



# A Day of Remembrance

316 S. Maynard Seattle, WA 98104 682-7364

PRESS CONFERENCE \* PRESS CONFERENCE \* PRESS CONFERENCE

on Wednesday, October 10, 1979, 10 A.M.

JAPANESE AMERICANS IN IDAHO FEAR WHITE BACKLASH,  
SAY "DAY OF REMEMBRANCE" AT MINIDOKA BY FORMER  
CONCENTRATION CAMP INTERNEES WILL "EMBARRASS"  
LIFELONG NON-INTERNEES

Pressure from Idaho Japanese Americans and  
national Japanese American Citizens League  
forces postponement of pilgrimage planned for  
October 13

Seattle, Washington. . . . Martin "Mich" Matsudaira, local haberdasher, community leader, and a former internee of the U.S. wartime internment camp in Minidoka, Idaho, will host a conference for the press this Wednesday, October 10, 1979, at 10 A.M., at 316 S. Maynard, to announce the postponement of the "Day of Remembrance" at Minidoka, previously scheduled for October 13.

Dr. Minoru Masuda, of the University of Washington Department of Psychology, a former Minidoka internee, and a veteran of the famous, all-Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team, was to have been the master of ceremonies at the Day of Remembrance. Masuda, one of the most respected Japanese Americans in the country, will be with Matsudaira and others to express disappointment about the postponement and the commitment of the community to return to the concentration camp to make final peace with the "evacuation."

Since the first "Day of Remembrance" of the wartime camps held last year at Puyallup fairgrounds, the former "Camp Harmony" assembly center, the Seattle Japanese American community has been working toward mounting a "Day of Remembrance" at the site of Camp Minidoka. Seattle

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Japanese Americans planned to plant a memorial post to those who died in exile in Camp Minidoka and to erect and burn a symbolic replica guard tower.

As revealed by wire services and Idaho newspapers, however, a rift has surfaced between the resident Idaho Japanese Americans who were not interned during World War II and the West Coast Japanese Americans who were. The non-internee organizers of the dedication of the Minidoka camp site as a U.S. historical monument on August 18, 1979, pointedly excluded the participation of former Minidoka internees in the dedication ceremonies. For the past month, Japanese Americans in Idaho and the national Japanese American Citizens League have been conducting a telephone campaign to pressure Seattle Japanese Americans from returning to Minidoka.

The rift is not new. The Japanese American residents of Idaho objected to West Coast Japanese Americans relocating in early 1942, when voluntary relocation was still an option. Later, they asked the then-governor of Idaho, Chase Clark, to distinguish between the loyal Japanese Americans living in Idaho, and the "questionable" Japanese Americans about to be interned in Minidoka. Since 1942, their superior acceptability to Caucasians has, in their view, depended on their rejection of any identification with the ten thousand people held behind barbed wire at Minidoka for an average term of three and one-half years.

The press is asked to come meet with Mich Matsudaira and Minoru Masuda to view the memorial post and help spread the news of the postponement to the many who reserved space on the charter flight to Minidoka. Matsudaira and Masuda will answer questions about how the former internees of Seattle hope to establish a more congenial atmosphere for their "Day of Remembrance" and about the disposition of funds raised for the pilgrimage through the sale of T-shirts printed by first generation Japanese Americans and the recent benefit concert reading with Mako, Tina Chen, and Pat Suzuki.