

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

("A Day of Remembrance--40th Anniversary," New York/2-20-82)

As our chair Leslee has observed, the Commission hearing in New York last November was just the first step in our struggle for redress and reparation.

At this moment in time the essential question is--
"where do we go from here.?"

Personally--I envision a long fight ahead, taking at least two to three years, or, perhaps longer. I hope I'll be proven wrong.

Today's observance of the 40th anniversary of the issuance of Executive Order 9066 is the second step forward, however slight, on the road to recompensive justice. Significantly, we are joining other communities in marking this "Day of Remembrance." A few hours from now, the National Coalition for Redress and Reparation will commemorate the "day" in Los Angeles, as well as its constituent organizations in Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose. Yesterday, the Chicago Ad Hoc Redress Committee, in cooperation with local Japanese American churches, community organizations and individuals observed the date as "The Great Betrayal...40 years later--Executive Order 9066."

A special commemoration, too, was held yesterday in the chapel of the Interchurch Center sponsored by the National Council of Churches.

Allow me to return to the question at hand--"where do we go from here?" Since January the coordinating committee of the East Coast Japanese Americans for Redress has held several brain-storming sessions. At these meetings short and long range ^{plans were suggested and discussed. A firm} consensus was reached that ECJAR should:

- (1) seek incorporation as a not-for-profit organization;
- (2) enlist the help of individuals in the areas of outreach and education, publicity and media, and fundraising;

(3) solicit community support and involvement in its programs;

(4) publish a periodic ~~bulletin~~ ^{newsletter} to keep everyone informed regarding the progress of the Commission and current efforts by all national and regional organizations fighting for redress and reparation;

(5) cooperate and work with these groups, and to be open-minded to build unity and nationwide solidarity;

(6) broaden the base of support by bringing all generations of the Japanese American community together--Issei, Nisei, Sansei and, yes, Yonsei;

(7) seek the endorsement of non-Nikkei groups on the national, regional and local levels; and , in turn--

(8) support restitution for other peoples who have or are suffering from unjust actions taken by the U.S. government;

(9) encourage a letter writing campaign to each or all members of the Commission, urging them to recommend in their report to Congress, individual monetary compensation to all former internees; and, before Congress addresses the issue of R/R--

(10) inaugurate a similar letter writing campaign to local Congressmen and U.S. Senators urging them to support individual redress and reparations to all former internees of Japanese and Aleut ancestry; and lastly--

(11) disseminate information to individuals and groups willing to hear the truth regarding the incarceration of Japanese Americans and Aleuts during World War II.

You can help to answer the question--"where do we go from here?"

Thank you.