



NATIONAL COALITION FOR REDRESS/REPARATIONS
244 S. San Pedro #406, Los Angeles, CA 90012
1858 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA. 94115

March 20, 1981

Dear

We have been informed that you were appointed as one of the Commissioners for the Presidential Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and would like to get to know your views on the circumstances surrounding Executive Order 9066, the redress/reparations issue, and specifics regarding the commission hearing process.

The National Coalition for Redress/Reparations was founded in July, 1980 and is comprised of numerous community, student, legal, social, church and other Japanese American organizations as well as endorsements and mutual support from the Japanese Americans Citizens League and the American Civil Liberties Union in Southern California. We have regionals in San Francisco/Bay Area, Los Angeles, San Jose, Sacramento, San Diego, and supporters/endorsers in Seattle, New York, New England and Alaska. In November, 1980, the NCRR held a successful national conference in Los Angeles, which attracted over 350 people from all over the country, including representatives from the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

Since our founding, we have conducted numerous educational presentations to organizations and individuals about the evacuation and the camps during World War II. We have received wide support for our two basic goals: (1) To seek meaningful restitution for those people unjustly incarcerated or evacuated during World War II; and (2) To seek preventative measures to ensure that this does not happen again to any group.

During our national conference, and in the course of our outreach and discussions with people, we have received many suggestions regarding the upcoming Commission hearings. We feel these suggestions are important in ensuring that the hearings reflect an accurate picture of the concentration camps experience. We plan to forward these suggestions to the Commission staff once it is appointed. At the same time, we ask that you inform us of your views regarding our recommendations, which are as follows:

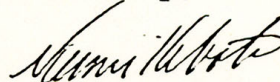
- 1) Additional Commission hearing sites, especially in San Jose, Sacramento, and San Diego. Since a large bulk of the Japanese American population resides in California, the NCRR believes the three proposed sites (San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Fresno) are inadequate. More hearing sites would facilitate greater participation from the Japanese American communities in those areas. We have enclosed petitions collected by the NCRR and chapters of the Japanese Americans Citizens League which strongly support the inclusion of the above mentioned cities as Commission sites. We are continuing to circulate these petitions and will forward upon completion.
- 2) Translations provided for Japanese-speaking testifiers as well as Japanese translation of any and all materials (literature, publicity, etc.) put out by the Commission and staff). As you are probably aware, it was mainly the first and second generation Japanese who were incarcerated. The first generation largely speaks Japanese and we believe that this should pose no barrier whatsoever to their full participation in the Commission process.
- 3) Commission hearings should be held at facilities in the Japanese American communities. This is another suggestion to help facilitate greater participation by the local Japanese American communities.
- 4) Times of the Commission hearings should take into consideration the schedule of working people and should adequately allow for the many groups and individuals who would like to testify. We suggest that some hearings be held in the evening and on weekends to allow working people to attend. We also suggest the hearings extend over a period of time in each city to allow enough time for community participation.
- 5) Written, taped and other forms of testimony be accepted. This point takes into consideration that some members of our community may not be able to attend the hearings, but nevertheless should be allowed to offer testimony.

In addition to the above suggestions, we are also submitting resumes of individuals who seek appointment to the Commission staff. The applicants are fully qualified to serve in this capacity, being concerned with the needs of the Japanese American community, as well as having direct experience in this area. We would also like to support the applications of attorneys Edwin Yoshimura and Allen Terakawa who recently applied for legal counsel staff positions.

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Overall, we would like to take this opportunity to set up lines of communication between the NCRR and the Commission so that we can keep abreast of the current situation regarding the hearings. Since very little information regarding the hearings has been made public to the Japanese Community as a whole, we would appreciate your getting back to us with a timetable of events, up-to-date status of the Commission and staff, as well as any other pertinent information, as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Naomi Kubota
staff member for the
National Coalition for
Redress/Reparations
c/o 1858 Sutter St.
San Francisco, CA. 94115

cc: Gordon Hirabayashi
Japanese American Citizens League
Concerned Japanese Americans (NY)
State Bar Sub-committee
Hokubei Mainichi
Nichi Bei Times
Pacific Citizen
Rafu Shimpō