

# NCRB BANNER

## NATIONAL COALITION FOR REDRESS/REPARATIONS

VOL. III NO. 1

January, 1984

244 South San Pedro Street Room 406  
Los Angeles, California 90012

1858 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, California 94115

### 1984 Sub-Committee Hearings on Bill HR4110

The CWRIC Hearings (1982) is now history but one that has left a deep and lasting impression upon JAs of all sectors and generations. The hearings brought to light all or its ramifications and suffice it to say that the event the issue has been well documented. A significant outcome we can all be proud of was the fighting and united spirit that was touched off by it and created a resurgence of pride and the "lets-go-for-it" attitude in our communities. As a result, throughout the ebb and flow of the post-hearings phase, the struggle has continued locally and in the Congressional arena in Washington. NCRB from the onset has always initiated working with JACL and other groups involved in the RR issue. To this end, we will continue to strive for mutual cooperation and coordination in the interest of a united community to move forward our struggle to victory. The goals of winning reparations are formidable enough, therefore, unity is all the more critical to enhance our strength as a community for the struggles ahead.

Several bills are now in Congress based on the final recommendation of the CWRIC. HR4110 "The Civil Liberties Act of 1982", introduced in the House of Representatives by House Majority Leader, Jim Wright, is scheduled for hearings in the House sub-committee sometime in April or May of this year. For the many Congressmen who have been unaware of this grave and historical incident in which 120,000 JAs were stripped of their constitutional and human rights, the hearings will provide first-hand testimonies by the victims themselves. It will be a time for us not only to attest to the evidence and the wrongdoings effected by the U.S. Government 42 years ago, it will also be a time for us to stand firm on our demands for justice and reparations.

The hearings is an important vehicle by which to maximize our impact. As part of the on-going struggle for RR, we will utilize all means to prevent the bills from getting "killed" outright, or shuffled around indefinitely as have hundreds of other bills that are introduced in Congress each year. The final outcome aside, an important lesson drawn from the 1982 hearings was that the JA community rejected a stance of passivity and silence. Mass community pressure was exerted in every possible way to maximize our influence and to give full expression to our demands. As a grass-

roots organization, we will continue to utilize "peoples power for peoples just demands". The difficulties ahead are tremendous, but with determination and organization, we can step by step define and implement what it will take to win our struggle in the various ways, and the hearings are seen as one step in that direction.

The NCRB Steering Committee has recently passed on the decision to undertake forming a contingent to represent our community at the Washington hearings. A delegation composed of NCRB representatives and community individuals will be further discussed and developed in this period throughout the regionals.

NCRB's basic position at the hearings will be to urge the passage of the bill as outlined in HR 4110. Additionally, we would like to recommend that Congressmen Lowry and Cranton's provisions for compensation to all internees be incorporated into the present bill. Secondly, the NCRB would emphasize the urgency of a speedy process of appropriations. This is because many of the Issei have already passed on and the Niseis too are getting on in years. What hollow justice if reparations are delayed to the extent the majority of the victims are no longer living to receive their due compensation.

This undertaking will ofcourse require funds for travel and other expenses. As we all know, throughout the existence of NCRB over the years, our modest budget has thrived on membership fees, donations and fundraisers. Further discussions and planning of this delegation to the hearings will take place following the Day of Remembrance program. As part of a fundraising effort, the NCRB throughout the various chapters are planning on potluck dinner-gatherings as a way to meet, mingle and talk about the upcoming hearings. We encourage everyone to join us. The details will follow shortly.

The NCRB needs your help! Your contribution towards this goal will help to realize our community's presence at the hearings this Spring. We urge all of you to join in this effort. Other ways interested groups can help would be to initiate fundraisers within your own organizations. Let's all support it and become a part of the Washington Hearings - united and strong - as exemplified at the 1982 hearings - for JUSTICE and REPARATIONS NOW!

On October 6th, the fight for redress and reparations came to Congress with the introduction of House Bill 4110 in the House of Representatives. The bill, introduced by House Majority Leader Jim Wright (D-Texas) and entitled "The Civil Rights Act of 1983," represents the culmination of years of perseverance and determination on the part of Nikkei throughout this country. Its introduction now brings us into the most crucial and difficult phase of the movement for RR: the legislative campaign.

At the time of the bills introduction 72 congressional representatives signed on as co-sponsors including: Norman Mineta (D-Ca); Robert Matsui (D-Ca); Mervyn Dymally (D-Ca); Mike Lowry (D-Wa); House Majority Whip, Tom Foley (D-Wa); Republican Hamilton Fish (NY); and Judiciary Committee Chair, Peter Rodino (D-NJ). Presently, the bill is in the Judiciary Committee and congressional hearings are expected to be held sometime in April or May of 1984.

Closely following the recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) the bill calls for the establishment of a \$1.5 billion trust fund out of which \$20,000 will be paid each surviving individual or Japanese ancestry who was either in a prohibited war zone as of December 7, 1941, or was interned as a result of E.O. 9066 or any other related government directive. According to the guidelines of the bill, the remaining balance of the trust fund is to be used for research and educational projects regarding the Camp experiences, and comparative studies of similar civil liberties abuses, to distribute the findings of the CWRIC, and for the "general welfare of the ethnic Japanese community." This trust fund is to be administered within six years of the bills passage by a Board composed of nine members selected by the President and approved by the Senate, with five of its members being Nikkei.

In addition the bill calls upon the President to pardon those convicted or violating curfew laws and military orders pertaining to the internment, and upon all government agencies to consider the findings of the CWRIC when they are petitioned by former internees for restitution.

For the Aleuts and Pribilof Islander forced from their lands during the war, the bill would establish another separate trust fund of \$5 million from which \$5,000 payments would be made to each individual member of their communities affected by the evacuation. The bill also calls for the government to rebuild Aleutian Community buildings vandalized by the U.S. armed forces during the war, and to clear away remaining wartime debris. Finally, this section of the bill would order the return of the island of Attu to Aleutian ownership.

The NCRR strongly supports HR4110 and sees it as the bill with the best chance of winning some form of R/R for Nikkei in this period. Accordingly, the NCRR will be working hard to help secure its passage. Along side of our efforts to build more grassroots support for the bill, however, we will also continue to urge for the consideration of additional points over-looked or left out of the bill. The NCRR feels that some form of payment to heirs should be made: at the minimum, sufficient funds should be allocated to pay \$20,000 to each and every individual out of the 120,000 estimated number of Nikkei interned with payments to deceased individuals paid into the trust fund, as reflected in Rep. Lowry and Sen. Cranston's bills in Congress. While this would not directly pay heirs, it would at least make the government live up to its obligation to compensate each and every Nikkei for having violated their individual constitutional rights regardless of the actual number of surviving internees. This would, in effect, make it clear to the government that it cannot "write off" those Nikkei affected by the internment who have passed away and that it must make some type of meaningful restitution in their name too. The NCRR, in addition, will urge Congress to pay the Aleutians at least the same amount in reparations (\$20,000) that Nikkei would be paid. We do this as a matter of principle: the Aleutians suffered just as greatly from the actions of the government as did the Nikkei.

In this next period, the NCRR will be planning various activities to support HR4110. We will assist in the efforts for full community participation at the congressional hearings on the bill to be held in Washington. We will be discussing the possibilities of setting up letter writing and petition campaigns. We will also send NCRR delegates to the Congressional hearings in Washington. Although the bill has initially received some strong support from prominent members of congress, the legislative campaign for RR will not be an easy or quick one, and will, on the contrary, present to us in the NCRR a great challenge to redouble our efforts to educate and activate broad sectors of our communities, and to win the support outside of the Nikkei communities needed to win justice and reparations.

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JUSTICE NOW    REPARATIONS NOW  
TAKE A STAND!

JOIN NCRR!

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## ALAMEDA COUNTY REDRESS VICTORY!!

On September 27th, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously in favor of an ordinance that would provide \$5,000 redress to seven Japanese American who lost their jobs with Alameda County due to the evacuation and internment. In addition, the ordinance provides that an oral history project will be coordinated by the County and NCRR to place an account of the employee's war-time experiences on permanent record in local libraries and schools.

We, in the NCRR, are proud of having initiated and been the moving force behind the 5-month-long campaign. From the outset, the NCRR faced stiff opposition from 3 of the 5 supervisors, as well as from right-wing organizations such as the John Birch Society and the "Americans for Historical Accuracy." In the face of this opposition and outright racism, the NCRR persisted. We continued to lobby the supervisors work with the County Administrator's office, and launched a successful letter writing and petition campaign. We received endorsements and letters of support from a broad range of groups and individuals including (among others) Alameda Buddhist Church, the United Church of Christ - No. Calif. Conference, Rep. Ron Dellums, Sen. Milton Marks, the ACLU, and American Friends Service Committee. This broad demonstration of support and consistent pressure from the public was key in turning around the final vote in favor of redress.

On Thursday evening, October 20, NCRR members and supporters were joined by several of the former county employees to celebrate our hard-won victory. Wine, appetizers and sushi were enjoyed by about 75 people at Lake Park Methodist Church. Those who came to offer their congratulations included Sup. John George, County Administrator Mel Hing, Asst. County Administrator Alfreda Rodriguez, journalists Brenda Payton and Jon Kawamoto, and attorneys Dale Minami and Don Tamaki.

(NOTE: We continue the "Alameda Victory" article with the following excerpt from Ms. Chiz Iiyama's article printed in the Pacific Citizen - 12/2/83.)

"... As an old-time JACLer, I was very impressed with the work of the NCRR, led primarily by our Sansei young people. As we gear up for our campaign for national redress, I think it's important that we go behind the short news releases and examine the elements which make up a successful operation.

Bill Sato of NCRR spoke slowly and recalled, "We started last spring by sounding out the chairperson of the Alameda Board of Supervisors about passage of an ordinance on redress. He was very sympathetic, and felt confident that the rest of the board would support it. We sent all the supervisors our material. We knew that other cities and counties, such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, had adopted similar measures...and after all, we are in the liberal East Bay...we we didn't expect any resistance."

He smiled ruefully. "So you can imagine how shocked we were to realize that the majority of the board were against our proposal which was presented at the April 17 meeting by our counsel Joseph Morozumi."

"We were surprised by the questions asked by the supervisors," stated Naomi Kubota, co-chair of NCRR. "They thought the camps were voluntary, or made statements like, 'Japanese businesses are buying out the state,' or even suggested that the evacuation was the price JAs had to pay for the perpetuation of freedom. Some of the supervisors also were concerned about the legality of giving compensation."

NCRR got letters in support of the ordinance from prominent politicians, including Rep. Ronald Dellums of Berkeley, Speaker of the Assembly Willie Brown, supervisors from San Francisco, Sacramento and San Joaquin counties, assemblymen Tom Bates and Ralph Dills, State Sen. Milton Marks, Mayor Lionel Wilson of Oakland, among others.

They obtained backing from labor unions, including the Alameda County Central Labor Council, the ILWU, and the Auto Workers Local 1364, civil rights organizations such as the National JACL, American Friends Service Committee, the ACLU, and the B'nai B'rith, Asian community organizations such as the Asian Law Caucus, East Bay Japanese for Action, Japanese Community Progressive Alliance, Chinese Progressive Assn., and Buddhist and Christian Churches.

They also met with friends in the media to encourage positive coverage in the press. They had a petition campaign in the summer and got over a thousand signatures.

They worked diligently behind the scenes with the Alameda county counsel to write an ordinance that could give redress in a legal way. The NCRR and the county worked out the final agreement after weeks of meetings. It was decided that the board of supervisors would sponsor a memorial ceremony on the Day of Remembrance in February 1984. At this time, payments will be awarded and excerpts from contributions to the oral history program will be read.

And so it went...the mood of excitement and cheer sparked the celebration and people were reluctant to leave. The party was over...but our work for national redress is only beginning. Every successful local effort contributes greatly to the momentum for the passage of a national redress bill.

Despite difficulty at the beginning, (and the National JACL Redress Committee emphasizes the importance of prior preparation), the NCRR came through with flying colors because of hard work and dedication.

And the biggest bonus of all was the outpouring of warm affection among all who worked together - Sansei, Nisei, old and young, Asians, Blacks, and Whites..."



## CORAM NOBIS VICTORY

The NCRR has always had as one of its five goals the reversal of the Korematsu Hirabayashi and Yasui Supreme Court cases. This goal was realized on November 10, 1983 when U.S. District Court Judge, Marilyn Patel, granted Korematsu's Petition for Coram Nobis, effectively overturning his earlier conviction for violating curfew and evacuation orders. (It is expected that judges in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington will render similar decisions to the Yasui and Hirabayashi petitions in early 1984.) This judgment was possible because new evidence, not known at the time of Korematsu's original trial, has since revealed that the U.S. Government knew there was no military necessity for incarcerating 120,000 people. "Military necessity" was the basis on which the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the evacuation orders in 1943.

These three cases carry with them a significant impact on the redress/reparations movement. For example, during the CWRIC Hearings in 1981, speakers opposed to redress cited these cases as justifications for the government's actions against JAs during WWII. More recently, an opposition speaker to a resolution before the Alameda County Board of Supervisors which would grant compensation to former Nikkei employees forced to leave county employment in 1942 cited the Korematsu case as upholding the evacuation and internment as legal and constitutional).

The NCRR, recognizing the implications of these cases on the RR movement, has supported the efforts of the three petitioners and the Committee to Reverse the Japanese American Wartime Cases (CRJAWC) from the beginning. NCRR regionals in Los Angeles, Gardena, San Francisco and Sacramento have contributed by sponsoring and co-sponsoring fundraising events and programs. In addition, CRJAWC speakers were invited to various NCRR programs and regional meetings as a way to update the community on its progress. Legally, the NCRR joined with the Japanese American Bar Association (JABA) in filing an Amicus Curiae (friends of the Court) brief in support of the Coram Nobis petitioners. A letter was also written to Judge Patel urging findings regarding the lack of military necessity for and unconstitutionality of the WWII evacuation orders. Finally, the NCRR helped mobilize former internees and members to attend the November 10th hearings before Judge Patel. Though there was only slightly more than one week from the time the CRJAWC approached the NCRR for help in mobilizing for the hearing, efforts were so successful that the hearing was moved from Judge Patel's courtroom to the much larger Ceremonial Courtroom. The courtroom was packed with over 200 spectators, most of whom were former internees of the concentration camps.

The CRJAWC is now preparing for the upcoming Yasui and Hirabayashi hearings. They are also trying to locate others who may have gone to court over the evacuation and internment orders, as each individual

can go through a similar process to have their conviction vacated. The CRJAWC estimates that there may be 150 - 200 other people in this situation and is encouraging those affected to come forward.

NCRR congratulates Fred Korematsu and the CRJAWC on their November 10 victory. His victory is a victory for all Japanese Americans who care about justice, and gives considerable strength to the call for REDRESS NOW!

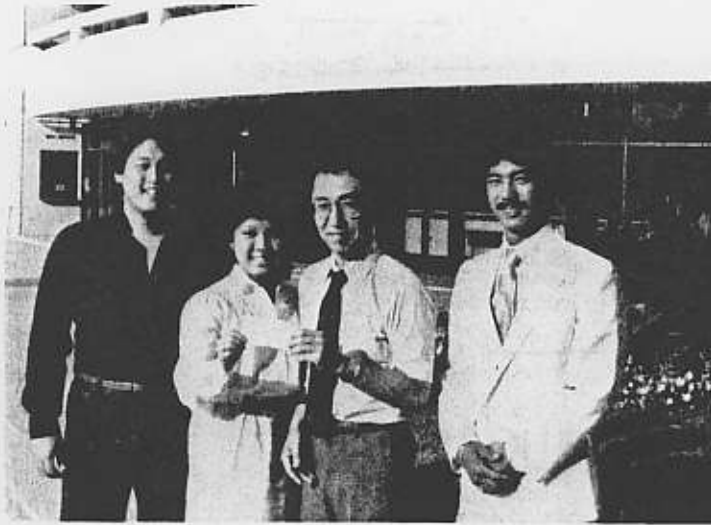
## SAN JOSE NEWS

For the last several months, the San Jose Jose Nihonmachi Outreach Committee (NOC), as a member organization of the NCRR, has been busily picking up the pace of the RR movement in the San Jose area. Working extensively with local JACL chapters, the Asian Law Alliance, Asian Americans for Community Involvement, the Wesley United Methodist Church and others, NOC initiated and helped to sponsor a series of successful community educational events including, a press conference, a community forum on the legislative campaign, and a follow-up workshop.

At a press conference held on October 7, the day after the introduction of the reparations bill into the House of Rep., NOC, along with the above mentioned local organizations, let the broader public know about the significance of HR4110 through prepared statements and interviews with the local media.

On October 9, the local community groups sponsored a highly successful educational forum on the current state of the RR movement. NOC members were quite pleased with the large turn-out and were especially excited by the significant number of people who were attending a RR program for the first time.

A follow-up workshop was held on October 23 which allowed those who had attended the forum to discuss the issue in more depth. At the workshop people were also offered the chance to practice answering questions about RR that people felt were the most commonly asked by neighbors, friends and co-workers. Another workshop was held on December 4 with training sessions on how to give presentations to community organizations regarding the RR issue and how to conduct interviews with the media. Plans for the 1984 Day of Remembrance program are under way and we are encouraging everyone to join the efforts of NOC and the other sponsoring organizations to use their newly acquired skills to help build for the February 19 Day of Remembrance event.



NCRS treasurer Jim Matsuoka cordially thanks Randy Lowe of Randy Low Insurance, Clifford Uyeda of "Rising Productions", and Danna Morinaga of NCRS for organizing a benefit dance on May 29, which raised \$1,333.00 for NCRS. Thanks also to the door prize donors and to everyone who attended.

## THANK YOU

A funding by the Pacific Southwest Synod of the Lutheran Church in America towards an educational project on the WWII Concentration Camps has enabled the NCRS to complete its slide show project to be used as a visual aide to promote awareness on the issue. We wish to thank the Rev. Paul Nakamura and the Congregation at the Lutheran Oriental Church (Torr.) for their part in making this possible.

Our special thanks also goes to Takashi Fuji and Duane Ebata of Visual Communications, Inc. for their fine skills, time and labor expended to complete this project.

In commemoration of February 19, 1942, the Day of Remembrance, the LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA is disseminating a printed statement entitled, "The 42nd Anniversary of EO 9066: Detention and Relocation of 120,000 West Coast Japanese", describing the internment process, the effects of the incarceration as well as the outcome and recommendation of the CWRIC for redress. Although we are unable to reprint the text in its entirety, we wish to share with our readers the following concluding excerpts:

### "Has the Church Spoken?"

...Also in July 1983, in response to a request from the Executive Council, the Bishop of the Church wrote to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and the House, calling upon Congress (a) to enact legislation issuing a public apology to those persons and their descendants victimized by this wartime policy and providing for appropriate public remembrances of the episode, and (b) to establish a foundation for educational and humanitarian purposes to ensure that the detention and relocations will be remembered, and so that the causes of them will be illuminated and understood, and (c) to respond to the claims of the victims of this wartime policy in such ways as respects their gravity, including payment of reparations to those Japanese Americans relocated or interned.

On Sunday, February 19, 1984

Let the commemoration of injustices to one group of persons in our midst be a significant part of our worship on that day. But let commemoration be more than mere remembering. Let us reflect on the present and future, as well. Let us search our attitudes. For attitudes are at the root of actions.

Let us follow the example of the bishop of our church in writing to the highest officials of our nation and to our own members of Congress, urging them to affirm and carry out the position of our church, and to assure that the suffering inflicted on one segment of American society not so long ago, will not be repeated.

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE ACTIVITIES

San Francisco/Bay Area: Saturday, February 18th, 3:00pm at the Christ United Presbyterian Church, 1700 Sutter St., S.F. Program with candlelight procession.

San Jose: Sunday, February 19th, 5:30pm at the San Jose Buddhist Church. Congressman Mineta to speak followed by a candlelight march to the Wesley United Methodist Church.

New York: Concerned Japanese Americans (CJA) will have a commemorative program to build support for the legislative campaign.

Los Angeles: Sunday, February 19th, 1:30pm at the Japanese American Community and Cultural Center, 244 So. San Pedro St. Speakers include Congressmen Roybal and Dymally.

San Diego: Sunday, February 19th, potluck gathering at Miku Gardens, 1260 3rd Ave., Chula Vista. Program and culture. Call 584-8938 for time and further information.

Boston: Call Peter Kiang at the Asian Am Resource Workshop (AARW) for their DOJ information. (617) 426-5313.

## 1984 Membership Drive

As we enter into the new year we are again appealing to our members to renew their memberships. There is much to do in 1984 with redress/reparations bills in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, Congressional hearings this spring, and much educational outreach yet to be done. We need your tax deductible donations. We need your help to continue the struggle for redress and reparations!

Please fill out the information below and return the entire lower half of this page to:

National Coalition for Redress/Reparations  
244 South San Pedro Street, Suite 406  
Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 620-0761

NAME (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member         | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership (\$5.00)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization Membership (\$25.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____  |  |

(Membership fees/donations help pay for such things as our mailings, educational projects, special events, etc. Members will receive newsletters and be put on our mailing list.)

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**OPTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE:**

☐ Male ☐ Female Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnic background: \_\_\_\_\_

If Nikkei, what generation? ☐ Issei ☐ Nisei ☐ Sansei ☐ Yonsei

☐ Newcomer Language: ☐ English ☐ Japanese

NCRJ  
244 South San Pedro St., 406  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Address correction  
Requested