

JAPANESE AMERICANS

REDRRESS: MOVE FOR SEPARATE ~~REDRRESS~~ ORGANIZATION ~~UNDERWAY~~

Dissatisfaction with the direction taken by the JACL Redress Committee has sparked a movement among the Japanese American community to form a separate redress organization.

Criticism of the Redress Committee focuses on its March 3rd decision to draft a bill establishing a congressional commission that would "determine the amount and method of payment" of funds to former internees of the wartime camps. Since then, according to an April _____ draft of a proposed/sent to JACL chapter presidents (?) ^{bill} the JACL Redress Committee has modified further its demands of the proposed commission, which now would determine, among other matters:

"Whether the injustices suffered by Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II at the hands of the United States government . . . in American concentration camps caused great personal suffering and humiliation to loyal American citizens; (and)
"Whether Americans of Japanese ancestry were deprived of their civil liberties on the basis of ancestry alone, and whether it is imperative that the American government redress the violations of human rights and dignity suffered by loyal Americans."

The "two-step" commission would thus first "conduct a study of the culture, needs, and concerns of Japanese Americans; the nature of the wrong committed against, and the extent of the injuries to the Japanese Americans" before considering "the various means to remedy such wrong."

2/2/2

The commission approach has suffered severe attack from within the Redress Committee itself. Rom Mamiya, Seattle attorney assigned to draft the legislative bill, informed John Tateishi, Committee chairperson, ~~xxxxxxx~~ that because he believed the commission approach violated the mandate of the JACL National Convention, he could not "in good faith and conscience" do so "without further clarification." Mamiya was thereupon discharged from the Committee.

The Seattle JACL board of governors shared Mamiya's views and called for a "reconsideration" of the commission approach. Martin Matsudaira, Seattle chapter president, wrote:

1. We ~~(the Seattle board of governors)~~ feel the so-called "Commission" approach is in idirection violation of the letter and spirit of the National Council's Salt Lake City mandate...The main points of the mandate included eligibility, individual payments, a trust fund, and the broadest possible coverage.

2. etc.

~~MAY SAT~~
APR 28

1 - MANDANAR

2 - HOHRI

3 - COMMISSIONER
1-SENTENCE OF

4 - HAYAKAWA @U.

~~BLAKE~~

WBD
MAY 9

OPEN LETTER
FR

MAY 11
MEDIA COVERAGE
& RESPONSE TO
OPEN LETTER

3/3/3

Meanwhile, in a memo to members of the Japanese American community "interested in pursuing a more aggressive campaign for reparations," William Hohri, past president of the Chicago JACL chapter, argued that the commission approach "merely postpones the congressional requirement of appropriating funds ~~x~~ for reparations, which is the real issue."

Mr. Hohri, speaking for a group composed of "JACL members and others" in Chicago, said the group wished ^{"to stand apart from the action of the National Redress Committee"} "to press for the clearer proposal of a direct appropriation by Congress," He himself, he wrote, "would much rather lobby with my own representative and senators--those who must make the final determination--than with prestigious and expert persons who have no constituency and no real power."

"We do not see direct opposition to the national redress campaign as being productive," he continued. "We would wish, instead, to offer our alternative as being consistent with the mandate of the JACL and would hope that the national committee, while not endorsing it, would not oppose this alternative."

(INSERT HERE THE ABE/YASUI MATERIAL)

Both Abe and Hohri welcome hearing from anyone interested in working with them. Their addresses are: Frank Abe, etc. William Hohri, 4717 N. Albany, Chicago, IL 60625.