

From: East Coast Japanese Americans for Redress  
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For Immediate Release

New York--"A Day of Remembrance" to mark the 40th anniversary of the signing by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt of Executive Order 9066--which put 120,000 Japanese Americans and their permanent resident parents behind barbed wires during World War II-- will be observed here on Saturday, February 20, 1982, 1 p.m., at the Japanese American United Church, 255 Seventh Avenue.

The Japanese American redress movement has been organizing in Japanese American communities across the country since the defeat of the Mike Lowry bill in Congress in 1979 and the establishment of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1980.

Since July of 1981, ten Commission hearings have been held on both coasts, Chicago, and three areas in Alaska. Last November a government hearing at the urging of the Japanese community in New York, was held here at the Roosevelt Hotel. Because of the time element, only a limited number of testifiers could be heard.

As a follow-up, the East Coast Japanese Americans for Redress is sponsoring the 40th anniversary event to continue outreach in the Japanese community here and as a educational to all interested peoples in New York City on the issue of redress and reparation. In other major cities where a sizeable Japanese community exists, similar events are also being held.

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"A Day of Remembrance"

The program here will highlight the experiences of local residents who were incarcerated or affected directly by Executive Order 9066. Among them are: Mrs. Haru Akamatsu, wife of the late Rev. Dr. Alfred S. Akamatsu, Minister Emeritus of the Japanese American United Church; the Rev. Arthur Kamitsuka, national director for Men's Work of the United Presbyterian Church; Ms. Min Matsuda, a prize winning artist; Ms. Yuriko Matsuda Porter, cosmetologist; Mrs. Mae KanaZawa, an administrative secretary; Mrs. Yuriko Tsukada, Director of Services for Abused and Sexually Assaulted, Bronx Municipal Hospital Center; Jimmy Konno, Clinical Supervisor, New York City Board of Education; and Ms. Yokoe, an education and Asian Studies major at the City College of New York. The speakers will be introduced by chair Karl Akiya, a retired bank clerk.

Another feature will be a brief ceremony in commemoration of those who died in the concentration camps. Master of ceremonies for this segment of the program will be George Shimamoto, a prominent architect. In addition, Charlie Chin, a well-known Asian American musician/folk-singer, will play the "shakuhachi"--a Japanese flute.

A cultural interlude will be provided by members of the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, Inc., who will do a reading from "Rohwer," a play by Lionelle Hamanaka. The play focuses on the internment experiences of Japanese Americans in Rohwer, Arkansas--one of ten wartime concentration camps then located in remote areas of the United States.

On display will be camp memorabilia and photographs, as well as posters by Byron Goto, who teaches at New York Technical College at the City University of New York.