

COMMUNICATION FROM: DONALD KAZAMA, PRESIDENT, SEATTLE JACL

February 6, 1970

Dear Ray:

This is in response to the number of letters and communicays I've received and to which it seems that I was unable for one reason ~~or~~ another to respond. And to begin, my apologies for my poor typing. And the rambling.

There apparently is a tremendous amount of turmoil and upheaval going on at local levels inre JACL and without. I really don't know how to respond in wags of proposals or plans. In a way I've thought about it but have been too busy to evaluate my experience and write it down. What bugs me is the lack of communitation from the other side whatever, whoever they may be. In a sense the silent majority. The implication of the "silent majority" says that they are ~~app~~ opposed to us and the kind of change we apparently want. I don't believe that. I found that there is a sizeable segment o f the ~~silent~~ silent majority who do want change whatever that is to them. Another part of the silent majority politics behind the scenes. What to do with that is a problem is probably peculiar to each locality. Some of it is a very patriarchal attitude, such as only Past Presidents should be on certain committees or a Past President should be chairman of a certain committee.

The behind the scenes politicking is something I don't like too much because it is not open and subject to much misinterpretation. But, it is a fact of life. Whether it is true or not of only Niseis, the "kill" type of competitiveness at times is somewhat vicious. I sense that elsewhere is really no different than Seattle's situation that cooperation is alien to Niseis. It reminds me of the Black's situation that since the White establishment does not permit competition with them...the Blacks kill each other. At the present time, what's in their favor is the fact that they number in the millions and we number only about $\frac{1}{2}$ million and half in Hawaii. I'm afraid that if we don't become more involved and make ourselves felt we may end up as the American Indians...brainwashed, more than we are at present.

We know what an emotional impact evacuation had on the Iseis and Niseis-- probably more so on the latter. True, the war record is there but the public forgets and the young generation of America-- of all races do not like war. The question Sanseis seem to be raising what are you going to do with your war record and your evacuation experience... What can we do with it? As some high school students say, anything prior to 1962 is ancient history.

So what am I driving at? I'm not sure, really. The only answer I see now is probably a painful one...process. It seems to me that not withstanding the Planning Commission questionnaire which I too consider boring and too long that change must come about slowly within such a highly structured organization. There seems no doubt to me that National presents us with the "go green" in being more relevant but we cannot assume a patriarchal attitude either and use that. I think that as long as only JACL exists within a sizeable JA community, there is little chance of faster change than slow. I believe ACE in Seattle has served as a stimulus. Another part to this at this local level is the control which a small segment of the community exerts on the organization. And by that I mean, fear. Don't ask me why? or how? or of what? It's there, I've been told this. I think the more "tired old men" there are trying to run the outfit the better chance for change. Some

22222222222222

of them will try policking behind the scenes but will eventually end up fouling themselves up.

I think also that individuals like you guys need to continue prodding the boards..win a few...lose a few...be selective in what you present to boards.. assess the climate of the opinions of members..At the same time sound out the community on what they think about JACL...young and old...Niseis and Sanseis...others, whites, chicanos, filipinos, blacks...

It took me about 5 years to get to be President but I believe that I policked hard and long to get it...within JACL and in the community. I do plan to practically wipe the slate clean...much to the unhappiness and anger of the old timers...even some of my close friends are unhappy with me... but some of the newcomers are older guys and gals who do want to see change. I also worked sometimes angrily for changes with the Chapter matters ...sometimes it boomeranged...I encouraged, coerced, arm twisted non JACLERS to join the Human Relations committee. From there some of the people branched out to other committees. The President Elect Min Masuda started on the Human Relations Committee. What committee now is relevant...? It seems to me that Asian studies now seems the relevant thing in Seattle...so we have as Chairman of the Education Committee, not such a young guy but a 2 or 3 year member of JACL, about 35 years of age. A lot of the early fortyish are now active. This in turn has stimulated others to join. and participate and run for offices.

To me the key committee in any organization is the Nominating Committee. Get on that committee but also have names ready to submit. One also has to assess what other organizations or groups of people are running or trying to run JACL. Plan how to minimize that. In getting new people young and old, we've got to accept conservative ones too. At ~~the~~ least the young conservatives can be educated.

Meanwhile...what does one do with one's frustrations that JACL moves not fast enough? I had to be involved in the Central Seattle Community Council where a lot of action took place that me and my needs were met. This in turn, I think let me be more patient with JACL. I am all for change in the structure of JACL...I am not sure whether I agree with the Regional Director plan because that might tie that person up with administrative details too much. I am for doing away with the District Council level but understand that this does serve some purpose in the way of communication but I have seen little of this. I think that there has not been much effort made to look for new blood at all levels...to get more new blood involved. I do not have any specific plan but I do agree that regional needs are unique and need special attention but how? I think of a program director or better yet a coordinator. It seems to me that the concept of grass roots involvement is a must. How this can be done within JACL needs to be worked out. I am on a committee of the Association of King County Community Councils working off the development of neighborhood and community councils and shall try to send copies of the final plans to you. Maybe there will be ideas from that. Perhaps what we ought to do is form an informal coalition of Niseis and Sanseis "Turks" and keep in touch with things like this...share experiences...ideas and see what we can use at our own local level...what we can learn from each other.

I plan to be at the National Convention and perhaps we ought to plan a special meeting of rebels and exchange ideas...a brainstorming session..

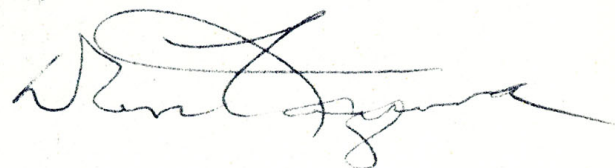
3333333333333333

I've certainly rambled a lot and thanks for letting me do so...I am not so sure whether I want all of this shared with all the people on the mailing list but maybe I should let you be the judge...part of my hangups I guess.. I think that I have made enough people unhappy with me in the Chapter... I know I have the support of a lot of the elder "new" group and the Sanseis. The money however lies with the elder established groups and it takes money to run a chapter, unfortunately..I belong to the elder group but do not have the money...just spirit and enthusiasm for the young...The young too have copped out in their terrific criticism of JACL and not being willing to join and work at change... I have told a number of ~~them~~ them and some of them are willing to look at that and do something like joining and speaking up... It would seem that the Sanseis have learned their lessons well from the Niseis...copping out...

I guess that painful thing I was talking about...process...involves mostly communication...gut talk...but too many Niseis and Sanseis too are alien to gut talk...they seem to be hiding their soul....keep it nice and smooth... never really talk openly about differences...keep up the appearances for whitey's sake.... this last is nothing but frustrations being expressed...

keep in touch...even tho I am a lousy correspondent...I do really appreciate all that I get from you guys....

Yours..



P.S. Guess I'm addressing this letter to you cause you expressed most feelings about the frustrating situation you face — & I feel for you — I'm mad too —



DONALD KAZAMA
3042 - 19th AVENUE SOUTH
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98144