



Not One More Block!

Residents and stakeholders in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo community are very concerned about the city's recent proposal to develop the city-owned, 10 acre northeast parcel at First and Alameda streets into a public safety complex.

The proposal includes the new headquarters for the Los Angeles Police Department, a 512-bed jail, fire station and emergency operations center, day care center, motor transport division, occupational health services division building and parking. The projects are scheduled to complete design by the end of 2003 and construction within 4 to 6 years.

For community members, the most troubling aspect of this plan is the proximity of the proposed jail to Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple located on the southeast corner of the site. Not only would the proposed complex create excessive noise, traffic congestion, and possible street closures, many people have concerns about the jail's release of criminals near the Temple's child care and senior citizen centers. Also, the project would further isolate the historic Temple from the Little Tokyo community.

Since the announcement of this project in April 2003, NCRR has participated on the Little Tokyo Community Council's Task Force in numerous meetings to develop the community's vision of what the community would like to see on that site. Any project that is developed needs to support the community's vision of Little Tokyo as 1) A Gathering Place/Destination for Japanese American community and culture, 2) A Living and Thriving downtown community, 3) A Spiritual Place for Japanese Americans throughout Southern California, and 4) A Bridge to downtown.

Task Force members raised numerous issues at the July 26 community workshop sponsored by Councilperson Jan Perry. Key issues include the consideration of the current Parker Center site for the new public safety complex, the development of First and Alameda to meet community needs and interests such as affordable housing, retail space, free or low cost public parking, recreational facilities, etc.

This is an update of events and overview of NCRR's statement that appeared on the July 25th issue of the *Rafu Shimpo*. For the full text, please refer to the *Rafu Shimpo* or go to NCRR's website: www.ncrr-la.org.

Direct your concerns to Councilperson Jan Perry at perry@council.lacity.org, Mayor James Hahn at MayorHahn@mayor.lacity.org or write to the mayor or any councilperson at 200 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. You may sign an online petition at <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/LAJtown/>.

Let's Continue the Struggle Against Coble—There's a Lot at Stake! By June Hibino

It has been 6 months since Congressman Howard Coble (R-N.C.) made his statements supporting the government's decision to put Japanese Americans into internment camps during World War II. Since then many groups have denounced Coble's statements and called for him to step down as Chair of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security. These groups include the Japanese American Citizens League, National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, NCRR, the Muslim Public Affairs Council and the NAACP. The Congressional minority caucuses (Asian Pacific American, Black and Hispanic) also called for Coble's resignation, as did the California legislature. Even students at Coble's alma

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SUMMER ACTIVIST TRAINING 2003: TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY

By Kathy Nishimoto Masaoka

Another successful training of 20 young Asian Pacific Islander activists was held at the end of June. The Summer Activist



SAT Class of 2003. Photo courtesy of www.SATAumni.org.

Training is run on a shoestring budget with support from the five sponsoring organizations as well as from former SAT participants. This year's SAT was coordinated by SAT 2002 graduates, David La and Winnie Leh and was led by trainers Kimi Lee and former SAT participants, Peter Gee, Kei Nagao and Kimberly Ta. The three and half day training concluded with a direct action at the ASSI Marker and a sushi restaurant owned by the same owner of Forever 21. These young Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese and South Asian activists coming from as far as New York will take the skills from the training back to their campuses as well as to their communities.

SAVE THE DATE!

You are cordially invited to support the Judy Nishimoto Ota Youth Internship by attending a fundraiser on August 23, 2003 from 4PM to 7PM in the Union Center for the Arts Courtyard. The program includes a Cuban dinner, music and entertainment by Nobuko Miyamoto of Great Leap. The cost of the dinner program is \$35 and the proceeds go to funding a project/intern at the Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Center. For more information, please call (323) 223-3201. To make reservations or to donate please send checks (made out to the Little Tokyo Service Center CDC) to Suzy Katsuda, 3639 Latrobe Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90031.

Judy was a life member and supporter of NCRR who lent her home for many fundraisers. Her contact with the Cuban Japanese enabled the NCRR delegation in 2001 to learn and exchange with the Japanese in Havana and on the Island of Youth. Her contributions to the Little Tokyo community also include work with the Little Tokyo Peoples Rights Organization and the Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Corporation.

*****ALERT*****

If you wish to continue to receive our newsletter "Banner", please return this tear-off:

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Email _____

If you would like to support our community work and become a member, please join for \$30/year (\$15/year for students and seniors) with the tear-off information above and send to:

Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress
(NCRR)
231 E. 3rd Street G104
Los Angeles, Calif. 90013

We are a 501 (c) organization. Please ask for a receipt.

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mater, Guilford College, criticized Coble's statements, which resulted in him withdrawing as this year's commencement speaker.

Yet despite this opposition, Howard Coble, a staunch opponent of redress in 1988, still sits as Chair of this important committee and refuses to meet with critics, whether they are Asian Pacific Congressmen or the JACL. And the Administration and Congressional leadership have backed Coble through their utter silence. Many have asked how is it that Trent Lott's statements longing for the old days of segregation elicited a firestorm of criticism forcing him to resign as Senate majority leader, yet Howard Coble's statements supporting the internment camps were met with only silence on the part of Congress and the Administration?

CONCENTRATION CAMPS IN THE FUTURE?

The Committee chaired by Coble is responsible for congressional oversight of the Department of Homeland Security. Given the actions of the Administration, many rightfully fear that civil liberties will be trampled on in the name of "national security." Already, the Patriot Act, which was rushed through Congress after 9/11, has taken away many of our rights. For example, the government now has much broader surveillance powers and can define as a "terrorist" someone who is engaging in his or her constitutional rights of freedom of speech and assembly, such as participating in mass demonstrations and protests. He or she can be held without charges, denied bail and deprived of legal counsel. A citizen can also be branded an "enemy combatant" and stripped of his or her citizenship and denied all legal rights.

But what do Coble's statements have to do with this broader attack on our civil liberties? The fact that there has been NO criticism of his statements by the Administration, Attorney General John Ashcroft, and Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, indicates that the Administration tacitly supports his statements. One conclusion that can be drawn is that the Administration and the Justice Department want to leave open the option of incarcerating those it deems "terrorists" or "enemy combatants" in some form of concentration camp.

WHAT IS AT STAKE

Getting Coble to resign will be a real uphill battle. But it's a battle worth fighting. What is at stake is the safeguarding of our true history - both the reality of what happened during the camps and the truth that was finally revealed during the decade long battle for redress/reparations in the 1980s. To preserve our community's hard-fought gains - a formal apology, \$20,000 reparations per internee, and a recognition that the camps were due to racism, wartime hysteria and a failure of political leadership is so important. This attempt to reverse the findings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians only 15 years after the signing of the Civil Liberties Act must be challenged by our community. It's for the sake of the Issei and Nisei who were finally vindicated, the younger generations who should not have to hear that the camps were "for our own good," and also for the sake of those who may be the next targets - Muslim Americans, Arab Americans and South Asians.

Yes, Japanese Americans are a relatively small minority. But we have a proud history of struggle for our rights. And there are many groups and individuals who are as outraged about Coble's statements as we are and who can be counted on for support.

NCRR will host a meeting of those interested in discussing ways to continue the struggle. Please come and share your ideas!

Meeting Date: Saturday, August 23, 2003

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Japanese American Cultural & Community Center
244 S. San Pedro Ave., LA

For more information, contact NCRR at (213) 680-3484 or visit NCRR at www.ncrr-la.org