

REDRESS

ORA Announces Two New Eligibility Categories for WWII Internees

About 75 Japanese Americans who were previously deemed ineligible for redress will get paid.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of Justice officially announced yesterday that redress payments will be made to approximately 75 Japanese Americans born in World War II internment camps to mothers who "voluntarily entered" the camps or to those who accompanied their mothers into the camps as children.

Compensation payments of \$20,000 each were previously made to 75,000 Japanese Americans. But the 75 individuals who entered the camps voluntarily were initially denied compensation because they had not been forcibly interned.

The Office of Redress Administration (ORA) declared the claimants were eligible for payment on the basis that their liberty had been unlawfully constrained. It ruled that despite their voluntary entry into the camps, the claimants were not

free to leave without written permission, and, therefore, that they were eligible for compensation under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

"In essence, we have found that these persons, similar to other compensable internees, were confined in camp and could not leave without obtaining the permission of authorities," said James P. Turner, acting assistant attorney general of the Civil Rights Division.

ORA Administrator Paul Suddes said eligible individuals will be notified of ORA's decision and they could receive payments in October 1993, pending confirmation of their identities.

ORA said these persons previously were ruled ineligible or potentially ineligible for redress payments because they were born to so-called "voluntary entrants." A description the War Relocation Authority used to define those who petitioned to enter camp permanently or who left camp, then reentered permanently. In most cases, they were women who returned to give birth or to join incarcerated family members.

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The Justice Department has reversed its decision on "baby internees"—children born in camp or brought into camp—who were de-

children of Naval Language School Personnel, Hawaii evacuees, and Phoenix-Glendale residents.

"NCRRC feels that the 1988 Civil Liberties Act and its 1992 amendment authorizes the ORA to give the benefit of the doubt and exercise liberal judgement," said Kay Ochi, NCRRC president. "The majority of the denials fall well within the law and amendment."

Furthermore Ochi said that NCRRC is simply trying to seek administrative remedies and do not want to go outside of the Justice Department or seek new legislation.

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Many of the 2,200 people who have been denied redress are appealing their cases. One such individual was a child whose family left the West Coast before the evacuation order.

Among the approximately 10 categories still denied redress are the Japanese Peruvians, the chil-

dren of Naval Language School Personnel, Hawaii evacuees, and Phoenix-Glendale residents.

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Furthermore Ochi said that NCRR is simply trying to seek administrative remedies and do not want to go outside of the Justice Department or seek new legislation.

"However, we do expect the Justice Department to do more research and investigation into all of these cases," Ochi added. "The burden of the proof should not rest solely on the applicant."

The Sept. 11 event will include a slide presentation, discussion and question and answer session.

NCRR representatives to Washington D.C. included Ochi; Miya Iwataki, legislative chair; and David Monkawa, director.

For more information, call NCRR at (213) 680-3484.