

PACIFIC CITIZEN



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COLUMN LEFT:

Don't fumble the (membership) bill

Our talented Dayton Daily News artist Pete Hironaka who prepares our cartoons each week scores again with his most timely suggestion: "Don't fumble the ball." By the time this week's issue reaches our readers, our JACL chapters should have on hand the 1959 membership forms.

As we all know, members signed up since Nov. 1 are good for 1959.

While winter months are not traditionally the period to canvass the community for membership, it would make a fine Christmas gift from the outgoing cabinet to the incoming cabinet to have the membership committee machinery at least in first gear — working on the renewals, for instance.

We know it would be a big task to ask chapters to sign members for 1959 at this time. The chapters have been busy with PC holiday issue solicitation, for one thing, and all seem to be ready for Christmas season activities. And individual members will be laden with many personal affairs associated with the merry season: gift-shopping, Christmas cards and decorating the home. But, a start on the 1959 membership drive now would be a "Christmas" gesture for the men and women who take the reins of the chapter next year.

We wouldn't think it out-of-order to have a renewal campaign start at some chapter Yuletide function, if it were proposed that the outgoing officers wanted to make a little Christmas gift of so many members signed up for 1959 to the new officers. For each renewal obtained this year may mean more time to add new members next year when the membership drive shifts into high gear.

Those chapters which have their 1959 officers elected, this proposal is still intact as the 1958 cabinet can still take action. The point is that chapters have activities in December and provide a wonderful opportunity to solicit membership.

—H.H.

NISEI THANKSGIVING STORY:

American way vindicated as losses of evacuation compensated by gov't

Washington, D.C.

This Thanksgiving 1958, we Nisei Americans have much to be thankful for. And, as we look about the world today and read the headlines about the troubles and the tragedies of the times, we can be more thankful than ever that we are privileged to live in the United States, and to enjoy the miracles of the American way.

Much that we have to be grateful for in this year of our Lord 1958 is epitomized by the simple ceremony that took place on Monday afternoon, November 10, in the office of the Attorney General of the United States.

At four-twenty-six that Monday afternoon, Attorney General William P. Rogers signed the 26,552d award authorizing payment of \$19,704 to George M. Yanagimachi of the New Washington Oyster Co. of Willapa Bay, Wash.

With his signature, he formally terminated the administrative program that in ten years provided \$36,874,240.49 in payment for some of the real and property losses suffered as a consequence of the military evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast in the spring of 1942.

End of an Epoch

In a real sense, though, the ceremonies marked the end of an epoch for Americans of Japanese ancestry that began when bombs fell on Pearl Harbor that fateful Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, and ignited a chain reaction that forced those of Japanese ancestry on the Pacific Coast to undergo fearful odyssey unprecedented in American history.

That epoch also embraces the saga of the JACL, which has kept watch and ward over the destinies of Americans of Japanese ancestry through the period of our greatest travail.

But, it is most of all the story of the American way, for what happened could have happened only here in America. And what has happened to us Nisei Americans is the epic proof that democracy can—and does—correct its mistakes.

Impressive Ceremonies

The short ceremonies that brought to an end a unique and heroic chapter in Americana was impressive in its simplicity, eloquent in what was left unsaid.

About fifty officials, some with their wives, most of whom had served at one time or another in one capacity or another in the claims program, gathered in the magnificent chambers of the chief law officer of the nation late in the afternoon of November 10.

It may have been coincidence that the Department of Justice, where the rites took place, was the last Government agency to capitulate to the "military necessity" for the evacuation. Be that as it may, press and radio reporters were present, as were newsreel and television cameras to record this bit of history for posterity.

How different from the times when the evacuation orders were first promulgated, or even when the administrative program itself was initiated a decade ago. Then, there was no fanfare, no ceremony.

George C. Doub, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Division that supervised the Japanese Claims Section in the administration of the program and the man most responsible for ex-



A typical interior of the barracks home during the evacuation period (1942-45), this WRA photo was taken at Jerome, Relocation Center in Arkansas.

pediting the project to completion, opened the formalities by reviewing the evacuation and the congressionally authorized program.

Attorney General Responds

The Attorney General then responded, saying in part that "All of us are very pleased that substantial restitution has now been made to these American citizens of Japanese ancestry for their property lost as a result of the extraordinary demands made upon the claimants by our Government in time of war and particularly when this group of our citizens has had such an admirable reputation for integrity, industry, obedience to law, civic responsibility, and loyalty to the United States."

There were those in the listening group who had hoped that the Attorney General would follow the example set by his Assistant Attorney General Doub in addressing the recent 15th Biennial National JACL Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, last August by setting the record straight on the necessity for the mass movement and the failure to prevent it. But they were doomed to disappointment.

The Attorney General did, how-

ever, specifically single out the JACL and its Washington representative for their "helpful cooperation", thereby acknowledging the leading role played by JACL in the entire program.

Then, Mike Masaoka, Washington JACL representative who has been living with this subject matter from the time of the evacuation itself and especially through its legislative and administrative phases, commended the Department for the successful completion of a difficult assignment.

Enoch E. Ellison, chief of the Japanese Claims Section, concluded the ceremonies by commenting that they had just worked themselves out of a job. In so doing, it might be added, few other—if any—government claims programs are ever completed, especially in such a short period of only ten years.

Restrospective Views

Although it has been 16 years since the evacuation, it is not difficult to recall the insistent, aggressive campaign of hate and bigotry that demanded the mass and arbitrary evacuation of 110,442 persons of Japanese ancestry—65 per cent of whom were native-born citizens and 40 per cent of

Supreme Court rules Alabama Pupil Placement Law valid on 'limited grounds'

WASHINGTON—The United States Supreme Court Monday declared the Alabama Pupil Placement law constitutional on its face, leaving open the question whether the law would be valid as applied in individual cases.

It upheld a special district court decision which found "it possible for the law to be applied so as to admit qualified Negro pupils to nonsegregated schools".

Parents of four Birmingham Negro children had challenged the placement law and appealed to the Supreme Court to review and reverse the lower court ruling.

(The JACL has been vitally interested in the school segregation cases since the organization was first founded over a quarter century ago when Nisei in California were taught in segregated schools in some instances.)

The Supreme Court's one-paragraph opinion said it was affirming the lower court's ruling "on limited grounds" on which the

lower court had relied. The special court held the law "furnishes the legal machinery for orderly administration of the public schools in a constitutional manner by the admission of qualified pupils upon a basis of individual merit without regard to their race or color."

"We must presume that it will be so administered," the special court added. "If not, in some future proceeding it is possible that it may be declared unconstitutional in its application."

The Alabama pupil law gives local school boards authority to determine whether any pupil attends public schools. Among factors considered by the school board are available rooms, teaching facilities and transportation, scholastic aptitude, effect of admission of pupils on progress of classmates; possibility of friction among pupils and of disorder or economic retaliation within the community.

whom were under 21 years of age—from our West Coast homes and associations.

Who among us will ever forget—or forgive—General DeWitt's "a Jap's a Jap" philosophy that conceived of military necessity without trial or hearing, without accusation or conviction of any action or crime, and without a declaration of martial law, as was done in Hawaii.

Then, being herded off like cattle to civilian control stations in race tracks and fairgrounds under armed guard while leaving behind everything except what could be carried in one's arms. Then, shipped off to ten barrack-city camps behind barbed wires in the deserts and wastelands of California, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Arkansas to suffer a prison-like existence.

And thanks to God that a humanitarian like Dillon S. Myer directed the program, for as bad as it was it could have been much worse. Consider how the General would have operated the camps.

Activation of 442nd

Then came the turning point, with the activation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team composed of Nisei volunteers from the camps and from Hawaii. And, though the road back was long and hard, Nisei Americans can be proud—and thankful—that we not only made it back but advanced to greater acceptance and opportunities than ever before.

We were helped on the comeback by thousands and millions of Americans of goodwill who, once they learned the facts, tried mightily to "make-up" for the tragedies, the sufferings, the indignities, and the humiliations of the evacuation. And the same Government that authorized the evacuation proposed, and the Congress enacted, remedial legislation that in principle acknowledged that in the hysteria of war the loyalties and allegiances of Americans of Japanese ancestry had been badly misjudged.

The American way was vindicated. Democracy again had demonstrated not only its ability but also its will to correct a mistake.

Chronological Review

Perhaps the easiest and most graphic way in which we can relive the ordeals of evacuation and appreciate just how fortunate we are to live in a society where such miracles as those that have happened to us can take place, is to list chronologically the high-points in our trials and tribulations of the past 16 years, lest we forget.

As we remember what transpired to us as individuals and as a group, let us give thanks this Day, and every day, that we are Americans who have participated in making more meaningful the American dream not only for ourselves but for all others throughout this tension-filled world to see and to believe.

1941

December 7: Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

December 8: Congress declared war against Japan.

December 10: Attorney General Biddle assured persons of Japanese ancestry, citizens and aliens alike, that they would be treated

Continued on Page 7

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Ye Editor's Desk

WE NEEDN'T CALL attention to the fairly comprehensive review of the evacuations claims program, which concluded its administrative aspects Nov. 10, in this week's PC. It's on the front page . . . The special feature was prepared by the Washington JACL Office—with the timely thought that Thanksgiving Day 1958 would be especially meaningful to persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States. But what we'd like to emphasize is that chapter historians should keep this week's issue on file—for it reviews Japanese American history chronologically. We are certain that occasions will arise in the future when this review will prove to be of some value.

LAST FRIDAY'S EXAMINER had more in Vince Flaherty's column on "anti-Japanese war films". He noted there was a steady flow of mail in response to a couple of suggestions which he made—that "distasteful and insulting movies should be ruled off the television screens" . . . While a majority of the mail was sent by people with the usual run of American names, a letter from Mrs. Jean M. Ushijima summed up the sentiments in particular. She wrote:

"I have just finished reading your article and am writing my first letter to a newspaper. My 8 months-old daughter is a fourth generation Japanese American. I dread the day she hears herself called 'Jap' by her friends.

"I grew up in the war camps during World War II, so perhaps I am used to people's feelings regarding 'Japs'. I still don't think it's right for people to hate me for the Pearl Harbor bombing. I can truthfully say, that since I was 9 years old in 1941, I was not a master saboteur. You may not hear from many Japanese Americans since it is not in their nature to speak out about their feelings. But I wanted you to hear from at least one of us who appreciates your printed views on the subject."

Flaherty wanted to assure her that "nobody hates her for anything". And continuing: "I received many letters from Japanese Americans. But Mrs. Ushijima's should read the many letters from her fellow Americans of other races. They deplore the showing of these movies on TV. Several suggested that all war movies should be ruled out, including one in which Germans are called "krautheads" among other disparaging names. It is my firm conviction that Japanese Americans are admired—but I'd have a hard time proving the point as long as television is allowed to hurl these deplorable movies over the air." . . . To which we simply add—"Amen".

One final thought: we're wondering how the local TV stations are reacting to Flaherty's protest . . . If the Los Angeles area didn't have so many stations (there are 7 here), it is conceivable better programming may come about. As it is, some of the independents to fill out the day spend their hard earned money for blocks of film and can't afford to set aside the objectionable movies or even edit them.

THE RECENT 35TH anniversary celebration of the Fresno American Loyalty League caused our Tokyo correspondent Tamotsu Murayama to write of Thomas K. Kanase, who was a prewar member of that chapter. He is the only Nisei to have passed the stiff Japanese bar examination after graduating from the Chuo University school of law—well known for its jurisprudence course . . . There are Nisei lawyers practicing in Japan, but studied law in the states and registered with the Japanese bar to practice in Japan, Tamotsu adds . . . But for Kanase, the road was tougher. He had to master the language first. Now, he has his office in the Fukoku Bldg., an indication that his practice is successful. Among the prewar Nisei doing good in Japan today, he appears distinguished with his long beard.

CREDIT LINES: Our thanks to Mrs. C. Tatsuda of Edina, Minn., for calling attention to a front-page story in the St. Paul Dispatch about photographer Paul Iida . . .

— HARRY HONDA

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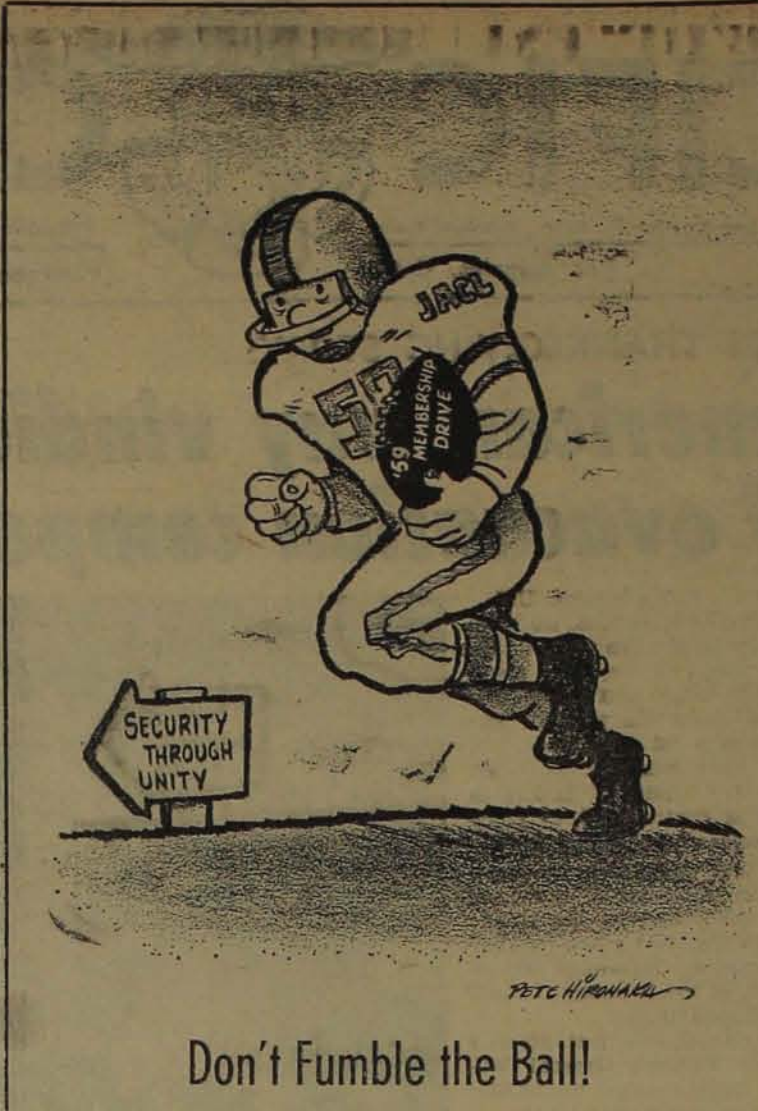
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Don't Fumble the Ball!

PRESS COMMENTS:

An Error and Atonement

(Idaho Statesman Editorial, Nov. 15, 1958)

Hysteria, which seems to be an inherent element of warfare, led to gross injustices some 15 years ago which this country has since recognized and for which it has been endeavoring to make some amends.

A concluding stage in this process of atonement was reached lately when the attorney general of the United States signed papers for the last negotiated payment in restitution to Americans of Japanese ancestry—the Nisei—who were forcibly moved from West Coast homes into detention camps—one of them on then desert area of southern Idaho—as potential enemies in the tense days after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor brought this country into World War II.

The award in this case, No. 26552, brought the total of reimbursements through negotiation to \$36,874,240.49. Manifestly it's a sum totally inadequate to compensate for distress sales of homes, farms, businesses and personal possessions, to say nothing of intangible losses and the suffering and mental anguish of loyal citizens temporarily treated as aliens.

Nor can there ever be adequate recompense for the patriotic devotion and heroism exemplified by the fighting men of the "go for broke" corps of Nisei under the

American flag.

Quite appropriately, a brief, simple ceremony marked this discharge of the national obligation.

Significantly, it was a ceremonial in which there was no voice of rancor from those who had suffered, nor of self-justification for the government.

The Attorney General observed that this was an occasion to pay tribute to "the thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry who have such an admirable reputation for integrity, industry, obedience to law and loyalty to the United States" and who had conducted themselves with "magnificent dignity in a trying period of our history."

Speaking for the Nisei, Mike M. Masaoka, Washington representative of the Japanese American Citizens League, referred simply to the hardships involved and added that the restitution arrangements showed "democracy has the ability to correct some of its mistakes—it is a tribute not only to the American way but to the democratic ideal. Democracy can take care of its mistakes."

It's eminently fitting, and wholesome, that we should be thus reminded of the truth that there's no more genuine attribute of greatness than the readiness to admit an error, and, in so far as possible, to make amends for it.

Nisei press photographer's dramatic photo picked for '59 Red Cross poster

ST. PAUL, Minn. — A dramatic picture taken by Paul Iida, St. Paul Dispatch staff photographer, has been selected by the American Red Cross for its 1959 fund campaign poster.

Iida, with other Dispatch photographers and reporters, went to western Wisconsin last June when a tornado ripped a trail of devastation, killing a number of persons and causing millions of dollars in property damage.

The picture chosen by the Red Cross from among hundreds taken across the nation by professional photographers shows the silhouette of a shattered home framed by gaunt stumps of trees.

The Nisei press photographer made the exposure near Coifax, one of the hardest hit of the western Wisconsin communities.

The photograph first appeared

on the front page of the Dispatch on Friday, June 6.

The Red Cross poster is a drawing of the photograph made by New York artist Anthony Saris, who donated his work to the Red Cross. His illustrations have appeared in Reader's Digest, Colliers, American Heritage, Life and other magazines.

Iida is married, has four children and lives at 1263 E. Junction Ave., Maplewood.

Peace group member

MODESTO. — Tokuo Yamamoto of Clovis was named one of the three regional chairmen for the membership drive of the California Freestone Peach Association that opened Nov. 15. He is an active Clovis JACLer.

PC Letter Box

HOPES FOR 1959

Editor: As the year draws to a close, I have found it fitting to look back upon my inaugural message at the time of the installation of officers for 1958. I found it to be optimistic, with high hopes for great accomplishments and wide member participation.

Now, although there were much more that could have been done this year, I feel that some basic steps were accomplished which should provide a springboard for larger gains in subsequent years. Many new ideas have been formulated, new plans have been proposed and most important, patterns and procedures have been set.

For these contributions and accomplishments, I have grateful appreciation to a responsive and cooperative board which has proven itself so dependable, hard working and done so much to reduce my shortcomings. I also extend my appreciation to the membership-at-large for their patience and kind indulgence.

I know that the board next year will be of the same calibre, the officers capable and hard-working. I trust that they will receive all the help and cooperation from the members for a successful year in 1959.

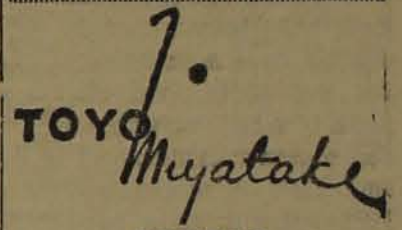
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