

Rafu 7/19/77

# Agenda for CWRIC Hearings Told

## Former Gov't. Officials, Hirabayashi Masaoka Set to Speak

Government officials past and present, representatives of national organizations calling for redress for Japanese Americans imprisoned in American concentration camps during World War II, legal organizations and other community figures will testify at the opening two days of hearings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in Washington, D.C., July 14 and 16 in the Russell Senate Caucus Room. It was announced today by CWRIC staff member Cheryl Yamamoto.

Following opening statements from commission members and other dignitaries expected to attend, the first-day of the historic proceedings will begin with statements from three men who held key positions with government agencies in 1942—a period during which the incarceration of Japanese Americans was justified and implemented.

Members of President Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration scheduled to testify, according to Yamamoto, are James Rowe, who was an assistant to Attorney General Francis Biddle; Leland Barrows, former assistant director of administrative management of the War Relocation Authority and Abe Fortas, who was undersecretary of Department of the Interior under Secretary Harold L. Ickes.

Statements from the current secretaries of the Justice, Interior and State Departments also will be read into the commission's opening day record, said Yamamoto. In addition, Fred Beck, from the Center on Military History, will testify on behalf of the Department of Defense.

Following the testimony of the government officials, two Japanese Americans who figure heavily in the history of the Nikkei camp experience—Dr. Gordon Hirabayashi and Mike Masaoka—will address the nine-member commission.

Dr. Hirabayashi of Seattle

sought to challenge the military exclusion and curfew orders. His historic cases eventually was argued unsuccessfully before the U.S. Supreme Court. Masaoka, a longtime Washington, D.C. consultant, served as field secretary of the Japanese American Citizens League, had close contact with government officials and is considered by many a controversial figure for his action during the war camp years.

Also scheduled to issue statements to the commission are Gen. Mark Clark (U.S. Army ret.), who headed up the highly-decorated Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team and Col. Karl Bendetsen (U.S. Army ret.), a WWII military official who is said to have had much influence in the methods of means of Japanese America's incarceration. Both Clark and Bendetsen will have their statements read to the CWRIC. Clark is said to be in poor health, while Bendetsen is reportedly out of town.

The second day of the Washington, D.C. hearings will see representatives of national Japanese American organizations testifying before the commission. Representatives of the Japanese American Citizens League, National Council for Japanese American Redress and the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations are scheduled to appear before the commission, according to Yamamoto, a Hawaii-born Sansei who serves as liaison between the CWRIC chairwoman Joan Z. Bernstein and the commission staff.

Dr. James Tsujimura and evacuation order challenger Minoru Yasui will speak on behalf of the JACL, the chief proponents of the formation of the commission. Chicago-based redress activist William Hohri will testify for NCJAR, a group moving ahead with a class-action lawsuit against the United States government for the wartime imprisonment. Los Angeles Nisei Bert Nakano will deliver the testimony of the community-based NCRR.

Next, a panel of legal organizations will issue statements. San Francisco attorney Dennis Hayashi will speak for the Bay Area Attorney for Redress, while Carole Morita will testify on behalf of the California State

Bar Association's redress subcommittee. Also set to deliver testimony are representatives of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund and the Asian/Pacific American Bar Association.

Major national organizations scheduled to speak to the issue of Nikkei redress include the American Civil Liberties Union, which will be represented by its national chairperson Edward Ennis; the American Friends Service Committee (Louis Scheider, executive secretary); Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (Ralph Neas) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense and Education Fund (Jack Greenberg, director-counsel).

Individuals placed on the second-day hearing agenda include Lillian Baker, of the Americans for Historical Accuracy; Dwight Chuman, of **The Rafu Shimpo**; Yuri Kochiyama, Tom Kometani, Nobu Miyoshi, Pat Okura, Paul Sakai and Kinzo Yamamoto.

Following the hearings in Washington, D.C. the CWRIC will convene regional hearings in Los Angeles on Aug. 4, 5 and 6; San Francisco, Aug. 11, 12 and 13; Seattle, Sept. 9, 10 and 11; Anchorage, Alaska, Sept. 15; Aleutian Islands, Unalaska, Sept. 17; Pribilof Islands, St. Paul, Sept. 19; and Chicago, Sept. 22 and 23.

The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, created by Congress last summer, will examine the circumstances surrounding the World War II displacement and imprisonment of Japanese Americans and permanent resident aliens of Japanese and Aleut ancestry. The panel is ordered by Congress to compile its findings in a report and to recommend "appropriate remedies" for any wrongdoings it uncovers during the course of its investigation.

For further details on the activities of the CWRIC, write or call: The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, 726 Jackson Place N.W., Suite 2020, Washington, D.C. 20506; (202) 395-7390.

—CECIL SUZUKI

## Obituarie

### JUN TETSU YAMADA

Funeral services for Jun Tetsu Yamada, 24 years old, son of...