

Enclosed is the close-to-final draft of an open letter to Senator S. I. Hayakawa (a response stimulated in part by his latest broadside against the redress campaign in the PACIFIC CITIZEN), which we are aiming to print in the WASHINGTON POST 2-½ weeks from now as a full (or half) page ad.

The \$12,500 needed to run the letter on a full page will be raised nationwide, with everyone who wants to sign paying a minimum of \$5 toward this amount, *Issei excepted.*

The people signing should say whether they're Issei, Nisei, or Sansei.

The open-letter format was chosen because of its effectiveness in drawing the casual reader, who will know right away from the headline that Hayakawa has in some way angered his constituents. (The printing of the letter in itself is newsworthy and should generate further coverage on redress issues.) The most casual readers will read only the headline and see that Hayakawa's moved the Nikkei to this extreme expression of dissatisfaction; the more interested ones will read the first couple of paragraphs and probably jump to the end; others will skip around the letter. All of them will pick up the main point: that Hayakawa's stand on redress does not represent the views of his constituents.

The letter itself was drafted to be as factual and yet lean as possible. It's unfortunately impossible fully to cover all the history leading up to the camps and what happened to Japanese America afterwards; there just isn't enough space. The letter as it stands now has been seen--and revised by--many people and represents the most solidly agreed-upon version that such a letter can take. So far (after a day's calling), people whose signature will appear on the ad are: Los Angeles--Mako, George Takei, Momo Yashima, Ralph Brannan; Seattle--Chuck Kato, Min Masuda, Hanna Masuda; Portland--Joyce Hata Cawthorne, Peggy Nagae, Kimi Tambara, Harold Onishi, Shiyo Uyetake. People who have supported the idea of the open letter but have not heard the enclosed draft are: Michi Weglyn, Monica Sone, Conrad Yama, Lawson Inada, Amy Uno Ishii, Cherry Kinoshita, Tomio Moriguchi, ~~Michele Nakata~~, Tets Kashima, Jack T. Ishii, Hana Uno Shephard, ..

One major argument against the letter has been that it is too kind to Hayakawa. But because protocol at least demands that respect be paid to his office (remember that members of Congress will be reading the letter) and that we refrain from making a personal attack on him, we have adopted the tone of the letter as it reads. Heavy-breathing, righteous anger drives Congress to protect their own. An open letter/paid ad is itself an extreme gesture. And we have to acknowledge the fact that there are Nikkei who both support redress, and respect Hayakawa, that only on this issue, do they disagree with him.)

We're shooting for the week of March ²³ 12th. To meet that deadline, we have to have cash and copy to the Post between March 5-9.

from Franklin
Here's my \$500

+ some changes I
made in the text.

Sue Kunitomi
Embrey
Nisei
Miyazawa
concentration
camp.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE HONORABLE S. I. HAYAKAWA,

UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

Thirty-seven years ago, on February 19, 1942, forty years of race hatred exploded against "all persons of Japanese ancestry" in the form of a Presidential Executive Order. Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 forced three generations of Nikkei out of our homes, birth-places, businesses; made us give up, curtail, or abandon our property and education; deprived us of all civil rights; stigmatized us as "enemy aliens"; legitimized the race hatred against us; and forced us into concentration camps, where most of us lived regimented lives behind barbed wire, under guard, for an average term of two and a half years.

You, Senator Hayakawa, were not there with us on the West Coast, where the Issei established the Nikkei as working, productive members of the American nation that denied us access to naturalized United States citizenship. You were not with us in the camps.

You have repeatedly, in the press, on radio and television, in the United States and Japan, called the move for redressing the wrongs done the Nikkei and American justice "ridiculous and absurd." You have said we "weren't in prison camps," that "they were relocation centers . . . nothing prison-like about them." You credit the mass removal of Japanese Americans to concentration camps for breaking up the Japanese American "ghettos" and for our higher education in "Antioch, Oberlin, the University of Chicago, Temple University, Mt. Holyoke, and so on," and further credit the camps for giving the Nikkei the opportunities that led to our enjoying the highest per capita income of any group in the nation.

They were concentration camps. Barbed wire, electrified fences, dogs, armed soldiers, machine gun towers made them concentration camps.

The per capita income of the nation rose during WW II. The population increased. For us, our per capita income dropped to nothing, our suicide, madness, and death rates increased, our birth rate flattened out.

The colleges and universities you name are fine schools. We had been attending those schools years before WW II, and did not need the concentration camps to spark our academic achievement. Prior to camp we had been in other good schools: the University of California at Berkeley, UCLA, Stanford, the University of Washington.

It was not our removal to camps that opened up the ghettos, but the repeal of the anti-Oriental laws that barred the Issei from U.S. citizenship, owning property, and certain jobs. After camp, we had nothing. That nothing is what camp gave us, not opportunity. It was our hard work, combined with the help of a few good friends, that brought us our present success. Our success does not make the concentration camps of yesterday any less heinous a violation of American justice. Our success does not excuse the camps from American history.

What you call the white hysteria of the time does not excuse or lessen the damage done to Japanese America or American justice. The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco assessed the value of our

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property lost in 1942 at \$400 million. The Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 paid out a total of \$38 million--3½%. The redress we seek is not for property losses, but for the violation of civil rights, wrongful imprisonment, loss of income, and psychological, social, and cultural damages.

Japanese Americans were as outraged and shocked by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor as any other Americans, and as anxious to defend America. The need for revenge against the Japanese enemy in no way justified the willful mistaking of three generations of Japanese Americans for the foreign Japanese enemy.

Everything you say justifies the mob hysteria of 1942 and ignores the fact that--as Mayor Charles Royer of Seattle wrote this January:

The people of our nation never before and never after have turned so violently against a mass of their own citizens and violated the humanitarian spirit of equality that has always been the moral basis of American law, American pride, and American spirit.

In camp we maintained our faith in the justice of a nation that had broken faith with us. Our all-Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team fought in WW II with a distinction marked with the highest death and casualty rates of any unit who fought in that awful war. In that same spirit of faith in American justice, we seek redress for the camps. What you have said about white backlash and forgetting the hardships we endured in camp convinces us that--unless the concentration camps become a recognized and essential part of American history--our ideals and system are vulnerable to the very tyranny Americans loathe. The concentration camps can happen again.

From an obscure Canadian immigrant, to noted scholar, educator, and U.S. senator, you have become a prominent Japanese American, in many ways. We regret that you choose now to make your reputation characterizing yourself as our "public enemy no. 1." You call yourself that as if the title brings you glory. In our eyes it does not. And on the concentration camps and our concern for redress, you do not speak for Japanese America.

~~The whites~~ ^{Americans} of today are different people. Today the mayors of the cities that once called for our elimination are welcoming us home. The owners and governors of the fairgrounds, livestock exhibition halls, and racetracks that once were hometown concentration camps, are giving us free use of the old assembly center sites to gather four generations of Nikkei together--Issei, Nisei, Sansei, and Yonsei--to remember the camps and stand for redress. In Seattle, Portland, ~~and~~ San Francisco, the white establishment, far from reviving their race hatred, are joining us to remember, to heal, and to encourage the triumph of law. We firmly believe American law can heal itself. We look to you as one of the physicians and are saddened by your mouthing of the cliches of an ancient mob.

and
Los
Angeles