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Status of Pending Redress Cases to be Discussed

Report on Campaign for Justice's trip to Washington will also be given Dec. 5.

An update on the current status of more than 1,200 pending redress cases will be discussed at a community meeting on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 1 p.m., at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC), second floor, conference room C, 244 S. San Pedro St., in Little Tokyo.

Fred Okrand, Robin Toma and Christopher Prince, attorneys for *Mochizuki v. United States* and the *National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRR)* and *Joe M. Suzuki v. the United States*, will lead the discuss.

A report on the Campaign for Justice's delegation to Washington, D.C., last week will also be given.

We urge community members to attend this meeting," said Richard Katsuda, president of NCRR. "Even though the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 ended on Aug. 10, the redress cases of over 470 Japanese Americans and 730 Japanese Latin Americans are still pending.

And according to the Office of Redress Administration, there is not enough money to pay them all," Katsuda said.

NCRR discovered that the Civil Liberties Act had language mandating that the government invest the redress funds at an interest rate of at least 5 percent. However, except for a short period of time this year, the government did not.

There would not be this shortfall in redress funds had the government invested properly. In addition, the government could have had the entire \$50 million originally intended by Congress for the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund to distribute for education and research. Instead, the government appropriated only \$5 million. That's why NCRR filed our lawsuit. The community deserves answers," Katsuda said.

Okrand, Toma and Prince will discuss the relationship between the two lawsuits and the attorney's recent request for postponement of the Nov. 17 fairness hearing on the Mochizuki settlement offer. The hearing is now slated for Jan. 7, 1999, in Washington, D.C.

In June, the U.S. offered an apology and \$5,000 to Japanese Latin Americans as settlement of the Mochizuki lawsuit. However, by the beginning of November, it was projected by the Department of Justice that remaining redress funds of \$3.62 million would not compensate the majority of former internees.

The attorneys for Mochizuki et.al. requested the delay on the final approval of the settlement until after the Dec. 18 hearing on the NCRR and Suzuki lawsuits.

"Had the funds been invested, there would have been enough in the redress fund for much more than \$5 million for education grants and no question of funds to all redress payments. We hope that the government will rectify the situation," Katsuda said.

For more information, call NCRR at (213) 680-3484 or Campaign for Justice at (310) 473-6134.