



JANUARY 27, 1988

NCRR BANNER

NATIONAL COALITION FOR REDRESS/REPARATIONS

Redress Update

RESPONSE FROM THE WHITE HOUSE; ACTION FROM NCRR!

By John Ota

More than ever it is a crucial time for people to send their letters to President Reagan since the bill is expected to cross the President's desk sometime in late February at which time he has but 10 days to sign, ignore, or veto it.

Already, NCRR chapters have collected and sent over 7,000 letters to Reagan or his advisors as of early January.

WHITE HOUSE RESPONSE

While there had been some hopeful signs coming out of Washington, the latest indications from the White House are negative. On January 5 the S.F. Hokubei Mainichi printed a letter from Anne Higgins, special assistant to Reagan and director of correspondence, responding to Ben Takeshita's letter to the President.

Higgins raises "concerns" that two policies--the 1948 Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act and Gerald Ford's 1975 rescinding of Executive Order 9066--sufficiently redressed the internment. Higgins does not say the President has decided to veto the redress bill, but seems to point in that direction.

"These are old arguments were addressed during the Commission hearings and again last year when the Justice Department raised them in House hearings", said Bert Nakano, the national spokesperson for NCRR. "It's disappointing that the White House is raising them again, but we always knew it wasn't going to be easy to get Reagan to sign the bill."

Day of Remembrance 1988:

Forward to Justice

By Janette Umemoto

FEB 20 1988

1988 sets forth an exciting new stage for the redress movement and an added urgency for redress supporters this year to "go for broke." To help us share the tremendous impact we've had up to date and to strengthen our movement further in the road ahead towards justice, NCRR's LA Chapter and JACL (PSW) is holding this year's Day of Remembrance Program on Saturday ~~January~~ 20, 7 p.m. at the Japan American Theatre (244 S. San Pedro Street in Little Tokyo) under the theme: "Redress/Reparations - Forward to Justice". (Programs in SJ, SF and Boston will be held that weekend as well).

Being such a pivotal period in the legislative arena, we will be honored to have Congressman Robert Matsui as a featured speaker; and have Spark Matsunaga and Norman Mineta planning to attend as well.

In addition Kinnara Taiko and actors from the play "Takenochi will be conveying the spirit of the redress movement via music and theatre on the cultural front.

Admission is free; however NCRR encourages people to RSVP as soon as possible to ensure seating as the theatre has a limited capacity and is expected to fill quickly.

RSVP today to Alan Nishio: (213) 498-5148.

In response to the White House's arguments, the NCRR is now passing out new form letters addressed to President Reagan stating that the arguments posed to not pass the redress bills ("Redress Update" cont. on page 2)

("Redress Update" cont. from page 1)
are fallacious. NCRR's key strategy remains flooding the White House with massive numbers of letters from redress supporters. "This still seems the most effective way to support the bill," Nakano said. "Hopefully Reagan will not veto it, but even a veto won't stop us. We need to keep working until the bill becomes law, with or without Reagan." (If you haven't received and/or signed the new letter, or know of public events where it can be distributed please contact the NCRR.)

1948 CLAIMS ACT

As to claims made under the 1948 Claims Act, Nakano pointed out that the government did not even come close to compensating the internees for their actual losses and suffering. Only \$37 million in claims were paid, or an average of \$308 per internee, while the government's own Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians estimated total losses in property and income at between \$810 million and \$2 billion in 1983 dollars. At 5% annual inflation, those 1983 figures would be \$1 billion to \$2.6 billion today.

Nakano added, "The 1948 law also excluded claims for loss of life, injury, lost wages or business income, interrupted education, and many other losses -- and of course, damages for false imprisonment, loss of civil rights, mental suffering and psychological injury were out of the question."

As to Gerald Ford's rescinding of E.O. 9066 in 1975, Nakano said it was positive that Ford called the internment "wrong" and a "setback to fundamental American principles," but that is still far from the formal apology on behalf of the nation as called for in the redress bill. "The U.S. government has never apologized to the former internees, never broadly acknowledged that a wrong was even done. Even most opponents of monetary compensation agree the government should officially apologize for the internment."

SENATE ACTION SOON

Meanwhile, Senator Matsunaga has informed the NCRR that the Senate vote will most likely take place in early or mid-February. Matsunaga had wanted the vote to occur before the end of 1987, but the Senate was tied up with the federal budget up until recess.

Congress just reconvened on January 19. With 75 out of 100 senators cosponsoring the bill, it should pass without major problems, despite threats by some conservatives such as Jesse Helms to filibuster the bill.

MAILGRAMS NEEDED

In addition to sending in the new letters immediately, NCRR recommends redress supporters to send mailgrams to Reagan as soon as the Senate passes the bill. This would serve as a good last-minute push. To order a mailgram call 800-257-4900 (Operator 9225) and ask that message "1" or "2" be sent to the White House at a cost of \$4.50/ea.

In Memory of Hana Uno Shepard 9 Feb.1918-19 Nov.1987

By Mia Iwataki

We in NCRR would like to say a few words in memory of one of our most treasured members, Hana Uno Shepard. Hana was born in Salt Lake City to Mr. and Mrs. George Uno of Los Angeles, the 3rd of their 10 children. Along with her brother Edison Uno and her sister Amy Uno Ishi, both of whom also dedicated their lives to their community, Hana was a well known pioneer in the redress struggle.

After high school Hanna went to Japan at the bequest of her eldest brother, Buddy, who was a well known Japanese American journalist. Hana worked in the Foreign Office of the Japanese government for two years. She returned home on the last ship to the U.S. before the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Along with her family, she was interned in the concentration camp at Amache, Colorado. After camp she worked for the Federal Civil Service, in the Treasury, and later in immigration for 30 years before her retirement in 1977.

Throughout her life Hana has been active in the community, displaying a strong belief in fighting for social change through her memberships in NCRR and JACL. For instance, she flew to Washington D.C. in October, 1986 to testify before the U.S. House of Representatives at the hearings for HR442. Her pet project was the Friends of Japanese Retirement Home (on Boyle Avenue). In October, 1986, one year before

her death, she made arrangements to donate her own house to the Japanese Retirement Home.

Hana Uno Shepard will be remembered by so many whose lives she touched by her commitment to the betterment of her community. We in NCRR honor her and miss her.

Dan Lungren for State Treasurer??! Diverse Groups Unite to Fight It

By Kim Hee

On January 12, 1988 opposition forces began to testify before the Assembly Select Committee on the office of State Treasurer. Witnesses were representative of a broad based anti-Lungren coalition, Californians for a Responsible Government, composed of well over 200 organizations.

Aki Maehara, NCRR delegate to Sacramento explained that, "Asian Pacific Islanders formed the nucleus of the anti-Lungren coalition. Most Asian Americans were familiar with Lungren's position against Redress and Reparations for Japanese Americans. Because of this Asian Americans initiated the critical examination of Lungren's dismal voting record.

Lungren's consistent pattern of conservative voting spurred others to come together and Californians for a Responsible Government rapidly grew from a primarily Asian coalition to a diverse multi-ethnic coalition.

As part of the coalition Mia Iwataki, legislative chair for NCRR, testified before the committee. Glen Kitayama, another delegate from the LA NCRR chapter commented that, "I believe the opposition testimony had a large impact. It showed the members of the Assembly the strength of grassroots organizing." In fact soon after the hearings more and more members of the legislature began to question the nomination of Lungren while other public officials established positions on the Lungren nomination.

A press conference was held in LA 6 days after the hearings by Senator Diane Watson who announced her opposition. Allan Nishio, Southern California Chair of NCRR, Mayor Tom Bradley, and other community leaders were also present to take a united stand against Lungren's nomination.

The Senate hearings are scheduled to begin on February 16. As representative of NCRR, Mia Iwataki is scheduled to repeat her testimony at the Senate hearings at the request of the coalition.

At this time, NCRR is working with the coalition to further its vocal opposition. Please voice your opposition by writing or calling:

Rose Ann Vuich, Dist. 15	(209)445-5541
Alan Robbins, Dist. 20	(818)988-5894
Joseph Montoya, Dist. 26	(818)988-
Ruben Ayala, Dist. 34	(714)884-3165
Robert Presley, Dist. 36	(714)781-4111
Wadie Deddeh, Dist. 40	(619)427-7080

Heated House Debate:

VIDEO AVAILABLE

The NCRR has finished work on a 50-minute edited version of the 9/17/87 House floor debate. The video features highlights of the best and worst of the speeches made the day HR 442 passed the House, and is available for \$12 plus postage. Please make your check payable to NCRR & mail it to 1911 Bush, #1G, SF, CA 94115 or contact the LA NCRR chapter.

***** L.A. Chapter

Contact Person: Alan Nishio (213) 498-5148
Mailing Address: 244 S. San Pedro, Rm. 411
Los Angeles, CA 90012

NCRR Receives Award

Congress members Jim Wright and Mervyn Dymally presented a plaque to NCRR acknowledging the contributions made to the redress movement. At a recent luncheon honoring Jim Wright, the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Last year, as House Majority Leader, Wright was the primary sponsor of HR442. NCRR National Spokesperson Bert Nakano accepted the plaque on behalf of NCRR.

REJOIN NCRR:

Renew Your Membership

If you haven't renewed your NCRR membership for the new year, please join us! \$10 - individual, \$25 organization.



NCRS Sacramento/Anti-Lungren Delegation
 (from left to right): Mia Iwataki, Glen Kitayama, Kim Hee, Mike Yamada, and Aki
 Maehara.

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 244 So. San Pedro Street #411
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

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January 27, 1988

NEW FORM LETTER

Dear Supporter:

Recently, Ann Higgins, special assistant to the president and director of correspondence, replied to one of the form letters sent by Ben Takeshita of Richmond, Ca. urging Reagan to sign the redress bill. While Higgins did not say that Reagan will veto the bill, she did raise several concerns that the president has regarding redress. To be succinct, the feeling at the White House is that the internees of the concentration camps have already been compensated through the 1948 Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act and President Gerald Ford's rescinding of E.O. 9066 in 1976.

Enclosed, you will find two copies of a new form letter that the NCR is circulating to address the concerns expressed by special assistant Ann Higgins. One letter is for you and the other is for a friend or relative. With the bill expected to reach the president within a week of the Senate passing S1009, it is extremely urgent that these letters be signed and sent today while Reagan is still debating the issue. We must let President Reagan know immediately that redress is still valid among Japanese Americans. We have come much too far in this struggle to let Mr. Reagan off the hook this easily.

Remember, the president must get these letters as soon as possible. In fact, you and your friend/relative should sign and send them now while you still have them in your hand. Yes, it is that important. Thanks!

Redress Now! Reparations Now!

Sincerely,

Glen Ikuo Kitayama

Glen Ikuo Kitayama
Outreach Committee



(print your name)

(address)

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I strongly urge you to sign into law the Civil Liberties Act of 1987. This bill is a matter of long-overdue justice for the 120,000 Japanese Americans who were thrown into internment camps during World War II without due process.

In response to concerns about the bill expressed by your special assistant and White House director of correspondence Anne Higgins:

1) The \$37 million in evacuation claims paid in the 1940's and 1950's amounted to an average of \$308 per person and did not come close to compensating the losses resulting from the internment. The official Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), established by Congress, estimated property and income losses alone at between \$810 million and \$2 billion in 1983 dollars. Assuming 5% annual inflation since 1983, this would mean between \$1 and \$2.6 billion in 1988.

Furthermore, the 1948 law also excluded claims for loss of life, injury, lost wages or business income, interrupted education, damages for false imprisonment, loss of civil rights, mental suffering and psychological injury. If all those factors were taken into consideration, compensation several times as high as the \$20,000 in the Civil Liberties Act of 1987 would easily be justified.

2) As to President Gerald Ford's rescinding of Executive Order 9066 in 1975, I agree with him that the internment was "wrong" and a "setback to fundamental American principles," and I believe that is why an official apology, as called for in this bill, is needed. The U.S. government has never apologized to the former internees. Saying something is wrong is not the same as apologizing for it.

In the end, I believe that supporting this bill is a simple matter of upholding the principle of "liberty and justice for all," regardless of race, creed or color. I hope I can count on your support on this matter of fundamental Constitutional principle.

Sincerely,