



NCRR BANNER

National Coalition for Redress/Reparations

September 1991

244 So. San Pedro St., Room 411, Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 680-3484

50th Anniversary of E.O. 9066

February 19, 1992 marks the 50th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066. Many different commemorative events are now in the planning stages. In Los Angeles, UCLA has granted \$100,000 to the Asian American Studies Center to plan events on campus. In addition, the Southern California NCRR and other organizations are planning a Day of Remembrance program, a cultural event, workshops, and exhibits to take place in Little Tokyo the weekend of February 15, and 16th. In San Francisco, groups including the NCRR, the National Japanese American Historical Society, JACL, and others have begun to meet to discuss coordinating events for 1992.

The succession of events will be begin with the Day of Remembrance programs on Saturday, Feb. 15th. Other ideas include a photo exhibit, film festival, special media programming, and cultural events. In San Jose, the Nihonmachi Outreach Committee will be discussing ideas soon.

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of E.O. 9066 provides the community an opportunity to reflect on our history, share lessons for the future, and continue to reveal the injustice of the internment camp



experience to the broader public. If you are interested in helping on Day of Remembrance programs, or other 50th anniversary events, call: LA-Alan Nishio (213) 985-5149; SF-Marlene Tonai, (510) 530-1969; and San Jose-Susan Hayase (408) 292-6938. ■

Our Journey Continues... The 1991 Tule Lake Pilgrimage



On the weekend of September 27-29, over 300 Japanese Americans and friends will travel to the site of the Tule Lake Segregation Center. The first Tule Lake Pilgrimage since 1984, it is being organized under the theme, "Our Journey Continues."

This theme describes the long journey that Japanese Americans have traveled since first arriving as immigrants in the U.S. This journey includes the concentration camp experience and continues today on the eve of the 50th anniversary of E.O. 9066 and with the first Tule Lake Pilgrimage since redress payments began.

The sponsoring organization, the non-profit Tule Lake Pilgrimage Committee, is composed of members from the SF and San Jose NCRR chapters, the San Jose Nihonmachi Outreach Committee (NOC), as well as others. It is the intent of the sponsors to educate Japanese Americans of all generations and others about not only the historical facts on Tule Lake and the other concentration camps, but also to affirm the legacy of Japanese Americans as one of courage, determination, and sacrifice as demonstrated throughout the camp experience and the redress movement.

The site of the former concentration camp is located in the town of Newell, California, approximately 400 miles from the San Francisco Bay Area and near the Oregon border. Participants will go on a tour of the former camp site and learn about the circumstances that lead up to the ten concentration camps. The significance of the Tule Lake camp as a segregation center in

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Second Round of Payments Due in October, 1991

The next 25,000 Japanese Americans eligible for redress payments should begin receiving their redress payments this October. This group includes all eligible persons born before 1928 (that is, on or before December 31, 1927).

If you believe you are eligible and were born before 1928, but have not heard from the Office of Redress Administration (ORA) in Washington, D.C., you should **contact the ORA immediately at 1-800-395-4672**. If you are hearing impaired, call 1-800-727-1886.

The ORA says it has verified the eligibility of 21,000 of the 25,000 but there are still some individuals who have not contacted the ORA or who have not completed the necessary paperwork.

Eligible individuals include not only Japanese Americans who were actually interned, but also individuals who moved inland in the weeks before the evacuation began in 1942 (the so-called voluntary evacuees); many individuals who were in the U.S. military during the evacuation, but whose families were interned; and many of the Japanese Peruvians who were interned in the U.S.

Also, the ORA recently announced that it is studying the eligibility of some 500 Japanese Americans who lived in Hawaii in 1942 and were forced out of homes located near military installations while non-Japanese neighbors were allowed to stay.

If you have questions about your eligibility, contact one of the persons or agencies listed below. ■

Redress Assistance

Los Angeles:	NCRR, (213) 680-3484
San Francisco:	Mrs. Tsuyako "Sox" Kitashima (415) 922-1534 Nihonmachi Legal Outreach 1840 Sutter Street San Francisco, CA 94115 (415) 567-6255
East Bay:	Marlene Tonai (510) 848-3560
San Jose:	Richard Konda, Asian Law Alliance (408) 287-9710
Wash. D.C.:	Office of Redress Assistance: 1-800-395-4672 (1-800-727-1886 for the hearing impaired)

Japanese Women Attacked at the Red Onion

On June 15, 1991, three Japanese women went to the Red Onion restaurant and disco in Huntington Beach, California around 11 p.m. According to them, they were assaulted by 6 Caucasian women for no reason other than conversing in Japanese. A white woman pushed and repeatedly punched and kicked one of the Japanese woman while demanding she "speak English." The Japanese women tried to leave, but were blocked by other white patrons, who were also repeating "speak English." Other bystanders in the bar laughed and cheered on the assaulter while she repeatedly punched one of the Japanese women.

When the three were finally able to get away from the situation, they tried to find the manager of the bar, who was talking to the white woman who assaulted her. Rather than helping the Japanese woman who was injured and bleeding as a result of the assault, the manager, Joe Gioscia, told the Japanese women to leave the bar immediately. The bartender, who saw the entire incident, at first said he could identify the assaulters, but later changed his story and said he saw nothing.

The Red Onion, which has 16 restaurants in the southern California area has been repeatedly accused of discriminatory practices. One Red Onion was accused of barring African Americans from patronizing its restaurant, another barring Latinos.

The L.A. County Board of Supervisors passed a motion to investigate the incident. A legal strategy is also being pursued by the victims.

NCRR recently met with two of the three women involved in the incident. The women want Red Onion to identify the suspect, and pay for medical expenses incurred as a result of the attack. The manager has yet to divulge the name of the suspected attacker and has offered to pay for medical expenses if the victim signs a waiver of all charges, which she has refused to sign.

The manager of the Red Onion, Huntington Beach is Joe Gioscia, at (714) 846-3339, located at 14650 Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, California 92649. Those interested should call or write him with their concerns. ■

NCRR Opposes Confirmation of Clarence Thomas as Supreme Court Justice

The National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRR) opposes the confirmation of Clarence Thomas as U.S. Supreme Court Justice. As part of the Japanese American community, from which in 1942, over 120,000 individuals were taken and, without due process, placed in U.S. internment camps, we know the consequences that can result when the Supreme Court fails to rigorously uphold the Constitution. Therefore, we are alarmed by Mr. Thomas' views and actions which call into question both his acceptance of the Constitution as the highest law of the land, and also his willingness to uphold the Constitution and existing laws when they conflict with his own strongly-held religious and social views. For example:

- **Separation of Church and State:** Although the Constitution calls for a separation of church and state, Thomas has stated on this issue of school prayer, "my mother says that when they took God out of the schools, the schools went to hell. She may be right." This and other statements raise questions as to whether or not Thomas is able and/or willing to separate his own personal religious views from the controversial Constitutional issues he would face as part of the high court, issues which can have a profound impact on all Americans, including those who do not share his religion or religious views. Mr. Thomas' religious views should have no bearing on his fitness to be on the Supreme Court, **unless** he has indicated that he allows his religious beliefs to interfere with his work as a judge or public official charged with carrying out the laws of the land.
- **"Natural Law" or the Constitution?:** Thomas upholds the concept of "natural law." In explaining this concept, Thomas quotes John Quincy Adams, who said, "Our political way of life... presupposes the existence of a God, and a rule of right and wrong, of just and unjust, binding upon man, **preceding all institutions of human society and of government.**" [emphasis added] This quote plus Thomas' praise for an article that used "natural law" to justify the view that fetuses have Constitutional rights from the moment of conception - raises the question of whether Thomas sees "natural law" as a religious concept that is above the Constitution.

Furthermore, we would point out that "natural law" is a vague notion that has been used in the past to justify longstanding social injustices such as slavery and the subordination of women.

- **Disregard for Existing Laws:** As Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Mr. Thomas had the responsibility to enforce civil rights laws. However, in keeping with his personal opposition to these laws, he used that position instead to weaken and subvert them. Some examples: Although the EEOC is responsible for seeing that federal agencies adopt effective affirmative action programs, under Thomas, little was done in this regard, and the EEOC even abandoned the use of goals and timetables to enforce fair hiring. Also during his tenure, the EEOC let the statute of limitations expire on some 13,000 age discrimination claims, and, in apparent violation of federal law, Thomas reportedly retaliated against an EEOC employee who criticized EEOC enforcement of age discrimination laws before Congress.

Thomas' actions on the EEOC led the Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights to criticize EEOC actions as "based solely on the extreme personal views of its highest officials, without regard to any practical considerations and without regard to the commands of the law." This serious allegation was echoed by members of Congress who were familiar with Thomas' work in the EEOC. In a 1989 letter to President Bush opposing Thomas' confirmation as a federal judge, House Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee Chair Don Edwards, Reps. Barney Frank, Edward Roybal, John Conyers, Pat Schroeder and nine other Representatives concluded, **"Mr. Thomas has demonstrated an overall disdain for the rule of law."** [emphasis added] A disdain for the rule of law is in our view a fatal flaw for an individual charged with upholding the highest law of the land, the Constitution.

While we were not surprised that President Bush nominated a conservative to take Justice Marshall's place, we were especially disappointed at the nomination of a candidate who has distinguished himself primarily by his hostility and active efforts to undermine and overturn many historic gains in the areas of civil rights and social justice. For example, Clarence

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Thomas has criticized the Supreme Court's landmark Brown decision which ended legalized school segregation; opposed and tried to dismantle all forms of affirmative action; criticized the Roe v. Wade decision which legalized women's right to choose abortion; and called into question whether the right of privacy is constitutional.

It is not surprising, then, that a broad range of organizations have come out against Mr. Thomas' confirmation, including: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Congressional Black Caucus; National Organization for Women (NOW); Southern California American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF); League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC); National Asian/Pacific Bar Association; Chinese for Affirmative Action; and many others.

However, our opposition to Mr. Thomas goes well beyond his conservative views. Our main concerns are the serious questions as to his willingness and/or ability to uphold the Constitution and existing laws when they conflict with his personal views. In a nation as diverse

as ours, Mr. Thomas' basic approach to interpreting and enforcing the Constitution and existing laws is a vital issue, one that could have serious implications for all Americans. We call on the U.S. Senate to reject the nomination of Mr. Thomas. ■

Tule Lake (Continued from page 1)

the aftermath of the WRA "loyalty" registration will be explained, and the dilemmas faced by families and individuals will be illuminated by remembrances from former Tuleans. Daily life and the layout of the camp will also be described as the remains of the camp are toured.

Both former internees and those born after the camps will get a chance to ask questions, share experiences, and discuss issues in Inter-Generation Dialogue workshops. A hike to the top of Castle Rock is planned along with other activities, and there will be a cultural program on Saturday evening and a Sunday morning memorial program at the Linkville Cemetery in Klamath Falls remembering those who passed away in the camps. ■

**NCRIR**

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