

December, 1987

Editor: Sam Honda

Redress Update....from the Pacific Citizen
November 13, 1987

Proof of Internment May Be Needed

LOS ANGELES — If President Reagan does not veto the redress legislation now pending in the Senate, Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens interned in relocation camps during WW2 will receive \$20,000 each in compensation.

An article in the *Kashu Mainichi* notes that people may write to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. to officially establish that they were interned. It is suggested that it would be wise to do this before the redress legislation becomes law.

If the bill is signed, the archives office will probably be swamped with requests and responses may be delayed.

Former internees should send their name, birthdate, place of residence before internment and name of the camp or camps to which they were sent. The archives will send notification of the dates they were interned.

Write to: General Archives Division, Nat'l Archives and Record Service, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C. 20409.

There will be ample time to get this verification if redress becomes law. According to the payment schedule, first payment will be made in 1989. My guess is that the payment plan will be pushed another year to 1990. Eligible individual includes Issei who were permanent resident alien and payments will be made to the oldest first. As of this date, December, 1987, The Redress bill has not been voted on in the senate. If you have any question, please call me on 429-3410.

Many thanks for sending me copies of the letters from our congressmen. I have not received a letter from Arlan Stangeland in over 6 month. If anyone have received a reply from him, please send me a copy of his letter. I realize he voted against our redress bill.

And....thank you for sending me copies of your letters to our congressmen. Some of your letters were pretty strong and that is good. Everyone has their own opinion on they feel about redress. That is one of the reasons I don't like to send out form letters. When congresspersons receive letters all with the exact same wording, he may be in doubt if you really are for redress. Certainly, you don't have strong feeling towards this bill.

Senate Redress Bill s.1009 in on hold because of the stock market crash, deficit, whatever..... You & I know, redress for violation of our constitution has nothing to do with the deficit. Since Senator Spark Matsunaga spearheaded this legislation and in his opinion this is not the time to debate this issue, it has been placed on hold.

Our momentum was going great. House of Representative passing HR-442 and events in Washington D.C.the opening of the Japanese American experience exhibit at the Smithsonian.....all of a sudden, Stopped! on hold! Just like our Minnesota Vikings. An offensive drive from their own 20 yards and getting within 10 yards of the goal line.... stopped! Ended with an interception in the end zone. Our Vikings always seems to re-gain their momentum. Hopefully, our redress bill can accomplish what Twins have accomplished. December 16th will end the 1st half of the 100th congress. 2nd half is a new ball game. I hope whatever needs to be picked up will pick up so our redress bill will again gain the momentum it had in September.

We must continue to write to our senators. Since the House passed HR-442, our senators have been receiving a lot of letters opposing this issue. Please write.....especially to those who have not written letters. Your letters will be considered as important as those opposing the bill.

Senator Dave Durenberger
154 Russell Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Senator Rudy Boschwitz
506 Hart Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

PC Holiday Issue One Liner. If you have not sent in your check, please send \$5.00 payable to TC JAOL and mail it to Min Tsuchimochi 1654 Melrose Ave. St. Louis Park, MN 55426

"The Constitution and Democratic Ideals"

By Sen. Spark Matsunaga

(Hawaii's Democratic Sen. Spark Matsunaga was the keynote speaker last October 1 at the "Japanese Americans and the U.S. Constitution" Bicentennial observance. The topic of his address at 10:15 a.m. on the steps of the nation's capitol was "The Constitution and Democratic Ideals". Here is a condensed version of Senator Matsunaga's speech in Washington, D.C.)

Those of us of Japanese ancestry of my generation, who learned about the United States Constitution in the public schools before World War II, know full well that its "Guaranteed Rights" can be suspended by the government for minority groups - in the name of national security. That experience of evacuation and incarceration in American-style concentration camps demonstrated for us the need for continued vigilance to

ensure individual liberty guaranteed by the constitution.

Our Constitution was designed as a charter for a nation born in revolutionary strife -- and, indeed, in revolutionary thought: the belief expressed in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights." It was a revolutionary idea, even though it had previously found

expression in many cultures over the ages. But the most remarkable thing about the founders of our country was that they succeeded in actually setting up a government based upon that belief, under which people could live in freedom and dignity. They prepared the "political soil" in which ideas that had been in existence for centuries could actually take root and grow.

They did so by the furrows laid out in that 200-year-old "consensus statement" which Americans have followed ever since: a government structure wherein the powers of government are circumscribed by the rights of the people; a nation, born in revolution, which would achieve justice and domestic tranquility, the general welfare and the blessings of individual liberty for its governed.

How was this unprecedented feat accomplished? By the acquiescence on the part of our founders to be ruled by law and not by men. They structured a government in accordance with provisions of a written Constitution and subject to its structures.

Their accomplishment was quickly recognized elsewhere in the world. The appeal of our national charter was readily apparent. This remarkable

document constituted a blueprint not only for a government but for a political way of life. It served as a firm, unshakable foundation as our country pushed westward and grew to become a nation of immigrants.

This is why we Americans of Japanese ancestry are here on these Capitol steps today. We are gathered to commemorate our own experience in "the cradle of liberty" with that of our fellow citizens on this Bicentennial observance of the world's first written Constitution. This is what the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History has endeavored to express in its new exhibit opening today entitled: "A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans And The United States Constitution.."

The moral of the Japanese American story for this Bicentennial is that the founding fathers of the Constitution were not merely establishing a government, they were establishing a set of ideals -- later expressed in the Bill of Rights -- for citizens to strive to achieve in working toward "A More Perfect Union."

From our country's earliest days the United States has been viewed as a model for democracy, a beacon of hope to the world at large. A dispassionate reading

of the record shows the light of that beacon has, over two centuries, both waxed and waned. Such a role has given periodic rise to the call for extending the "human rights" expressed in the amended Constitution to the realm of foreign policy -- to determine how we judge and treat other nations. Again, as with the Constitution itself, there is no agreement among us as to the applicability of such ideals to day-to-day international relations.

And yet, as with the Constitution, perhaps there is a core consensus among us on this concept to this extent: President John F. Kennedy in his memorable 1963 address at American University asked, "Is not peace, in the last analysis, basically a matter of human rights?" Surely all Americans can agree that the answer to that question is a resounding "yes".

As we have come to accept the proposition of the founding fathers that all men are, indeed, created equal, we have come to fulfill the ideals represented by that proposition. It has taken awhile, of course -- all of two centuries. And until the when international tranquility is more fully achieved, we still have much to do in forming both a more perfect union and a better, peaceful world.

'We Were Deeply Honored to Serve America'

By Senator Daniel Inouye (Sen. Daniel K. Inouye was the keynote speaker at a memorial service for World War II Nisei war dead. The service on Friday, October 2, 1987 at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, Va., was held during the Japanese American observance of the bicentennial of the Constitution.)

Yesterday, as part of the observance of the Bicentennial of the drafting and signing of the Constitution of the United States, the Smithsonian Institute opened a special exhibit featuring the World War II Japanese American experience in the United States as a historic study of the strengths and weakness of our Constitution. This exhibition honors the Constitution as a living and sacred document that has withstood the challenges of the past 200 years.

Today we gather to honor those Japanese Americans who served on the battlefields of Europe, in the lonely islands of the Pacific, and in far-off places like Burma, Korea, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Americans of Japanese ancestry have actively and with much valor, served in these battles.

Hundreds of speeches have been made that sing the praises of the gallant men of the 100th and the 442nd, so much so that I cannot help but feel that when many Americans think of our generation they are reminded only of the tragic and inexcusable mainland internment of our brothers and sisters and the heroism and patriotism demonstrated by Nisei in World War II. The Smithsonian exhibition dramatically focuses on these two events. However, I hope and pray that in the years to come when historians speak of our generation, they will do much more than relate these two important and tragic events. Because although they were undeniably dark pages in the history of our generation, many of our fellow Americans have their black pages.....the native American Indians, the Irish, Jews, Hispanics, Immigrants from Asia, and most obviously, the blacks. So our battle with racism and hatred is not unique.

I pray that historians will also speak of the bright pages of bountiful opportunities given to us by our country to succeed. I hope they will speak of Japanese American city council members and mayors, of Congressmen and Senators and of Governor and astronaut and of university presidents. I hope they also list the great numbers of Japanese American artist, architects, scientists, physicians and Nobel Laureates.

(over)

Inouye.....

Our children have done well, and our children's children continue to do better. This America has made it possible for succeeding generations to experience a better, more abundant life than that of their parents.

Educational opportunities have been almost unlimited.....visit our finest college campuses and you will know what I mean; study the names on the Dean's lists. Yes, America has been good to us.

But let history also know that we recognize the goodness of our fellow American and that we deeply appreciate our many blessings.

I know that history will always note that we served America and we did so without hesitation and with full knowledge that our lives were on the line. But, let history also know that we were deeply honored to serve America.

**Japanese
American
Citizens
League**

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TWIN CITIES CHAPTER

