

22 April 1994

Dear Editor,

If you are a member of the JACL and subscribe to the PC, I would hope that your decision to publish or not publish the enclosed will not be clouded by parochial or provincial biases because of the controversial too-hot-to-handle subject matter posed.

The long period of time during which the JACL has been suppressing the so-called LIM REPORT, undated, must be brought to an end. The ranks of the Nisei draft resisters and dissidents and, of equal importance, their spouses and other close relatives, have been thinned in recent years.

However, the agenda of past JACL biennial conventions has failed to effectively address the resolution of this critically important issue. It will not be resolved until the LIM REPORT is officially released by the JACL for its constituents to read, analyze and, thereafter, reach their individual conclusions.

The cover-up of the report is one of the contributing factors to explain the general apathy, apolitical posture and general uneasiness which are festering beneath the surface of AJA society in the continental United States.

There may be some curiosity in the minds of your readership as to the background of the writer vis-a-vis the living draft resisters and dissidents. In fact I think it is essential in terms of credibility, to include some of that which describes my personal history. Please feel free to use whatever part of the following you decide would be suitable. I regret that my letter to Lilliam Kimura is so lengthy and may pose problems for you in terms of available column inches.

Paul H. Ito is a native of Seattle and a former Minidoka inmate. He is a retired U.S. Army counterespionage officer. In the ensuing 26 years in the private sector, he served as a corporate security manager in several major defense contractors in the search of the then-hostile intelligence officers of the opposition. Most recently, he retired in 1991 from TRW Space and Defense Sector, Redondo Beach, California, where he was serving as the Special Assistant to the Director of Security.

De wa mata,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul H. Ito', written in a cursive style.

Paul H. Ito

1 Encl

6 pgs

22 April 1994

Mr. Richard Suenaga, Editor/General Manager

Pacific Citizen

2 Coral Circle, Suite 204

Monterey Park, CA 91754

Dear Mr. Suenaga,

Reference is made to Ike Hachimonji's letter to you which was published in the PC of March 18-24, 1994; it was related to Jimmie Omura, former English editor of the Rocky Shimpo of Denver, and Jimmie's then-unpopular support of the draft resisters of the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee (FPC). In Ike's letter, he calls upon the present national leadership of the JACL to step forward now and extend the olive branch of reconciliation towards those of their fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJA), and offer a meaningful apology to those who became draft resisters, dissidents and renunciants in defense of their constitutional rights. He also states the JACL must apologize to Mr. Omura as well for the pain and suffering the JACL inflicted upon him by their attacks on him.

Reference is also made to Mr. Omura's recent letter to you, a copy of which appeared in the April 12 edition of The Rafu Shimpo; his letter calls, firstly, for a straightforward apology by the JACL to the community of Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJA), as a whole.

Secondly, Omura suggests that if the JACL wishes to reeducate its poorly-informed membership about this tragic chapter of the AJA experience, a panel of draft resisters, dissidents, and their supporters be invited to the upcoming biennial convention in Salt Lake City to tell it like it was and thirdly, to cease the cover-up and suppression of the Deborah Lim Report.

I ask you to publish the following in the PC as an OPEN LETTER

TO LILLIAN KIMURA:

Ms. Kimura, this letter is a follow-up to those recently sent to Mr. Richard Suenaga, editor/general manager of the PC, by Messrs. Ike Hashimomji and Jimmie Omura. (See PC, 18-24 March 1994, and The Rafu Shimpo, April 12, 1994, respectively).

It has been my long-held view that the AJA communities on the Mainland and Hawaii, emerged from the carnage of World War II with their heads held high thanks, for the most part, to the courage, bravery and sacrifices of our fighting men who served in the 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Military Intelligence Service, the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) and the OSS (Office of Special Services). Those men served with distinction above and beyond the call of duty, honor and country; they so served to benefit us, their fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJA) in a time of great need.

However, the war-time leadership of the JACL arbitrarily took it upon itself to deliberately deceive and mislead its constituencies in the concentration camps about the true facts surrounding the purpose, status and objectives of the hundreds of Nisei draft resisters, e.g., the Fair Play Committee of Heart Mountain, Wyoming, and dissident groups such as the NO-NO Boys, the 1800 General Engineer Service Battalion (euphemistic designation for a labor battalion), and the DB Boys (Disciplinary Barracks, Ft. Leavenworth, Missouri).

The AJA's of the second and third generations now living in the continental United States have either a clear understanding about the so-called "Loyalty Questionnaire" (which made its appearance in most of the 10 "relocation centers" in about 1943), or their knowledge about it is unfocused, fuzzy, or incomplete.

Questions 27 and 28 were the most critical to the inmates, but the most important to the federal government. Q27 was to determine if the

respondent was willing to be drafted into the armed forces of the United States and serve wherever assigned. Q28, on the other hand, was to determine whether the respondent forswears allegiance to the Emperor of Japan.

There were allegations in those camp days that the questionnaire was a product of the JACL and not that of the WRA (War Relocation Authority), or the FBI, or the federal Interior Department.

Because of the deceitfulness of the war-time leaders of the JACL, particularly at the national level, the average Nisei and Sansei of today may be of the opinion that all Nisei draft resisters or dissidents vis-a-vis the military draft, were NO-NO's.

In my perspective, today's JACL is guilty of failing to clarify the facts as they were at that time. The truth of the matter is, the term NO-NO Boy is misleading because individual respondents, for highly personal reasons, had the option to answer these two key questions either YES-YES; NO-NO; YES-NO; NO-YES, or YES-YES conditionally, i.e., not everyone responded NO-NO. What about those Nisei who were already in the US Army at the time the forms were given them to complete? The vast majority of such personnel completed their military obligation despite the fact they had declined to respond YES-YES unconditionally.

On the basis of the Deborah Lim report, it is very clear that among the war-time national leaders of the JACL, confusion and/or a difference of opinion existed as to whether the FPC members were engaged in seditious acts, as charged by one national representative or, as stated by other national leaders, were loyal and willing to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces if their civil rights were restored to them.

The JACL members in the camps, however, were not provided this

unbalanced assessment of the draft resisters'/dissidents' actions. As a result, the lack of clarification from JACL national headquarters in Salt Lake City gave birth in the camps to the term "draft dodger," which is even used today when those ignorant of the true facts refer to a resister or dissident. All thinking people will have to admit there is a tremendous difference in calling a person a draft dodger as opposed to a resister.

There has been no factual evidence emerge in research conducted on this matter, which indicates that the resisters were primarily wanting to escape military service altogether. The wish of the resisters was to seek clarification of their constitutional rights and those related to their legal immigrant parents.

It is my firm conviction that the JACL is solely responsible for stigmatizing those Nisei and their family members involved in this tragic chapter of our history, such that a large number of them are refusing more than 50 years later, to emerge from their closets.

I urge you to accept Jimmie Omura's suggestion and agree, beyond the upcoming biennial convention, to conduct the appropriate research about these men who have experienced so much pain, stress and loss of respect. The time has long since passed for the JACL to fess up to the damage it has inflicted in a segment of AJA community.

I have conducted some research on these matters and have been in touch with the Japanese American National Museum. I suggest that a portion of the JACL Legacy Fund be provided to Ms. Irene Hirano and her highly qualified group of curators at JANM to defray expenses which grow out of this project. This is an untold story which must be told in the light of day and be preserved so that future AJA generations will benefit; history could repeat itself and another "relocation" threst could emerge in the future.

The fact that the JACL embarks on this project will, with the

proper amount of publicity in the Nikkei community, contribute to the emergence of the affected Niseis' from their ostracized situation thereby making whole again what has been a fractious community, whether you agree with that viewpoint or not.

There have been too many of them who have passed on to the after-world; JACLers will be thankful that you have set the project in motion.

In conclusion, in addition to the personalities which Mr. Omura suggested be invited to your August convention, I hasten to add Mr. Frank Abe, radio reporter for Station KIRO. Seattle, and Mr. Paul Tsuneishi of Los Angeles, a veteran of World War II and an activist who has been a staunch supporter of the those connected with the resisters' plight; Mr. Abe was one of the organizers of the program recently held in San Jose in recognition of the FPC and, at last word, was preparing a video documentary about the FPC; Paul Tsuneishi of Los Angeles collaborated with the JACL PSWD in honoring the FPC several years ago.

It is quite understandable that many of the Sansei generation have been asking their parents and elders, "Why did you let them push you around?" This project will provide them with the answer, that a group of loyal and courageous Nisei had risked being stigmatized and ostracized by their own people in taking the government to the mat.

The righteousness of their individual decisions vis-a-vis Q27 and 28, was established by the United States Government when President Harry Truman granted a presidential pardon covering all so-called draft resisters and dissidents, soon after the end of World War II.

Paul H. Ito

29 April 1994

Editors of:

Hokubei Mainichi

Nichibei Times

Northwest Nikkei

Pacific Citizen

The Rafu Shimpo

Tozai Times

Dear Editor,

This is the second in a series of articles regarding the JACL, the World War II AJA draft resisters/dissidents and the Deborah Lim Report; this was recently preceded by my letter of the 22nd to Mr. Richard Suenaga, editor/general manager, Pacific Citizen, a copy of which was furnished you.

#### The JACL vs the FDR Syndrome

The JACL's continued stonewalling of its members by covering up and suppressing the release/publication of the Deborah Lim Report is, without question, clearly analogous to that engaged in by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his "Day of Infamy" address to the United States Congress on December 8, 1941 (when the opportunity was present to address the question about the loyalty of the AJA to the United States).

I have strongly advocated that the private libraries of most Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJAs) must include copies of Ms. Michi Nishiura Weglyn's "Years of Infamy," The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps, Morrow Quill Paperbacks, NYC, 1976, and "Bridge of Love," the most



comprehensive account of the bravery, courage and sacrifices of the 100th Battalion and its parent organization, the 442nd RCT, Hawaii Hosts, Inc., 1985, by its author, John Tsukano, a veteran of the 442nd RCT.

These two authors must be viewed as giants of the Nikkei community in the mainland and Hawaii for their painstaking research, which gave us a new dimension, a broader view and a deeper understanding of the AJA experience.

Throughout CY 41, FDR was acutely aware of the possibility of armed conflict with Imperial Japan. In that context, he was deeply concerned about the loyalty, or lack of loyalty, of the legal immigrant Japanese and their American-born offspring to the Republic.

According to Ms. Weglyn's book, in October 1941, FDR sent a senior State Department employee, Mr. Curtis B. Munson, to the West Coast states of California, Oregon and Washington, and the then-Territory of Hawaii, on a specific intelligence and fact-finding mission as his Special Investigator.

Special Investigator Munson's mission was to contact the FBI, Army Intelligence and the Office of Naval Intelligence in those locations and receive an assessment as to "the loyalty question." He was to submit his written findings directly to the President, which he did.

To make a long story short, Munson returned from his field trip and submitted a highly favorable typewritten report to FDR on November 7, 1941 which, evidence would indicate, was shared only by the State, War and Navy Departments. The fact that the Justice Department was not in the loop is conspicuous to say the least. It is a matter of record that Director J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI, publicly expressed his agency had

no problem about the loyalty of the AJA and their parents; in fact, he was opposed to the evacuation.

In his report, Munson vouched for the loyalty of the Issei and Nisei generations residing in the areas visited, although the Army Intelligence units covered were somewhat reluctant to express wholehearted support for what Munson had been told by the local FBI, and the Office of Naval Intelligence of the 11th, 12th and 13th Naval District (San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle).

Therefore, on December 8, 1941, President Roosevelt had an opportunity to inform the American people about the favorable Munson Report; retrospectively, we could conclude that FDR had fought the war against Japan at our expense.

The JACL's long-suppressed so-called "Munson Report" is that which it commissioned Deborah Lim to produce, based on her authorized access to JACL archival documents, i.e., it is not something produced from whole cloth.

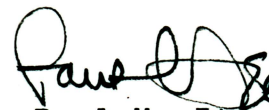
If memory serves me, the Seattle chapter of the JACL first proposed that the biennial convention held in about 1988 in San Diego, should address the matter of openly discussing the LIM Report for eventual release to its members. No action has been taken, to my knowledge, to indicate that the JACL did subsequently attempt to resolve this matter in earnest.

One of the disheartening and disappointing aspects of the JACL's cover-up is the total lack of interest or concern by the third generation in aggressively demanding a resolution of this impasse. There appears to be a lack of leadership even at the district and chapter levels of the organization, such that a "who cares" attitude/posture is detectable.

While the JACL projects an image of elitism, it also is condescending in its treatment of outsiders, which probably contributes to its lack of an increasing membership.

Six years have elapsed and the JACL leadership over that span of time has continued to deny the LIM Report to its membership. It is my personal view that the time has come to consider informing the American people about the JACL's Watergate.

The JACL also likes to portray itself as a civil rights organization. My question to the JACL is, what about the civil rights of the draft resisters/dissidents? Have the brain-washing tactics and strategy of the JACL in the post-evacuation era so desensitized you about the predicament faced by the resisters/dissidents that JACLers could care less? You owe it to yourself to read the LIM Report. At the very least, you must cease being the "quiet" American and express yourself; please express yourself in the PC and other Nikkei vernaculars. I would like to determine the pro or con views of the Sansei generation to measure their knowledge about the resisters and dissidents; those of the Nisei generation are cast in concrete by now.

  
Paul H. Ito

06 May 1994

Editors of:

Hokubei Mainichi

Nichibei Times

Northwest Nikkei

Pacific Citizen

The Rafu Shimpo

Tozai Times

Dear Editor:

#### The JACL's Watergate

This is the third in a series of articles related to the JACL, the Deborah Lim Report, and the World War II draft resisters and dissidents.

The Deborah Lim Report was ostensibly prepared to chronicle the World War II activities of the JACL and its leaders of that era based on JACL archival material. However, the fact the LIM report has been covered-up and suppressed by the contemporary national leaders of the JACL and the Pacific Citizen for such an extended period is clear evidence that this so-called "civil rights" organization has much to hide about its incredibly cruel and ruthless mistreatment of a segment of its own people.

JACL officers at the district and chapter level, in particular, are lacking the intestinal fortitude to confront the organization's own documented record of a conspiratorial performance undeniably critical to its history as it relates to the draft resisters and dissidents.

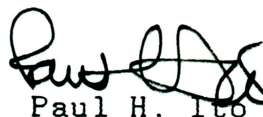
Moreover, the fact that the JACL's Nisei and Sansei generations

who are currently members, have not demanded the report's publication does not speak well for them; it makes them party to the suppression of the information about the brain-washing and hypocritical hatchet job performed on the draft resisters and dissidents of that period in AJA history.

The JACL, through its national headquarters, prominent officers, other leaders, and the Pacific Citizen of those days, variously did paint the draft resisters/dissidents as "disloyals, should be charged with sedition, or were draft dodgers." Based on an analysis of the LIM Report, the national headquarters of the JACL knew at that time, that such stigmata were not only unjustified, but were patently false.

For example, the white project director at Manzanar, Mr. Ralph Merritt, in his February 27, 1943 letter to Mr. Dillon S. Myer, director of the War Relocation Authority (WRA) wrote...."It is important to determine whether the "no" answer to the loyalty question actually means a renouncing of citizenship.....or representing the outcry of a man who has been ruthlessly and wrongfully deprived ...of his rights as a citizen.....It is my considered conclusion that the answer "no" has many shades of meaning and is prompted by many motives, some of which are attributable to our failures both past and present, and some of which may yet be modified and reversed without damage to the principles of American citizenship." "(Merritt Collection #122, Box 15, File 'Chandler,' SC-URL, UCLA."

Thus, unlike the JACL, Merritt saw no presumption of disloyalty in the "no" answer.

  
Paul H. Ito

P/S In addition to my personal background data previously furnished to you, I have been a free lance journalist and independent civil/human rights activist following my retirement from TRW in 1991.

20 May 1994

Dear Mr./Ms. Editor of:

Hokubei Mainichi

Nichibei Times

Northwest Nikkei

Pacific Citizen

The Rafu Shimpo

Tozai Times

This is the fifth and concluding article in the series dealing with the draft resisters and dissidents. However, additional articles may become necessary, depending on the results of the August 1994 JACL biennial convention and how it responds to the suggestions made in Jimmie Omura's recent letter to the editor of the Pacific Citizen (PC). (which the PC has still not published but was published in The Rafu Shimpo, April 12).

#### News Censorship by the JACL/PC

The first in this series of articles concerning the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), its Deborah Lim Report, and their relationship to the draft resisters and dissidents, was mailed on April 22, 1994, to Mr. Richard Suenaga, editor/general manager of the Pacific Citizen (PC); copies of the letter were also sent the same day to five other Nikkei vernaculars along the West Coast.

On May 9, 1994, a survey of the six newspapers was conducted to determine which would publish the first and (by that time) succeeding articles of the series which had been sent to them.

Mr. Suenaga's comments to me that day led me to conclude that the JACL and the PC were continuing to display a thin-skinned reaction to matters which are critical of their past actions and practices. He

also lectured to me that "some Nikkei newspaper editors (translation: specifically, Richard Suenaga) object to journalists sending articles simultaneously to a multiple number of Nikkei newspapers." Talk about subtlety! A feeble attempt on his part to intimidate me. He simply has no grasp of the magnitude of the current problem. I maintain that as much of the Nikkei community as possible must be provided an unabridged account of the facts regarding this long-simmering problem about the draft resisters and dissidents.

On the 17th of May, I followed-up my call of the 9th; a lady at the PC, after checking with Mr. Suenaga, informed me that he was busy and had not made a decision about publishing my material because it now had to be discussed at the upcoming JACL National Board Meetings on the weekend of May 21-22, 1994. I immediately sensed the possibility of a extending the JACL's cover-up, let alone the obstruction of a free flow of information to their subscribers.

I can anticipate what Mr. Suenaga's response to me will be after the national board meeting. He will say that because The Lim Report will be released to the convention attendees, he would not publish my articles. Of course I do not agree with his rationale. It's still a modified form of news censorship. Why should the JACL and the PC be privileged to put its coordinated political spin regarding the release of "THE REPORT" to convention attendees, while denying the opportunity for PC subscribers to read contrasting viewpoints? Does that qualify as evidence of a free press in a democratic society? Hardly!

It must be obvious to the readers, that the JACL is an organization which will not permit its house organ to operate in the family of free press" newspapers. It comes as no surprise that the brain-washing tactics employed by the wartime leadership of the JACL is still in effect. Such a practice has left its contemporary membership

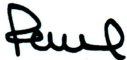


so desensitized about issues such as this (resisters/dissidents), that the average Sansei/Yonsei in our society today, are bent more on a materialistic set of goals than on concern for the emotional and psychological welfare of their fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry in the United States so viciously attacked in the camps for taking a position seeking the recognition of their constitutional rights.

History could well repeat itself; the Sansei/Yonsei generations may yet be called upon where they must stand up for their rights which have been granted to them under the Bill of Rights and the United States Constitution, much in the same manner that confronted the draft resisters and dissidents, i.e., there may yet come a time when the United States and Japan become adversaries once again.

The JACL/PC must fish or cut bait. The time is fast approaching for the American people to become more accurately and fully informed about the scope of the AJA experience and the tragic quality of our history as native-born American citizens.

The JACL must negotiate an amicable settlement with Mr. Jimmie Omura about his suggestions expressed in his recent unpublished letter to Mr. Suenaga.

  
Paul H. Ito