for protection of civil rights through new methods, increasing outreach to potential new members, providing added value for current members through events like membership nights, providing input into the development of the Minidoka National Monument, strategic planning for the coming years, and increased outreach to multi-racial and multi-ethnic members of the Nikkei community.

I would like to give special thanks to Ms. Nellie Fujii Anderson for help in facilitating a constructive discussion and aiding our 2003 annual planning retreat. Nellie prepared for weeks upon weeks to ensure that this planning retreat would be a day devoted to success. She enthusiastically facilitated numerous activities that allowed our entire board to develop a common vision and a means to carry out this vision. The Seattle JACL remains eternally grateful to Nellie for starting us down the road of challenges for this year and for the years ahead. Thank you Nellie!

Our planning retreat was followed two weeks later by our first board meeting of 2003. A very special and heartfelt thank you goes to Professor Gail Nomura of the University of Washington Department of American Ethnic Studies, who made it possible for us to hold our board meeting on the university campus immediately prior to their *Day of Remembrance* program.

Meeting on campus gave the board a chance to attend the *Day of Remembrance* program and listen to the insights of Professor Roger Daniels from the University of Cincinnati. The program also included a performance by the Tsunami

Taiko of Seattle, a few words from Congressman Jay Inslee, and an update on the planning stages for the Minidoka Internment National Monument. For me personally, the *Day of Remembrance* program sparked my own thoughts on internment and the events leading up to internment. It also underscored my own personal commitment to civil rights, justice, and equality.

To monitor issues pertaining to civil rights, justice, and equality, our Seattle JACL is very fortunate to have an extremely active Civil Rights/ Anti-Discrimination Committee. This committee works tirelessly year-round and has been very proactive, taking leadership on issues that are very difficult to tackle. Under the guidance of our 2nd Vice President for Civil Rights, Ms. Joy Shigaki, the Civil Rights Committee has grown to be one of our chapter's most active committees.

We are very fortunate to have leaders like Joy who remain committed and vigilant in protecting and advocating for the American Dream for all. Devon Abdallah, Nori Catabay, Debbie Hsu, Steve Idemoto, Cathy Lowenberg, Emily Momohara, Anna Tamura, Bill Tashima, Thao Tran, and Ryan Wilson have also worked alongside Joy in helping to make our Civil Rights Committee a committee with many strengths and talents, a committee outspoken in forming partnerships with our community friends, and a committee dedicated to protecting civil rights.

Our Civil Rights/ Anti-Discrimination Committee is just one example of Seattle JACL's many working committees that help to make our organization the success that it is. I use the term "working committee" loosely – as committees are not only about work. Instead, they are a wonderful opportunity to get involved, get to know new people, and oftentimes enjoy delicious food. If you might be thinking about getting more involved with the work of Seattle JACL, or if you would like an opportunity to meet new folks, I would encourage you to consider becoming a part of a Seattle JACL committee. If this sounds like something of interest to you, please feel free to contact me or leave a message at our Seattle JACL office.

See "President" on page 3

Announcements

Thank You

For your generous donations:

Raymond Ishii
David K. Suguro
Kristine Wong

Events Calendar

Mar. 25 - Civil Rights/ Anti-Discrimination Committee Meeting, 6:30 PM, Panama Tea House.

Mar. 31 - Seattle Chapter JACL Scholarship Deadline. For application and further information, please visit: www.jaclseattle.org

May 15 - Anti-Defamation League's 60th Anniversary Celebration Dinner, Honoring Tomio Moriguchi, Four Seasons Olympic Hotel.

Newsletter sponsored in part by these generous donors:

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Pride and Shame Exhibit

by Elaine Akagi, 3rd Vice-President

Originally created in the 1970's, the Pride and Shame Exhibit is the brainchild of Tomio Moriguchi and Min Masuda. This exhibit chronicled Japanese American history in the Puget Sound, from early immigration to the 1970's. The exhibit traveled around this region for many years. By the 1980's, some of the original exhibit artifacts and photos returned to their respective owners.

Until recently, I had never seen the exhibit, but for one panel sitting in the JACL office. In 2002, a Washington Civil Liberties Educational Fund Grant awarded JACL to refurbish the exhibit. Our committee had an opportunity to see parts of the exhibit, now resting in the dungeons of Seattle Central Community College. This was possible through the kindness of Ken Matsudaira, SCCC Art Museum Curator.

The committee, consisting of Bill Tashima, Alan Yabui, Kiku Hayashi, May Namba, Arlene Oki and myself, are charged with updating and implementing a portable exhibit. We are looking for old photos of people, places and events to borrow and duplicate for this exhibit. If you have anything to contribute towards this exhibit, please contact any of our committee members.

We hope to have this exhibit up and running this spring or early summer. If you're interested in helping, please give us a call. We'll be bringing you updates periodically.

President, continued from page 2

During March, Seattle JACL was proud to be a community sponsor of Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Day. This day is planned every year by the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) and a large coalition of community supporters. Every year, APIC helps bring together over 2,000 Asian Pacific Islanders from around the state and gathers them in Olympia to speak with our legislators and advocate for issues of importance to Asian Pacific Americans. We encourage you to participate by actively maintaining contact with your legislators throughout the month and the legislative session.

In closing, I just wanted to take a minute to thank each and every one of you who took the time to read this column. If you have read through the President's Message or any part of our newsletter, then chances are you have received this newsletter as a benefit of being a member of Seattle JACL. (If you're not a member, why not become a member today?) A very special thank you goes to all of our members and supporters – for without you, there would be no Seattle JACL. You comprise the life energy of our organization and we thank you for your continued support, kindness, and passion for the community. Have a wonderful and inspired March!

Coble, continued from page 1

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during WW-I and me and my family into American Concentration Camps without charge of wrong doing or any court hearing. Seventy percent of those interned were US citizens; the others were immigrants, prohibited by law from becoming Naturalized Citizens.

President FD Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on Feb. 19, 1942 which allowed the forced removal because the Army and War Department said it was "Military Necessity". Sixty one years after the fact, you still say you agree because the Japanese Americans were an endangered species; that it wasn't safe for us to be on the streets, so for our protection we were put into internment camps. That's why the government was justified in depriving us of our freedom? That is truly an amazing explanation. Representative Coble, why didn't you go on to explain why the machine guns in the corner towers placed there to "protect us" from the violent American mobs were instead trained on us? I was 17 years old at that time but it didn't take my later service as a combat infantryman in the segregated Japanese American 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team to know which way machine guns ought to be pointed, if they're really there to protect us. You must surely know by now that the FBI and Naval Intelligence had reported in early 1942 that the Japanese American Community was overwhelmingly loyal but that these reports were suppressed when several test cases came before the US Supreme Court. I'm sure you also know about the findings of a Congressional Investigating Committee, 1980-1983, which reported that the reason for the 1942 internment of Japanese Americans was not "Military Necessity" as the Army and War Dept. claimed but was due to race prejudice, war hysteria and failure of political leadership. Based on that finding, my United States of America admitted it made a mistake, apologized and paid token redress to the survivors after President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 on August 10, 1988. This Act, the Redress Bill, vindicated the faith and trust we held in American Democracy even as we mourned the maimed, the killed in action and the immigrant parents who had waited behind the barbed wire enclosures of American Concentration Camps for us to come home from the wars.

Representative Coble, your remarks point to a national need for much more informed political leaders who are truly motivated to make America live up to the ideals the Constitution says we stand for as a Nation. I hope we are not losing the America we love and cherish because of race prejudice, war hysteria and failure of political leadership, AGAIN!

Robert S. Sato

Mission Statement: The Seattle Chapter JAACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

Chapter Board Meeting: Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S., Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Arlene Oki prior to the meeting. All are welcome.

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Article and Event Submission: Board members should submit materials to the editor (ryanminato@hotmail.com) by the Friday after the monthly board meeting. Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

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