NIKKEI FOR CIVIL RIGHTS & REDRESS
VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

present

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE 2002

HONORING THOSE WHO

AND

PREMIERE OF

STAND UP FORJUSTICE

The Ralph Lazo Story

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE PSWD

JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

JAPANESE AMERICAN CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY CENTER

ARATANI/JAPAN AMERICA THEATRE FEBRUARY 21, 2004 7 PM

About the Day of Remembrance

Day of Remembrance (DOR) commemorates February 19, 1942, the day on which President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the events leading to the mass exclusion and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. DOR programs are held annually in various cities throughout the United States. In Los Angeles, Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress (NCRR) has worked with other organizations since 1982 to sponsor the Day of Remembrance.

DOR is a time to remember what happened to Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans as a result of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership," which was the conclusion of the federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) in 1983. The findings of the CWRIC included recommendations of a presidential apology and monetary compensation to former internees and were an integral step in the movement to redress Japanese Americans, which culminated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Day of Remembrance is also a time to reflect on the lessons of the internment and how they apply to today's world. The theme of today's DOR is how each person can stand up for justice in his or her own way. As we honor the courage and commitment of organizations and individuals who have stood up for justice, we call on our own capacity to act on our inner feelings for compassion and justice for others.



HOSTS

Traci Kato-Kiriyama, performance artist/writer, is working with her partners in zero 3 to storm through the nation and tour their theatrical show, "zero 3 - Stage and Spoken Word superheroes." She also produces and curates "Tuesday Nights at the Cafe" in Little Tokyo, with the support of Blacklava and the Little Tokyo Service Center. Traci says she is honored to be a part



of this year's Day of Remembrance celebration, "as it is one of the greatest events in the J-Town and JA scene!" Her parents (extras in *Stand Up For Justice*), along with the lovely folks from NCRR, J-Town Voice, Casa Heiwa, and LTSC have been pivotal in raising her spirit, consciousness, and dedication to community - and for this, she is eternally joyful.

Marcus Toji, an actor since age 4, can currently be seen on the Disney Channel as one of the Movie Surfers and in the Disney Channel movie *Right On Track*. Other recent work includes appearances on *The West Wing*, *E.R.*, and *Boston Public*, and he will soon be a guest star on CBS's *Still Standing*. Marcus also stars in Chris Tashima's *Day of Independence*, a short film on Japanese

internment. He narrated the video *Dear Miss Breed* in the *Once Upon A Camp* series for the Japanese American National Museum. Currently, he is a student at Santa Monica City College and plans to transfer to UCLA. He is proud to be part of the short film based on the true story of Ralph Lazo and its premiere at this Day of Remembrance.





DAY OF REMEMBRANCE 2004

Welcome

Chris Aihara
Japanese American Cultural and Community Center

Hosts

Traci Kato-Kiriyama and Marcus Toji

Statement on Day of Remembrance

Richard Katsuda

Candlelighting Ceremony

Honorees

Candlelighters

In Memory of Ralph Lazo

Lazo Family

Oxnard Beet Strike

Beto Flores and Richard Katsuda

Quakers and American Friends Service Committee

Claire Gorfinkel

Fred Okrand, A.L. Wirin, Wayne Collins

Mimi Okrand

Japanese Latin Americans Struggle for Justice/Campaign for Justice

Rep. Xavier Becerra

Fred Korematsu, Univ. of Chicago and NYU Law Professors, and the

American Civil Liberties Union

Eric Greene

Immigration Rights and Korean Immigrant Workers Association

Cindy Choy

Muslim Public Affairs Council

Nader Elmakawi

In Memory of Linda Mabalot

Leslie A. Ito

In Memory of Bert Nakano

Lillian Nakano

Musical Accompaniment

by Glenn Suravech

Stand Up For Justice

John Esaki•Amy E. Kato•Janice Yen

Performance

I Can't Fool This Heart of Mine Mary Nomura, Lisa and Brittany Ishibashi

Closing

Reception in Courtyard After the Program

IN MEMORY OF RALPH LAZO (1924-1992)

Ralph Lazo was a 16-year old Mexican-Irish youth who voluntarily accompanied his Japanese American classmates to Manzanar concentration camp during World War II. Ralph, a student at Belmont High School, (near downtown Los Angeles), decided to join his friends on the Manzanar-bound train. Speaking some Japanese, he grew close to the first generation immigrant *Issei* bachelors with whom he stayed.

Bruce Kaji says of his Manzanar High School friend Ralph, "In fact, he was one of the most popular members of our class – a cheerleader, a president of the class and a mixer. We got a lot of leadership from Ralph Lazo." Ralph spent two and a half years at Manzanar. After graduating from Manzanar High, Ralph was inducted in the armed services, attended UCLA, and eventually became a counselor at Valley College.

He never lost touch with his Japanese American friends. On New Year's Day 1992, one of Ralph's Nisei friends found out about his death when she delivered some of his favorite Japanese New Year's dishes to his house. With Ralph's passing Japanese Americans lost a dear friend - one who stood by them during the trying times at Manzanar and throughout the campaign for redress.



1903 OXNARD BEET STRIKE

On February 11, 1903, 500 Japanese and 200 Mexican sugar beet workers united their two unions to form the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association or the JMLA to protest the broken promises of the Western Agricultural Contracting Corporation (WACC), the major labor contractor supplying laborers to the sugar beet growers. Workers under WACC received lower wages, were forced to pay double commissions and patronize the company store. Members of the JMLA elected Kozaburo Baba as president of the Association, which was the first important agricultural workers' union made up of different racial minority workers. The workers reached an agreement and broke the monopoly of the WACC.

However, when the JMLA's secretary, J. M. Lizarraras, applied to join the American Federation of Labor as the Sugar Beet and Farm Laborers' Union of Oxnard, he was told by AF of L President Samuel Gompers that "your union...will under no circumstance accept membership of any Chinese or Japanese." The Mexican members of the union met and directed Lizarraras to respond as follows:

"In the past, we have counciled, fought and lived on very short rations with our Japanese brothers, and toiled with them in the fields, and they have been uniformly kind and considerate. We would be false to them and to ourselves and to the cause of Unionism if we, now, accepted privileges for ourselves which are not accorded to them. We are

going to stand by men who stood by us in the long, hard fight which ended in a victory over the enemy. . .we will refuse any other kind of charter, except one which will wipe out race prejudices and recognize our fellow workers as

being as good as ourselves."

If not for this racist policy of the AF of L, farm workers of different ethnic backgrounds would have organized as one union as early as 1903. Instead, they would have to wait for Filipino and Mexican farm workers to come together in the 1960s to organize the United Farm Workers (UFW).



QUAKERS AND AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Some of the most courageous acts in support of the Japanese Americans before, during and after the internment came from the Quakers and their American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). The Quakers immediately recognized the injustice of the forced removal and incarceration of the Japanese and were one of only a handful of groups that spoke up in protest.

The AFSC worked tirelessly throughout the war in support of the Japanese Americans. They conducted letter writing campaigns and lobbied the federal government against the internment. When those efforts failed, they helped Japanese Americans sell, store or give away their belongings, transport the goods they were taking with them, and found temporary lodging when necessary. They coordinated drives to send gifts and supplies to the internees and established hostels in the Midwest and on the East Coast. At war's end, the Quakers found housing, helped clean up and repair homes that were left unattended, purchased supplies, and found jobs for the returning Japanese.

The Friends' most significant contribution to the Japanese American cause came in the formation of the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council (NJASRC) on May 29, 1942. As soon as President Roosevelt signed EO 9066, college presidents, churches,



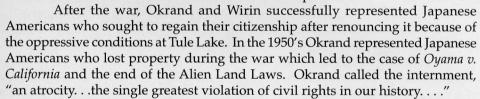
organizations such as the YWCA-YMCA, and justice-minded individuals began organizing to help the approximately 2,500 Nisei college students whose educations were abruptly halted because of their incarceration. The director of the War Relocation Authority, Milton Eisenhower, turned to Clarence Pickett of the AFSC requesting that the Quakers take over the administration of a program that would ultimately help 4,000 Nisei college students out of the camps continue their college educations.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION (ACLU)

In the midst of wartime hysteria, anti-Japanese sentiment, and the chaos of evacuation and internment, two young lawyers with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in southern California filed a lawsuit on behalf of two Japanese Americans to challenge the constitutionality of the internment. This marked the beginning of a life-long relationship that attorneys Fred Okrand and A.L. Wirin had with the Japanese American community. Unfortunately, due to pressures from within the community, the lawsuit was dropped by the

plaintiffs. For their principled position, Okrand and Wirin were victims of sneers

and insults and were called anti-American and unpatriotic.



Though retired as Legal Director of the ACLU in 1996, Okrand joined the pro-bono legal team of the Campaign for Justice which sought reparations for Japanese Latin Americans who had been kidnapped and incarcerated by the U.S. government. Through the settlement of Mochizuki v. United States, 645 of these former internees received a presidential apology and \$5000 in reparations.

A. L. Wirin represented Min Yasui's challenge of the constitutionality of the curfew against Japanese Americans, defended Nisei draft resisters, Issei

seeking United States citizenship, and several Tule Lake renunciants. In June 1943, Wirin testified at the Dies subcommittee public hearings, stating, "This evacuation was not based upon military strategy but was brought about by pressure groups of those racially prejudiced." He called for Japanese Americans to be returned to the West Coast and for an "investigation of groups that have inflamed racial prejudice." When a congressman referred to the camps as relocation centers, Wirin countered, "If they are not to be released then they are not relocation centers

but concentration camps."

Wayne Collins

According to Nisei author and activist, Michi Weglyn, Attorney Wayne Collins, "did more to correct a Democracy's mistake than any other one person." During the 1940's, Collins represented Fred Korematsu in his landmark Supreme Court case that tested the constitutionality of the internment. He represented thousands of renunciants from Tule Lake and fought for the rights of 4,948 Nisei to have their citizenship restored, which was finally won after more than 14 years.



A.L. Wirin and Fred Okrand

Collins also represented 365 Japanese Latin Americans, obtaining a court order halting their forced deportation in 1946. Historian Richard Drinnon described Collins as a "wiry, tense Irish-American. . .made the courtroom his arena for battle after battle to make the Bill of Rights apply to everybody — Communists, Nazis, non-whites, everybody — and apply in wartime as well as in peacetime."

Our heartfelt thanks go to attorneys Fred Okrand, A.L.Wirin, and Wayne Collins - for their courage, their conviction, and for standing up for justice.

JAPANESE LATIN AMERICANS STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE/ CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE

During World War II, the U.S. government orchestrated the abduction of 2,264 Japanese Latin Americans

(JLAs) from their homes and communities in Peru and 12 other countries and incarcerated them in the Crystal City internment camp in Texas. The objective of this mass kidnapping was to obtain persons to trade for Americans caught in Japanese-occupied territory. Many JLAs were used in the exchange. Not allowed to stay in the U.S. and not wanted by their former Latin American countries, most of the remaining JLAs were forced to go to Japan after the war. Some were able to remain in the U.S. as critical-need workers at the Seabrook Farms in New Jersey.

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 excluded JLAs because it was stipulated that redress recipients had to have been citizens or legal permanent resident aliens during the War. According to the U.S. government, JLAs had "illegally" entered the U.S.; therefore, they were denied redress.



Okrand, Carmen Mochizuki, Alice Nishimoto

JLAs and Japanese American redress activists, outraged by this technicality, formed the **Campaign for Justice** (CFJ), which filed a lawsuit on behalf of all Japanese Latins who were denied redress. In 1998 the lawsuit culminated in a bittersweet settlement to redress JLAs with an apology and \$5,000 in monetary compensation. Unsatisfied with this settlement, CFJ continues to fight for redress in the same amount given to Japanese Americans (\$20,000) and for the government to acknowledge the fundamental injustices suffered by Japanese Latin Americans during WWII. CFJ is working with Congressman Xavier Becerra (D-LA) to achieve not only redress equity for JLAs but redress for Japanese Americans who had also been denied payments due to other technicalities.

FRED KOREMATSU, UNIV. OF CHICAGO AND NYU LAW PROFESSORS AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

As concerns grow about the threat to our civil liberties, a number of attorneys, legal organizations and justice-minded individuals are stepping forward to challenge current government practices.

In October 2003 Fred Korematsu filed a "friend-of-the-court" brief in the U.S. Supreme Court asking the high court to review the constitutionality of prolonged executive detentions under the Bush administration's "war on terrorism." The amicus brief was filed in the cases of *Khaled Odah v. United States, Shafiq Rasul v. George W. Bush* and *Yasir Hamdi v. Donald Rumsfeld*. Each of the plaintiffs has been held without formal charges, without any fair hearing to determine "guilt" or innocence, without the assistance of counsel, and without any meaningful judicial review. Odah and Rasul are being held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and Hamdi, a U.S. citizen, is in a military brig in Virginia.

University of Chicago law professors Geoffrey Stone and David Strauss along with NYU professor Stephen Schulhofer filed the briefs on Korematsu's behalf. According to Stone, "The extreme nature of the government's position...is reminiscent of...past episodes, in which the United States government too quickly sacrificed civil liberties in the rush to accommodate overbroad claims of military necessity."

Fred Korematsu challenged the constitutionality of Executive Order 9066 more than 60 years ago and his conviction was upheld on the grounds of military necessity. It wasn't until 1983, that the U.S. District Court in San Francisco overturned Korematsu's conviction in response to a writ of coram nobis (to correct a judgment on the ground of an error of fact). Upon receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Fred said "We should be vigilant to make sure this will never happen again." Though in his mid-80's, Fred Korematsu holds true to his words, and continues to fight for others who are suffering under the government's unjust treatment.

The ACLU believes that civil liberties must be respected even in times of national emergency and pursues its mission of preserving the protections and rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Since September 11, the ACLU has been extremely active monitoring and educating the public about the USA Patriot Act. Under the Patriot Act the President can label a U.S. citizen an "enemy combatant" after which he or she can be stripped of all rights of citizenship, including the right to legal counsel and due process. The Act also gives the FBI vast powers to secretly obtain records and personal belongings of innocent people, including citizens and permanent residents.

The first legal challenge to the Patriot Act came from the ACLU, which filed a lawsuit in Detroit on behalf of 6 advocacy and community groups targeted for investigation. The Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor, Michigan, the lead plaintiff, testified that due to fear of the Patriot Act, "attendance at prayer services, educational forums and social events has substantially dropped" and donations are almost half of what they were before 2001.

In addition to litigation, the ACLU supports coalitions around the country that are working to adopt resolutions opposing the Patriot Act. Recently, a big victory was won when the Los Angeles City Council adopted such a resoluton.



IMMIGRANT RIGHTS AND KOREAN IMMIGRANT WORKERS ADVOCATES (KIWA)

From the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Alien Land Laws to the roundup of the first generation Issei right after Pearl Harbor, Japanese and Asian Americans are all too familiar with the treatment of immigrants in this country.

In 1994, Proposition 187 or the "Save Our State" initiative was on the California ballot when many people were still suffering the effects of a stiff recession. It proposed to deny services, such as education and healthcare to the undocumented and it required that teachers and administrators identify and turn away students without legal papers. Japanese Americans and other Asians marched with thousands of people of different ethnic backgrounds along Cesar Chavez Avenue supporting the rights of immigrants to live, work and learn without fear in this country. Although the proposition passed, it was challenged in the courts and pronounced unconstitutional. Proponents of the first Prop 187 are busy again fashioning a new "187" which will again deny services and

rights to immigrants.

The Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA) has dedicated itself to supporting the rights of both Korean and Latino workers in Koreatown. It has challenged restaurant owners who were cheating workers out of their pay and helped to organize the Restaurant Workers Association. When workers from the ASSI Market in Koreatown approached KIWA, a plan to unionize workers across the Korean supermarket industry was initiated and the Immigrant Workers Union was born. KIWA continues to remind us of our own history as immigrants struggling for our rights in this country.

MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) seeks "to establish a vibrant American Muslim community that will enrich American society through promoting the Islamic values of

Mercy, Justice, Peace, Human Dignity, Freedom, and Equality for all." MPAC's work involves educating Muslim and non-Muslims alike to the issues facing the American Muslim community such as the Patriot Act, hate crimes, terrorism/counter-terrorism, and the Israeli-Palestinian

dispute to name a few.

Last year the Immigration and Naturalization Service began the mandatory registration of all young men from primarily Muslim nations. MPAC stepped forward to monitor the INS to make sure the rights of those being registered were protected and it organized NCRR and others to help. MPAC is also involved in humanitarian causes such as seeking aid for the recent earthquake victims in Iran.



MPAC has reached out to establish dialogues with other Muslims groups, Christians, Jews and representatives of other faith communities and works with these groups on issues related to peace and justice. Since 2001, MPAC and NCRR have built a strong friendship through working on "Break the Fast," a dinner and cultural exchange held at Senshin Buddhist Temple. Held during the holy month of Ramadan, Break the Fast recently featured performances by Great Leap and has become more successful with each passing year.

IN MEMORY OF BERT NAKANO

Bert Nakano, NCRR's national spokesperson during the height of the redress period, was a tireless fighter for justice. As a teenager, Bert, a Hawaii native, witnessed his own family suffer devastating physical and emotional losses before, during and after camp-experiences which became the source of

his tremendous passion for redress and justice.

Reluctant at first to take on a leadership role, Bert struggled with himself to take on this responsibility and poured his heart and soul into the fight for redress reparations. He was NCRR's national spokesperson for 9 years, representing the organization at press conferences, speaking in an eloquent vet down-to-earth manner, demanding that redress and reparations be granted immediately as the Issei were passing away every day. "Justice Now! Reparations Now!" became the slogan of NCRR and Bert's leadership helped NCRR rally the grassroots of the Japanese American community to join in the struggle.



Bert urged all the redress groups to put aside their differences and join together to form a common strategy to fight for redress/reparations. Encouraging others to speak about their own experiences, he led major delegations to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress for a redress bill. Bert strongly supported other minorities in their struggles for justice and equality. Feeling that a broader coalition was needed, he eagerly joined Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition and was a Jackson delegate at the 1988 Democratic National Convention. Bert could often be found walking picket lines in support of workers rights or protesting the unfair treatment of immigrants and attacks on affirmative action. Everyone who met Bert remembers him as being warm and outgoing, enthusiastic and passionate in his beliefs. With Bert's passing on September 27, 2003, NCRR and the Japanese American community has lost a true leader, a great inspiration and most of all, a dear friend.

IN MEMORY OF LINDA MABALOT

Linda Mabalot was the executive director of Visual Communications—the nation's first Asian Pacific media arts center—for nearly two decades and was herself, a filmmaker and community activist. Since 1977, she had been a key contributor to VC's groundbreaking films and videos about Asian Pacific American history and culture. Most notably, she produced and directed Manong, one of the first documentaries about Pilipino Americans farm workers in the Central Valley. Among those featured in Manong was the late Philip Vera Cruz, legendary co-founder of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee. Linda believed wholeheartedly that through media, we could help relieve social ills and correct gross injustices by educating and sharing different points of view. Linda will be profoundly missed, not only by Asian Pacific Americans in the media arts, but by many people of diverse ethnicities whom she touched in her short, but prolific life.



SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

I Can't Fool This Heart of Mine
Performed by Brittany Ishibashi, Lisa Ishibashi and Mary Kageyama Nomura

This unique singing trio represents three generations: Brittany Ishibashi who portrays "Ruby" in *Stand Up for Justice* is the daughter of Lisa Ishibashi, who is the daughter of Mary Kageyama Nomura. Mary is the famed "Songbird of Manzanar" who, as a sixteen-year-old, was incarcerated with her family in the Manzanar concen-

tration camp during World War II, and who was widely admired for her stirring vocal renditions of popular tunes of the time.

"I Can't Fool This Heart of Mine," was written by Mary's late husband, Shi Nomura, while still confined in Manzanar. He sent it to Mary who had been released to return to Southern California. She set the words to music, recorded the song without accompaniment and sent it back to Shi in camp. They were married less than a year later.

"I Can't Fool This Heart of Mine" is performed in the film *Stand Up for Justice* by Brittany and fellow actress Azusa Oda.





NCRR FIGHTING SPİRIT AWARD

Past Recipients

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2003 J	anice `	

2002 Art Shibayama

2001 Alan Nishio

2000 Carmen Mochizuki•Alice Nishimoto• Fred Okrand

1999 Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee

1998 Michi Weglyn

1997 Linda Kawabe Consolo•Bruce Iwasaki•Gerald Sato

1996 Bill and Yuri Kochiyama

1995 Jim Saito•David Monkawa

1994 James Omura

1993 Jim Matsuoka

1992 Bert Nakano•Bernadette Nishimura•Lily Okamoto

1991 Tom Shiroishi

1990 Amy Ishi and the Uno Family

1989 Frank Emi•Reverend Paul Nakamura

In past DORs NCRR has recognized individuals who have demonstrated the courage to stand up for their rights and the rights of others. In place of the **Fighting Spirit Award**, NCRR is joining the community in honoring Ralph Lazo and others in the candlelight ceremony.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special Thanks

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Walt Louie

James Matsuoka

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Further information

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