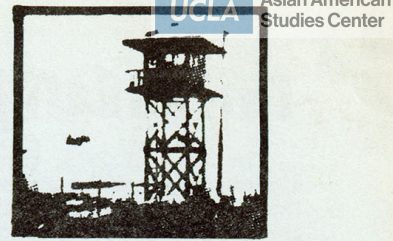




THE NEW TULEAN DISPATCH



VOL. 1, NO. 1

NEWSLETTER OF THE TULE LAKE COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER 1979

Learning From Tule Lake -- Sacramento, San Jose Hold Community Programs

SAN JOSE - "Return from Tule Lake"

On June 24th, over 80 people made the trip from various parts of the Bay Area to Wesley Methodist Church in San Jose to attend the program, "Return From Tule Lake -- A Day of Reflection, Culture and New Horizons." Just less than a month before, the church served as the starting point for the South Bay contingent of the 1979 Tule Lake Pilgrimage, and the people assembled once again represented a broad cross-section of seniors, families and students from the Japanese American community, as well as other participants and supporters of the Pilgrimage. This time, the people came to embark on another kind of journey -- one to re-experience and rekindle the many memories, lessons and concerns stirred-up by the Pilgrimage.

As the first speaker, Toni Morozumi, representing San Francisco's Committee Against Nihonmachi Eviction, gave an overview of the history of oppression, racism and discrimination against Japanese Americans. She pointed out the direct relationship between the World War II concentration camp experience and today's struggles against redevelopment of Japantowns as the on-going attempt to further disperse and destroy the Japanese community.

The debut of the Tule Lake Committee's film of the 1979 Pilgrimage followed. The soundtrack featured flute and guitar improvisations recorded for the film, and was punctuated with a bilingual narrative.



SACRAMENTO - "Learning from Tule Lake"

On the evening of July 20th over 65 people of all generations braved Sacramento's heat to attend an educational and entertaining TLC fundraiser. Sacramento's summer heat was reminiscent of the desert conditions of some of the concentration camps like Tule Lake. Many displays and pictures brought out the harsh conditions and suffering that the Japanese endured during those humiliating and frustrating years. The old saying "one picture is worth 1,000 words" seemed to be true that night as people gathered around the rare and faded photographs to see whether they recognized themselves or friends. The pictures told many stories of strong friendships and unity forged to organize the camps. Organization often seemed to be a necessity for survival, as food, housing and medical conditions, as well as social and political conditions, were not good.

Kiyo Sato-Viacrucis, a native Sacramentan, gave a brief account of her experiences during the war, including FBI harassment and returning home to a house full of strangers. Her experiences were very painful -- her family having suffered monetary, physical, and psychological hardships. From the beginning, they were singled out by the FBI and then repeatedly questioned throughout the course of the war. She was denied entrance to the University even while her brothers were fighting for the U.S. in Europe -- the same U.S. government that uprooted and incarcerated the rest of her family. Upon returning to the family farm, she found overgrown fields, missing property, and a home occupied by strangers.

Introducing the Dispatch

In March of 1978, various community and student organizations gathered to form the Tule Lake Committee. Since then, we have united to plan and build two successful Pilgrimages. Our most recent effort was this past May and was coordinated with the Japanese American Citizens League Plaque Dedication Committee.

The TLC's principles of unity are:

1) To expose the racist incarceration of the Japanese people during World War II as part of their history of oppression and resistance in the U.S.

2) To learn from the experiences of the past to draw lessons for our struggles today.

In order to broaden and further the education that the TLC has been able to carry out through the Pilgrimages, the TLC has decided to establish itself on an on-going basis throughout the year. A major part of this process is the publishing of this newsletter, The New Tulean Dispatch. The purpose of the Dispatch is to keep folks up to date on the activities of the TLC, as well as carry articles on a variety of topics related to the work of the TLC.

In this first issue of the Dispatch, we are featuring an article exploring the Redress/Reparations issue -- a summary of the legislation around it, as well as the TLC's view of this important question. We hope to follow-up this article with more in-depth discussion in future issues. Other items of interest in our first issue include articles on the community programs put on by the Sacramento and South Bay chapters of the TLC. We hope that you find the Dispatch to be informative as well as helpful in getting involved with the TLC.

TLC Coordinating Committee Report

The Coordinating Committee (CC) has been meeting over the summer mapping out the work of the various regional chapters of the Tule Lake Committee (TLC). Made up of representatives from Sacramento, San Francisco/East Bay, and South Bay, the CC has been discussing these topics:

1. TLC becoming a tax-exempt, incorporated organization. We are currently in the process of applying for tax-exempt status. This would be necessary so that all those who make donations/contributions to the TLC could write them off on their income tax.

2. The 1979 Tule Lake Pilgrimage film. We have a film of the the Pilgrimage, and it is available for showing. This film was shown at the the San Jose and Sacramento follow-up programs, and also at the JACL District Conference in Turlock. The film rental fee has been set at \$5, and a \$20 deposit is required. The film is accompanied by a taped narration describing the various events of the Pilgrimage.

3. The Redress/Reparations issue. The CC has had some preliminary discussion on the reparations issue -- why we support reparations and what we want to do about it. The general membership of the TLC in the three regions is pursuing further discussion so that we can have one, unified view of it.

4. Coordination of the work of the different chapters. The TLC is a broad organization, with ongoing work covering a large geographical area. We want to keep everyone informed of activities in the three regions so that we all support and participate in them. The CC hopes that this newsletter will go a long way in furthering this goal.

Pilgrimage Book Nears Completion

If you would like to help out on the book, please contact the Tule Lake Committee. We expect the book to be out in January. After the book is published, we will make the resources we have collected available to as many people as possible. We plan to put together a portable display and possibly a slideshow along the same theme as the book, for public showing. Through the book and our other projects, we hope to share the pilgrimage experience with everyone.

One of the major projects of the Tule Lake Committee is a book on the Tule Lake Pilgrimage experience. Many photos and interviews were done by the Tule Lake Committee during and after the Pilgrimage, and these make up a large part of the book. We were also able to meet people who have original pictures of Tule Lake taken during internment. These never-before-published pictures will vividly portray what life was like at Tule Lake.

The theme of the book will be the feelings and thoughts of individuals who attended the Pilgrimage, both those who were imprisoned there and those who visited Tule Lake for the first time. There will be a section on the history of Japanese in the United States and the Tule Lake concentration camp. Also, the book will bring out issues that face the Japanese Americans today.



Photo taken at Tule Lake Concentration Camp. One of the many historical photos that have been submitted the TLC Book Committee.

For More Info On The TLC

Contact the TLC in your region:

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Redress/Reparations: What's the story?

Over the past year, the issue of Redress/Reparations has been an issue of much discussion and debate within the Japanese community. In this article, we want to discuss what the Redress/Reparations issue is, the current legislative movement around Redress/Reparations, and the TLC view on Redress/Reparations.

WHAT IS THE REDRESS/REPARATIONS ISSUE?

There are two terms--Redress and Reparations--which are being used to describe the efforts by Japanese Americans/Japanese to seek justice for losses suffered and rights violated by the U.S. Government during the World War II incarceration.

Redress is the general concept that there are many ways in which to seek justice; these may, but do not necessarily include monetary compensation.

Reparations is a specific form of Redress which involves monetary compensation paid by the U.S. Government to Japanese Americans/Japanese on the basis of property losses over \$400 million; loss of wages, employment opportunities, and lives; false imprisonment; and deep psychological damage that was suffered as a result of the incarceration.

LEGISLATION ON REDRESS/REPARATIONS

Basically, there are two groups that have proposed bills to put forward in Congress--the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and the National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR)

JACL - Basically, the components of the bill initiated by the JACL, introduced in the Senate as S. 1647, include:

- 1) The establishment of a "Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians Act" to study whether or not there were injustices suffered by the Japanese Americans/Japanese; whether or not it was on the basis of ancestry; whether or not redress action should be taken.

- 2) The 15-member Commission, of which at least one member must be Japanese American, would be appointed by the President.

This bill was introduced in Congress on August 2 by Senators Dan Inouye (D-HI), Spark Matsunaga (D-HI), S.I. Hayakawa (R-CA), Alan Cranston (D-CA), James McClure (R-Idaho), and Frank Church (D-Idaho).

NCJAR - the components of the bill initiated by NCJAR include:

- 1) A basic monetary compensation of \$10,000 and \$15 per day for all people of Japanese ancestry who were interned in the camps or forced to move because of the Exclusion areas.

- 2) Internal Revenue Service Special Trust be set up so that any Japanese who wished to allocate their taxes for reparations could do so.

- 3) That a Nikkei Trust Fund be set up as a means to aid in educational, cultural, humanitarian or legal purposes, this would include any unclaimed reparations payment and payment for those who have died and have no surviving heirs.

At the present, the status of the NCJAR Bill is very unclear.

HOW THE TLC VIEWS REDRESS/REPARATIONS

The TLC supports the demands by Japanese Americans/Japanese for Redress/Reparations. However, while the TLC recognizes the necessity of going through Congress, we do not want to rely solely on the politicians in Washington D.C. to get Redress/Reparations. We believe that, beyond Congressional bills, broad community support is necessary to win these demands.

Therefore, the TLC would like to do massive education among the Japanese communities, and other communities as well. We are seeking to build the broadest support possible - from all sectors, nationalities, and ages. We want to encourage the input of Japanese Americans/Japanese and others to participate in the Redress/Reparations campaign.

In particular, the TLC sees that two important aspects of the Redress/Reparations issue are: 1) basic monetary demand, and 2) establishment of a community trust fund.

The monetary compensation is important and something that all those who experienced the incarceration rightly deserve. This demand would only partially compensate for the losses and suffering of the Japanese Americans/Japanese population. Furthermore, the compensation should begin immediately. Many of the Japanese Americans/Japanese cannot wait much longer -- most of the Issei population has died, and even many of the Nisei are dying off.

The community fund aspect is extremely important. There are still many community services and projects that must be developed to meet the needs of Issei senior citizens, as well as the rest of the Japanese American community. The overall needs of senior citizens and youth: affordable housing; legal, medical, and social services; and cultural/community centers, are yet to be adequately met. All sectors of the community could benefit from a community fund.

The TLC views discussion around these specific concerns and the Redress/Reparations issue in general, as one way in which to do more education and exposure about the camp experience, and how it relates to the current struggles in Japanese communities today.

FUTURE PLANS

The TLC has united around taking up the campaign for Redress/Reparations. One of the first projects we want to implement is a survey about Redress/Reparations -- getting people's feelings, ideas and comments about it. We want to do this by setting up tables/booths at community events and activities, and also by going to various organizations.

Secondly, we want to plan for a conference on Redress/Reparations sometime in January 1980. This educational conference would be one in which we would encourage input and participation of everyone -- those who support, as well as those who oppose Redress and/or Reparations. We hope to involve people from throughout Northern California, and present all sides of the issue. We encourage everyone to become involved in it. If you are interested, please contact the TLC.

Redress/Reparations Coalition Formed In LA

The Los Angeles Community Coalition on Redress/Reparations (LACCRR) was formed to bring together those interested in raising community awareness of the issue, mobilizing support, and seeking justice through legislation. The LACCRR is working with groups throughout the nation with organizations such as the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the National Council on Japanese American Redress (NCJAR), and the Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization (LTPRO), and is building a coordinated effort to seek justice on this issue. The LACCRR will sponsor future educational activities, develop and distribute educational materials, and mobilize community support for the issue of Redress/Reparations. For further information please call: (213) 680-1143 or (213) 626-4413.

Vernon Hayashida, a sansei born in Manzanar and later interned at Tule Lake, read his poem, "From a Sansei," which was composed during the Pilgrimage. It was an expression of his deeper appreciation of his parents' and grandparents' struggles.

Peter Horikoshi, Mike Okagaki and friends brought the first half of the program to a close with a musical performance which included Peter's "Fewer Dimes," written about the losses resulting from the evacuation.

Mas Yamasaki, who was a young boy while interned at Tule Lake, began the second half of the program with a personal account of his camp experiences. He explained how the Pilgrimage helped him to better share with his own children that 3½ year long episode of his youth.

A rousing solidarity speech followed, given by Sue Kim, a member of the Korean American community, in which she placed emphasis on the similarities of the various Asian American struggles. She described the Tule Lake Pilgrimage as having been "a pilgrimage in every Asian American's heart to experience what it means to be treated unjustly."

The second half of the program was rounded out by a musical performance by Sam Takimoto and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, who together form the group "Bamboo." This segment featured Bamboo's theme song as well as Robert's "Nihonmachi," a song about San Jose's Japantown.

During the intermission and after the program, people enjoyed some excellent home-baked goods and refreshments. Many lively discussions started up, people crowded around the Tule Lake Committee's photo display, made personal copies of Vernon's poem, and shared personal albums and scrapbooks on the camps and the Pilgrimage.

The Tule Lake Committee links the success of the program to the irrepressible creativity and spirit of Japanese America and the richness of the Asian American experience. The Committee hopes that "Return From Tule Lake" will be a first step toward doing work with more people on future projects.

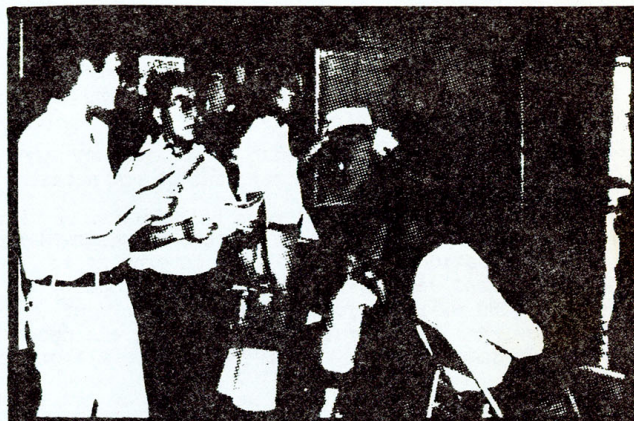
Acknowledgements:

Our special thanks to all who contributed to the program --

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ashizawa	S.J. Asian American Studies
Asian Americans for Community	Rev. Tada
Involvement (AACI)	Mr. & Mrs. Masao Taketa
Hatsuko Cho	Mrs. Misue Toyota
Mr. Vernon Hayashida	Judy Tsuno
Mrs. Hayashida	Wesley United Methodist
Mr. & Mrs. John Horio	Church
Don Johnson	Andy Wong
Joyce Kawahata	Mrs. Helen Yamasaki
Sue Kim	Mrs. Mas Yamasaki
Mrs. Helen Masuda	Rev. Yasaki
Mrs. Marie Miyashiro	Fumiko Yokota
Tomas Pimentel	Yoshio Yoshida

From the wartime experience she brought out the need to support the campaign for reparations and redress, even though the losses and trauma suffered could never be fully compensated for.

A film of the 1979 Tule Lake Pilgrimage was shown, which highlighted the activities of the nearly 400 people who attended. For Sacramento Japanese, Tule Lake was the closest camp in the northern valley region during World War II. Even for those who weren't able to attend the Pilgrimage, many memories came back.



The local chapter of the JACL, represented by Don Ito, gave a statement on their plaque dedication and work with the TLC. It was brought out that many lessons were learned in the course of planning the Pilgrimage and plaque dedication together. It was a struggle-unity relationship between the two organizations at times, but we're looking forward to working together on future projects.

The first part of the program ended on a happy note -- a modern version of "Sakura" played by Mrs. Sugiyama's koto class. Then, after intermission, support statements from the community came from the Asian State Employees' Assoc., the Southside People's Program Committee, and the Asian/Pacific Student Union.

Special thanks to all who attended and contributed to our program! The fundraiser was a great success, making over \$175 in donations and T-shirt sales!

Acknowledgements

Much gratitude goes out to those who donated time, materials and encouragement!

Mary Tsukamoto	Don Ito
Charles Takahashi	Norbie Kumagai
Masao Kondo	Kiyo Sato-Viacrucis
Mrs. Sato	Mrs. Sugiyama and class
Ruby Furukawa	Mr. Richard Lew
Tom Nagasawa	APSU
Ted Tamai	ASEA
Henry Taketa	SPPC

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