LOS ANGELES CEREMONY

City workers fired during WW2 receive payment, apology

LOS ANGELES—Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Los Angeles mayor Fletcher Bowron forced the city’s Japanese American employees to resign. To protect them, no one may look into the mind of an Oriental...if one has been selected for an important role...with respect to securing information and transmitting it or taking part in a fifth column activity...[he] would take every precaution to ward off suspicion by proclaiming loudly his loyalty to the government of the USA.

42 years later, the Los Angeles city council passed and Mayor Tom Bradley signed into law an ordinance providing $5,000 each to 30 former city employees and 6 survivors of others who have died.

In a Sept. 5 ceremony at City Hall, 22 of the recipients were on hand to receive their checks and city proclamations extending apologies and regrets to those Japanese American citizens who suffered hardships and inconveniences resulting from the United States’ actions in 1942 and in particular to those Japanese American employees of the City of Los Angeles whose employment was disrupted by administrative action taken by the city.

Speakers included Bradley, council members David Cunningham (who introduced the measure), Zev Yaroslavsky, Joy Picus, and Gilbert Lindsay. As he introduced the recipients, Bradley said, “We cannot compensate them for their loss, hurt and suffering...We regret the action taken by others and hope this eases the bitterness and hurt they suffered...Expressing their approval of the reparations payments were JACL national director Ron Sakabayashi, PSW district governor Harry Kajihara, Debbie Nakatomi of Asian/Pacific Women’s Network, and Manzanar Committee chair Sue Embry. JACL president plagues to Cunningham and to his aide, Dennis Nishikawa, for his role in locating the former employees.

Referring to redress bills pending in the House and Senate, Sakabayashi said, “This sends a message to Congress that those who know the Japanese Americans best— their community and neighbors—say this is the right and moral thing to do.”

Healing Wounds

K. Patrick Okura, a Los Angeles native who became a city personnel examiner in 1938, called the apology and payment “a historical and meaningful event...I have waited 42 years for and one that now terminates some of my personal frustrations and heals some of my psychic wounds.

In 1942, Washington Post columnist Drew Pearson wrote that “a Japanese American disguising himself as an Irishman by the name of K. Patrick O’Kura” had infiltrated the city government with 50 espionage agents (the number of JA city employees) and planned to sabotage the Water and Power Dept., when Japan attacked the West Coast.

Mayor Bowron later described Okura as “the most dangerous Japanese American in the country.”

“When this hit the headlines of the Los Angeles papers, I was called to the mayor’s office and asked to resign,” Okura recalled. “I refused, and the following day the mayor personally called me in and requested my resignation. I again refused and following a confrontation I was fired. When the Examination Dept. received this news, the entire staff staged a one-day walkout.”

Okura moved to Nebraska, where he worked as a psychologist at Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home. But the accusations made against him in 1942 “prevented my seeking federal employment for 25 years.” Okura credited then-Congressman Spark Matsunaga with clearing his name in 1962.

Mabel Ota, who in 1962 became the state’s first Asian American woman to be a school principal, was forced out of her job at the LAPD’s fingerprint bureau in 1942. She was interned in Poston, Ariz., where her diabetic father died and her daughter suffered brain damage during delivery. Like Okura, she said that the city’s action “has brought back my faith in America.”

Ota plans to donate the redress money to JACL, a church community center, a UCLA scholarship fund, and a senior citizens’ center.

Nisei vets’ resolution passed by Am. Legion

SALT LAKE CITY—A resolution declaring the WW2 internment of Japanese Americans an injustice and recognizing the contributions of Nisei servicemen in Europe and the Pacific was passed by the American Legion at its national convention Sept. 3.

Submitted by the Illinois delegation, the resolution concurs with the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians that the internment was caused by “war hysteria, racial prejudice and political expediency” and praises the Nisei of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service.

The resolution resolves that the American Legion “set forth principles against a recurrence of such a tragedy in deprivation of human rights, to uphold the ideals of what this nation fought for and that the rights of citizenship in no way depend on race or ancestry.”

Originated in Chicago

Although a motion was made to table the resolution, it was turned down by voice vote before the final voting took place.

The resolution was originally adopted by Chicago Nisei Post 1183, then by Illinois’ 1st Division and by the Department of Illinois. Former Nisei Post commander Art Morimatsu attended the convention as a delegate and led the Illinois delegation’s move to have the resolution passed.

A similarly worded resolution was passed at the Veterans of Foreign Wars national convention held in Chicago last month. To help build support for the resolution, Morimatsu helped coordinate the showing of the “Go For Broke!” photo exhibit at Daley Center Plaza.

Opposition to Redress

Resolutions opposing reparations for Nisei internees were submitted last year both by the VFW and American Legion national conventions.

Mayor Tom Bradley signs resolution for Lily Kataoka, widow of former employee Takio Kataoka.

ANCHORAGE testifiers back redress for Aleuts and Nikkei evacuees by Ronald K. Inouye

ANCHORAGE—Supporters of redress greatly outnumbered opponents as Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) and the Alaska Subcommit­tee on Civil Service, Post Office and Federal Services conducted a daylong hearing on redresses bill S 2116 at the Old Federal Building Aug. 29. About 100 people attended.

In 1942, nearly 900 Aleuts were evacuated from their villages because of the danger of a Japanese attack. Housed by the Dept. of Interior in abandoned fish canneries and other long uninhabited sites, over one tenth of the Aleuts died of disease, malnutrition, lack of medical care, and sanitation facilities. Their villages were leased by U.S. servicemen, who later moved to potential Japanese danger zones.

The bill embraces recommendations made last year by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, which include establishment of a community trust fund, individual payments to surviving evacuees, restoration of villages churches destroyed or damaged during WW2, and removal of military debris from inhabited areas.

Referring to the $2,000 per capita payments, Ray Gauthier, a Vietnam veteran held captive for 11 months in the Mekong Delta, said, “Nobody gave me $12,000 when I got back.” Gauthier was the lone anti-redress testifier.

Aleut Redress

Gov. William Sheffield was among the witnesses supporting compensation for Aleuts and Japanese Americans. Community representatives Philemon Tutuakoff of the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Assn., Agafon Krukoff of the Aleut Corporation, Father Paul Mercil of the Aleutian Housing Authority, Vincent Tutuakoff of Unalaska Village, William Ermaloff of Nikolski Village, and legal advisor John Kirkland gave testimony similar to that which they gave before a House subcommittee in June (see July 13 PC). Former evacuees from the village of Shishmaref, St. George, Paul, and Akutan also supported the Aleut portion of the bill.

A delegation of St. George evacuees now living in Anchorage testified generally in support of S 2116 but argued that its major benefits, such as restoration of churches, clean up of WW2 debris, and construction of village community centers, would serve only evacuees who still live in the villages. Since WW2, a large number of evacuated Aleuts have moved to urban areas. Stevens urged the former St. George residents to work out these differences with the Aleut leadership which assisted in drafting the bill.

Alaskan Nikkei Evacuated

Nikkei living in Alaska were interned along with those on the West Coast. Among those testifying on the Japanese American portion of the bill were William Kimura, Amelia Kito, Pauline Moto Hathaway, and Ronald K. Inouye. All supported the provisions of S 2116.

Hathaway and Inouye urged that the evacuated Alaskan Native wives of interned Japanese men be included as beneficiaries.

A number of Issei men were married to En­kito, Indian, or Aleut women and had families. Their wives and young children remained in Alaska when the men were taken away (although male children over 16 were also interned) and were illiterate and had no means of providing for their children. The situation became more tragic when many of the elderly Issei men died in the camps.
All-Chinese American unit different from 442nd

By Elizabeth Lui, East West

SAN FRANCISCO—Walk down the street and ask strangers about the 987th, the all-Chinese American combat unit which served in Europe during WWII, the 967th, the only all-Chinese American Army unit, has maintained a low profile.

Few people know that up to 150 Chinese American men from all parts of the country were organized into a special unit and trained at Camp Crowder, Missouri. Even fewer know that these men served in Yunnan province in China under Gen. Joseph Stilwell. That will change, hoped some veterans, when members of the 967th hold their first reunion in San Francisco on Sept. 16.

Of course, another major reason for the reunion is to give old friends an opportunity to get together again. Although a good number of the men live in California, the rest are scattered all over the country. For the reunion, veterans and their families will be flying in from places such as Kansas, New York, Tennessee, Maryland, Texas, and Hawaii.

"The 967th has been wanting to get together from some time. Fellas kept calling me to organize it," said retired Col. Thomas Lew, who somehow ended up being the head of the reunion organizers. When asked why the men asked him to plan the reunion, Lew joked, "probably because the guy they loved to hate ... I had a reputation for being every GI, as the guy who sticks to regulations."

As members of a special operations company, the men of the 967th provided radio communications for the allied forces in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater. Although some were assigned to Kuming and various other locations in China's Yunnan province and worked with and trained the Chinese forces,

"The fact that the 987th was comprised entirely of Chinese Americans did not seem to bother the men who served in it. 'It's not a matter of discrimination,' opened former staff sergeant Wood Moy, pointed out that the Air Corps and other units had both Caucasian and Chinese American members.

Language Problems

Although some of the veterans surmised that the unit was formed because the military leadership believed a Chinese-speaking unit would be able to work better with the Chinese forces, the fact was that not all the unit members, many of whom were born in the U.S., spoke Chinese.

Moreover, the mainly Cantonese-speaking 987th was unable to communicate with the Mandarin-speaking Chinese forces. The ironies were numerous. Members of the 987th trained their Chinese counterparts in English with the help of English-to-Mandarin translators paid for by the Chinese government.

An additional twist was the fact that the 987th also included men who, being newcomers to the U.S. when drafted, spoke no English. Under the law at the time, non-citizens were prohibited from signing up for the military, but in time of war, non-citizens could be drafted to save space in Limited Entry forces. Approximately half of the men in the 967th were non-citizens, estimated Lew.

In an out-of-court settlement, Tchu was allowed to keep his job for "battery reasons." Yet, Tchu contended, white auditors with less seniority were kept on the job and non-Asians were hired to replace them. "They were looking for more Chinks," he said. "(If) I had to do it again, I'd do it this way."

In the 987th, Tchu was denied his right to return to the station where he was stationed. Tchu had been the producer of the station's news program.

"Theaverage age for the young recruits of the 987th was about 23. Their actual ages, however, were probably higher than what their registration records showed because many came to the U.S. as "paper sons." It was not uncommon for a soldier in the unit to be 15 to 15 years older than what his papers showed.

Picked Up as Spies

The Chinese American men were summoned from all over the country and packed off for basic training at Camp Crowder. The unit encountered no major problems in Missouri, but Lew did recall one incident that now evokes more chuckles than resentment.

It happened one night in Fayetteville when some men in the 987th were looking for directions to their training site. "Before too long, a large number of people started surrounding us. I remembered Lew. 'They thought the Japanese had invaded the United States.'

The men were marched into the county jail despite their protests that they were Chinese American GIs. The sheriff and his men took a "you can't fool 'em" attitude and thought the Japanese had pulled a fast one. Release came only after the sheriff confirmed with the command at Camp Crowder that the men were indeed American GIs.

Danger But No Combat

Due to the nature of their assignment, the men of the 967th did not encounter the level of combat which confronted the 42nd. Nevertheless, the unit did have its share of close calls.

For example, just getting from California to Kuming proved to be a harrowing experience because the small transport ships had to make the journey unescorted. Of the three liberty ships which left the port of Wilmington, only the one carrying the 987th made it safely. The other two fell victim to enemy submarines.

Although the 987th was well received by the Chinese forces and was not assigned to an army unit, Lew recalled that toward the end of their stay, the unit "faced some fireworks, not from the Japanese, but from the local forces."

Lew explained that one Chinese command officer disobeyed Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, causing open fighting between the factions. The men of the 987th "literally had to crawl on their tummies to escape the crossfire."

"Unfortunately, because of the location, our talents were not fully taken advantage of," Lew observed. "If the dialect had been Cantonese, we would have been even more effective."

Catching Up

The reunion will provide an opportunity to get together for the first time in nearly 40 years. As Lew's newsletter put it, the reunion will be a parade of skinny GI turned fat and coiffed GIs turned bald.

The participants will also catch up on how their buddies are doing.

Some may not know, however, that former staff sergeant Hop Louie Woo, known for his fondness for gambling while in the Army, has done extremely well for himself with his avocation. Lew recalled that he used to tell Woo, "Don't gamble. You're not going to get anywhere in life with gambling."

"Now Lou is unlikely to make such a comment to Woo, who is now executive vice president for Caesar's in Las Vegas."

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County pays $25,000 for bias

LOS ANGELES — Ventura County paid $25,000 to a former employee who had been discharged because of his race and national ancestry, announced attorney Gerald Sato Aug. 28.

Villain Salazar, who sued the county for $1 million in damages, had alleged that in August 1981 the county removed him from his auditor's job for "battery reasons." The county countered, however, that Salazar and other auditors with less seniority were kept on the job and non-Asians were hired to replace him.

In an out-of-court settlement, Tchu was awarded back pay to August 1981, less actual earnings for the period.

Radio host apologizes, quits

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Radio talk show host Morton Downey Jr. today apologized after he had displayed a "lack of sensitivity," resigned from station KFBK Aug. 24. The day before he repeatedly used the word "Chinaman" in an ethnic joke and when Tom Chinn called to complain, shouted at the city councilman on the air.

Downey, who married a woman of Asian descent, said he did not think "Chinaman" was derogatory but that he realized "an avalanche of (disapproving) phone calls." He was not the only one. After Downey's resignation, a large number of people called both the radio station and Chinn to express their distinct for Asians. KFBK reporter Ed Ferguson told the Sacramento Bee that one caller told him that, "They nearly blew my head off in Vietnam, and now I'm unemployed and you're riding around in Cadillacs. Don't tell me to be nice to Asians."

News in Brief

Counties pays $25,000 for bias

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TV news graphic corrected

LOS ANGELES—While KTLY's news anchor was reporting that former city employees of Japanese descent had received compensation for their wartime dis­missal, the New York Times reported that the Japanese government paid these people by returning the 987th to Kumming proved to be a harrowing experience because the small transport ships had to make the journey unescorted. Of the three liberty ships which left the port of Wilmington, only the one carrying the 987th made it safely. The other two fell victim to enemy submarines.

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ABC responds to Olympic ‘Jap’ protest

LOS ANGELES—During the Olympics, many Nikki were surprised and angered when a U.S. gold medal winner referred to his opponent as a ‘Jap’ during a nationally broadcast interview. JACL PSW regional director John Saito, who served as ABC president when Nikki was屾eld, broadcast a telegram of protest to the one ABC officer who is the most honored man on the bleachers because of Americanism from the network—but not the kind he had hoped for.

Randall Lewis, who was interviewed by ABC’s Russ Helling in front of Japanese-American wrestling station WAGI, said, “I thought I would have a pretty wild match with that Jap.” Nikki warriors who viewed the JACL officer were upset that both Helling and the network as a whole allowed the slur to pass without comment.

In a letter to Saito dated Aug. 21, ABC’s audience information manager wrote: “I was surprised and angered when a U.S. gold medal winner referred in a nationally broadcast interview to his opponent as a ‘Jap’ during an Olympic tournament.

Mr. Roene Areloge has asked me to convey his personal regrets because he was offended by our coverage of Randall Lewis during the Olympics. However, he would also like to point out that Mr. Lewis is not an employee of this network and ABC has no control over Mr. Lewis’s opinions or the expressions he uses to voice those opinions.

We have tried to track down the exact comment. Mr. Lewis made, but were unsuccessful, since you are the only complaint being presented to ABC by Americanism, most of the interview sessions during the L.A. games were live, and as a result, there was no way to know what an interviewee would say until the time of the actual interview.

Please be assured that it is not the policy of ABC to portray any racial or ethnic group in a negative light. We are proud of our network’s heartfelt commitment to fairness and equality for all people.”

As for the statement that only one protest had been received, Saito said, “They’re lying through their teeth.” His office has received letters written to ABC by concerned individuals, including one signed by the mayor and city council of Gardena. Angry viewers have also phoned the network and sent complaints to the U.S. Olympic Committee and to Lewis himself.

A number of Nikkei who called JACL and the two local JA newspapers said they strongly suspected that a similar remark about Blacks, Jews, or another ethnic group would have caused an uproar and made headlines. The “Jap” remark appeared to be the one that received the least response. Rather than lodge another protest, Saito said he planned to have the “Jap” incident mentioned along with other complaints being presented to ABC by Americanism, most of the interview sessions during the Olympics.

The coalition of minority organizations, in which Saito represents JACL, does not feel ABC lived up to its “good faith” agreement to portray minorities in significant numbers during its Olympic coverage.

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Learning While Earning

DURING MY YEARS practicing law in Philadelphia, I experienced a varied practice, representing those of modest means (Issei and the so-called war-brides) as well as wealthy Republican municipalities in the nearby suburbs, and even some national and international corporations. And there were a few matters for some Nisei. But since practically no Nisei was involved in a business proprietorship in Pennsylvania, we did not have the privilege of providing commercial legal services to them. 

Except one.

IN THE ADJOINING county of Montgomery, in the municipality called Lansdale, there existed—and continues to exist—a unique business: chick-sexing, entering into contracts with hatcheries through the United States as well as Europe and South America, which contracts would then be subcontracted to chick-sexors. This “nukatorio-kambetai” provided many a Nisei chick-sexor with generous financial returns, particularly at a time when avenues to livelihood were limited. Many Nisei veterans were able to get back on their feet following their discharge from military service.

THE BUSINESS was founded in 1937 by a determined, hard-working fellow from Terminal Island (Calif.) by the name of S. John Nitta—“Shigeru” to oldtimers. Upon graduation from high school, and along with many other Nisei facing bleak economic times, John looked about for a way to survive. After rejecting suggestions that good money could be made as a masseur or as a radio operator aboard a tuna boat, he boldly turned to the then little-known art of chick-sexing, i.e., eliminating the cockerels from the pullets so that the poultry farmer’s expenses are halved by feeding and maintaining only egg-producing birds.

There was only one place where John might pick up this then-closely-guarded secret: he proceeded to Nagoya, Japan, and went to school there. With the art firmly learned, he then returned to the United States and opened up a school to share the secret. Thus was born the American Chick Sexing School which has many graduates, some of whom undoubtedly are reading these very words. At first, there were so few students—just one at the beginning—that the school’s expenses far exceeded income.

THEN, THE BUSINESS named “Amchick” (short for “American Chick Sexing Association”) was formed, entering into general contracts with hatcheries throughout the United States. But here again in 1945, at the beginning it was tough going. How does one convince a skeptical farmer that one has the ability to segregate, by sex, day-old chicks? But John persevered, and grew. Today, his oldest son David is firmly in charge—in the vein of his father, which is a hard act to follow.

IT WAS NOT easy for John. He was the oldest of five children when his father passed away. John was 12 years old. He was then attending school in Wakuba, Wakayama, but returned to the United States to complete his education—and work. His mother struggled and managed to raise all the children. She’s still alive today, bless her.

AS A LAWYER serving and working with John, I learned a lot about being a careful craftsman in reviewing documents and drafting contracts. I can afford to admit this now because he no longer pays me for that education I received from him.
These Soldiers Not Just Fading Away

The fellows down at Nisei Legion Post 185 dedicated the "Go for Broke" exhibit here in Denver the other day. Gov. Dick Lamm, who opposes cash redress payments as a matter of principle, was there to say a few heartfelt words on behalf of the Nisei sacrifice during WW2, and so was Denver Mayor Federico Pena.

The exhibit, of course, is deeply moving memorial to the Nisei infantrymen who served with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Battalion, and in the Pacific as well, and paid such a devastating price in blood. But just the other day John Coil, who wrote about the dedication ceremony in the Rocky Mountain News, was the advancing age of the men who had gone through WW2.

"Martial music blared from a loudspeaker, and four old men in blue caps and matching two-tone shirts stood at ease with the flags of Colorado and the United States," Coil wrote. And further down in his column, Coil said of Gov. Lamm: "He stood with the rest of the dignitaries on the platform as the four old soldiers posted the colors, still sharp as knives when they cut the corner."

Coil is still a relative youngster and perhaps it is understandable that he is including the Harry Amano, Yosh Arai, John Noguchi and Jun Oya as old soldiers. Well, shocks, the war they served in was four decades ago and the years understandably have added frost to their hair and plates.

And of course they deserve to be called old soldiers in a respectful manner. But the feats of courage they and their buddies demonstrated should remain young forever in our national memories, and that's what the perfunctory exhibit is all about.

I've said it before in this space and I'll say it again. We Japanese Americans owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the guys who had been sent in our country to swallow the humiliation of evacuation and incarceration to volunteer for military service. It is not overly dramatic to say that they wrote the message of Japanese American loyalty with their blood and all of us are beneficiaries of their sacrifice.

Many of those who volunteered for service were under enormous hostile pressure from peers who saw neither wisdom nor logic in fighting for a nation that had betrayed them. There was much that was persuasive in the argument that the U.S. should do right by Japanese Americans before they agreed to fight for it.

But the Nisei volunteers, and the draftees who followed them, laid down no preconditions. That was not the way they were. And so these fellows who have grown into old soldiers shook off the jeers and hostility of those lesser faith, were bloodied and battle lost good buddies, and it is only proper that we should commemorate what they experienced.

Old soldiers indeed. That is a description that they can accept and proudly wear as a badge of respect, admiration and affection.

More Comments on Senate Redress Hearing

The Aug. 29 Los Angeles Times printed two letters in response to its coverage of the Aug. 16 Senate redress hearing. R.L. Kado of Gardena wrote:

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Letters

Readers get mad as Sam plays it again

Pacific Citizen I love you but I'm appalled that you would print the picture (Aug. 24 PC) of what is probably the world's ugliest man on page 1 or for that matter on any page of any issue. And also there's this article in which different unpatriotic Americans voiced their poisonous opinions as to what was going on in those days of infamy when we were imprisoned in U.S. style concentration camps. I especially wish to comment on two of those most knowledgeable "know it all" namites. The retired U.S. Army colonel from Phoenix (I wouldn't honor him by using his--or is it a her--name) cites a public lie. Well, the lie is him for chances are he wasn't even around Dec. 7, 1941, for he proves what a school boy he is in his completely ignorant and what has to be the most un-American. Irresponsible remark I've ever heard: "a Chinese American, an American, and a Jap--and a Black. I beg your pardon... attacking Japanese ethnicity."

Then there's this Caucasian Rachel Kauwai, with her ridiculous statements. No doubt this one is now a divorce and doing nothing but screaming vindiciveness and bitterness because of it. Sayonara and drop dead to these two bums and all others that think sick as they do. CHIYERKO HEDANI Costa Mesa, CA

S.I. Hayakawa epitomizes the current cultural dilemma of American-Japanese Americans are at a crossroad. Our fate depends on how we approach the future--a close knit ethnic group or a watered down version of our predecessors. With individuals like Hayakawa running their mouths off, in public, who needs role models? Or enemies, for that matter? While many consider Hayakawa to be an educated person, I choose to believe he is a fool, a traitor, and a heartless politician who will do anything to prove his American-ness to his Anglo cronies who pat him on the back for being a good old boy. As a Sansei, I am concerned for redness. As a American, I am disturbed by Hayakawa's predictions about the campaign experience. After all, where was he? THOMAS OKAZAKI Arcadia, Calif.

Personal endorsements

I am writing to voice my response to Fred Hirasa's letter (Aug. 31 PC), regarding the nomination speech made by the outgoing national president for one of the candidates for the next biennium. My comment is not with regard to the propriety of what was done but with the issue of rights. Each member of the JACL has a right to his/her personal opinion of the issue of support for an individual candidate for any JACL office. I would strongly oppose any attempt to prevent the right of free speech in any campaign in future national conventions. The right to voice one's opinion, and that was only that, should not interfere with the delegate's ultimate right to cast their vote as they chose to do. It was made clear that person or persons who endorsed a particular candidate did so as an individual and not as the spokesperson for a chapter, district or national JACL. Office holders must not voice personal opinions when voicing a position or policy statement for the group they represent unless authorized to do so by that group; however, with regard to nominating and seconding speeches, each person can voice personal opinion. The delegates are intelligent enough to make their own decisions as to their vote. I have heard too often the comment, Why did you not speak? Your comments were relevant and important in the final consideration of how to vote. I would hope that whatever side you were on, that we go on from here to assure an effective and strong JACL. Assumptions are dangerous, and I would hope that each delegate did their homework and listened and came to their own decision as to how to cast their vote for the many offices. I don't believe that votes were cast based on assumptions. Many things were done differently this past convention with regard to campaigning. Everything done was within the realm of propriety and fairness. YOSHIO NAKASHIMA San Francisco

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YELL O AKASHIMA San Francisco
U.S.-Japan workshop panelists stress understanding

By Yasumasa Kurada
(Special to the Pacific Citizen)

HONOLULU—Minister William Clark Jr., deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo and Minister Michihiko Kurihara, chair of the JACL Washington, D.C., were honored as keynote speakers at the JACL convention workshop on U.S.-Japan relations Aug. 15.

Chairing the workshop was Frank Ashi, who mentioned on potential role of JACL in U.S.-Japan relations were JACL President Floyd Shimomura, Tokyo Chapter President, Dick Yamashita, and David Nakado of Washington, D.C.

Minister Clark spoke positively of recent developments in the region. He cited increased high-level contacts between the two countries since President Reagan’s visit to Japan last November. The secretaries of state and defense of the United States as well as the vice president have visited Japan in the recent past.

He also reported progress made in regard to various trade and defense issues which constitute the two most important issues in U.S.-Japan relations.

An impression one received by listening to his remarks is that, although not all the problems were solved, much progress has been made and is being continued to be made, particularly in regard to defense issues. Clark declared, “The relationship between the U.S. and Japan has never been better.” To buttress his point, he reported that Japan’s increase in defense expenditure almost equaled that of the U.S. in recent years and that, “This achievement eclipses the NATO nations’ average increase by a factor of four, and this was achieved in spite of severe budget constraints in Japan.”

Increasingly Important Relationships

He placed these remarks in the context of increased importance the Pacific and Asian nations have to the United States as indicated by the volume of trade between the two areas, which is expected to exceed $20 billion last year. He also noted that Ambassador Mike Mansfield has expressed the relationship between the U.S. and Japan the “most important bilateral relationship in the world.”

Clark pointed out the responsibility of those who understand both countries. They must form a “bridge” and “often take positions that are not popular and say things that need to be said.”

He described how difficult it was to make the Japanese people familiar with the growing strength of the relationship between the two countries.

Second keynote speaker was Minister Kurihira from Washington, D.C., who represented the Japan side of the panel. Kurihira’s presentation began with his recollection of earlier years in Los Angeles when he developed close relationships with many Japanese friends.

He described how hard it was to make the Japanese Americans to work today’s success in America. He referred to himself as “one of your Japanese cousins in Hollywood.”

Friction Inevitable

Kurihira considers the past the only decade of growth in the development and relationships between the two countries. He believes that certain frictions are inevitable in this process of rapid growth. However, he believes at least some frictions and also some problems (dependence) toward the United States.

He is also quick to point out that political frictions between the two nations were often caused by unilateral U.S. decisions. He probably was referring to such incidents as the internment of Japanese Americans during the Nixon shocks” of July 15 and Aug. 15, 1971. Nixon unilaterally made a decision to visit China and to impose a 10 percent surcharge on all imported items from overseas in 1971.

It is true that Kurihira too noted that recent shift of interest towards the Pacific area. He ended his presentation by emphasizing the importance of making further efforts to improve the relationships between the United States and Japan, he concluded.

Dick Yamashita commented on the need to know facts, as Minister Clark had pointed out. He alluded to the United States and Japan as having the most important partnership in the Pacific while at the same time being the two most advanced nations in the world.

The chairman then described the JACL’s U.S.-Japan Relations Committee, which president James Tsuchiya visited Japan and met with Prime Minister Sanuki and others. In 1982, the JACL passes a resolution calling for better U.S.-Japan relations. In 1983, Shimomura and Ron Waka- amaie of the United States were invited to visit Japan and met with the prime minister and other important figures. Following Iwama’s summary, the three JACL panelists spoke once more expanding on remarks earlier and encouraged each other’s points.

Approximately 45 minutes were devoted to questions and answers.

Questions ranged from the discussion on unitary subjects to handicapped American tourists in Japan. Perhaps some of the more intimate inhabitants of their ancestral, the session included such suggestions as one made by Minister Clark, who said that each local chapter should work with Japan America Society chapters.

Nakado suggested that we invite Japanese diplomats and businessmen to our local chapters as functions as a means to learn more about Japan, and for personal relations with the JACL.

The workshop was attended by well over 100 people, most of whom stayed through the long sessions that lasted two and a half hours. The audience of the panel was composed of the Japan-American students who have provided perspectives on U.S.-Japan relations that are more varied and practical.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the workshop provided the audience with a macro-view of what is happening in U.S.-Japan relations accompanied by numerous facts as some practical suggestions. All those who attended — including the speakers — seemed to be in agreement that there is much work to be done and that we should start with learning more about each other.

KOREANS

Continued from Page 4

The Japanese entertainment field is filled with superstars of Korean ancestry: Hibiari Misao, Keiko Matsuzaka, Hiroshi Hori, Harumi Itsuki, Harumi Miyako, etc.

During World War II, 100,000 Koreans were conscripted into the Japanese armed forces. Additional tens of thousands were drafted into the war effort, and many were unable to escape their alien status through naturalization without renouncing their Korean names and ethnic identity.

JACL delegates at the convention accepted the Golden Gate chapter’s statement that JACL, as an organization committed to civil and human rights, has a natural and special interest in the similar rights of residents in their ancestral land. Japan.

The Japanese American experience has taught us that a nation’s commitment to democracy is reflected in the manner in which it treats its minorities. Japanese Americans take pride in the heritage of their ancestral, and believe that Japanese government’s granting of an opportunity for equal franchise with dignity to their Korean residents is a human rights issue of great importance to all citizens of the world.

It is an act which could also enhance Japan’s image abroad.

Setting an Example

As one of the leading industrial states, Japan’s practice in dealing with its minorities is being scrutinized the world over. Japan is known as a model for the acceptance of ethnic minority in the modern industrial states. The American experience has taught us a sense of ethnicity that takes pride in more than one culture. It is a conscious effort to become democracy work in multi-ethnic America. It is a perspective, which when implemented in Japan, will bring recognition and respect to Japan among the world’s moral leaders.

The JACL National Council organized the instruction to bring its expression of concern to the attention of the government of the United States through its State Department.
The lenses are sent to the Nikkei Lions Club of San Francisco, who in turn forward them to the Lions Eye Foundation for Project "Hope." The metal or partially metal frames will be sent to a metal recycler, who will pay a small sum to help the center's finances. Glasses may be set to John Shinagawa, 301 Phillips Ct, Richmond, CA 94804.

Tulare Kings
VISALIA, Calif.—A combination business meeting and barbeque, with election of officers, takes place at the Ozawa residence, 324 W. McCormick, Saturday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m. Also on the program is a showing of the JALC videotape, "A Tale of Nisei Retirement."

Watsonville
WATSONVILLE, Calif.—Three local scholarships were awarded by the chapter. Kip Miura received $500 and Taguatt.au attend UC Berkeley to pursue a career in medicine. Janice Sakata received $200 and will attend Pomona College. Francine Tosa received $250 and plans to transfer to UC Berkeley after two years at Pacific Union College. Dr. Conrad Hamako was scholarship committee chair.

KODANSHA ENCYCLOPEDIA—JAPAN

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Chapter Pulse

ARUSA—Approximately 400 persons attended the 29th Annual Japanese American Community Graduation Program last June at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel. Ninety Denver high school graduates were honored.

After the Mile Hi JACL established a scholarship in memory of the late chapter president Harry Sakata in 1956, other organizations began to form what is now a community-wide scholarship program. Today, 32 grants, gifts and scholarships are awarded, ranging from $300 to $750.

Chapters in Denver

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At the 1984 Honolulu Convention

Tangible thanks—Author and longtime JACL supporter Thanas Taro Higa of Honolulu studies the plaque recognizing his many contributions to the organization. He was honored at the convention’s Aloha Banquet.

Helpmate—Hawaii’s First Lady, Jean Ariyoshi (center) talks with May Dick, Gardena Valley delegate (left) and Cherry Kinoshita of Seattle, JACLer of the Biennium, during reception.

Gubernatorial address—Gov. George Ariyoshi speaks to conveneres at Washington Place, the governor’s official residence.

Anticipation—Laua-goers (above) watch baked pig being unearthed from underground oven.

End of the week—Attending the Sayonara Banquet (at left) were Irene Hirano, women’s concerns committee chair; Patrick Ogawa, Downtown Los Angeles Chapter president; Rose Ochi, vice president for membership; and Isamu Noguchi, a Japanese American of the Biennium.

James Imahara:
Son of Immigrants

The personal recollection (as told to Anne Butler Poindexter) of a charter member of Flo- rin JACL, Imahara and his young family of 10 were evacuated to Arkansas in 1942. They begrudgingly settled after the war in Louisiana (Chicago was too cold, and to hell with California), where he successfully ran a nursery business and saw to it that nine of ten children finished college. One of the few first-person Nisei histories to be published, the fifth daughter encouraged her dad to write what had happened to him and the community, how he felt and survived... “This little book may encourage other Nisei to tell the flip-side of their Evacuation story, the memoirs, thoughts, emotions and philosophy of life.”—Harry Honda.

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When the Pacific Citizen was getting set to go to press, we became aware of the eyes under the head of the Little Tokyo Committee. Several people, including various human rights, anecdotes, reveries and people. This one (PC. July 25, 1942) is about Little Tokyo. Many of its early years are not pretty titles. This column (with comments added) is none of several describing what it was like in Little Tokyo in the "30s.

By Larry Tajiri

Little Tokyo was always a part of the tracks.

In Los Angeles, it was called Little Tokyo, a collection of cafes, drug stores, noodle joints, department stores, barber shops, and used car stores where five seas swimming in a tank in the window. It had third-class, second-class, and first-class page or two of English type for the niche. (The PC style for Japanese words was "lower case" those days.)

Before Roosevelt and his book equidistant further underground, it had its gambling ball (see July 26, 1942) Yamato Hall) and its books. The Daily Racing Form was available at the magazine stand alongside the Boston culture of the Atlantic Monthly. And in those days when jobs were scarce the boys from Hawaii would stand on the street corners with their guitars and sing soft island songs. Little Tokyo had its share of love and laughter, births and deaths. It was an oriental mono.

We remember Little Tokyo best the day of the earthquake in March 1933 (March 10) when panic hit Los Angeles and the 28-story city hall was shaken. This time the eyes were unshaken and the streets were shaking down the walk into the gutter. Most of the people of Little Tokyo gathered in the big parking lot around the S.K. (Yueda Bigd at First and San Pedro) and waited for doomsday.

We rushed back to the news plant (the Kashi Mainichi, 339 E. 2nd St.) and put out an ("gakou"). Looking back, now we wonder why. The earthquake was hardly news to people of Los Angeles and of Little Tokyo, but it seemed the thing to do. Later, when the dust settled on the jampacked and downed to Terminal Island where the fishermen lived (the other close common to the epicenter of the earthquake). That was the same time other Terminal Islanders were riding the Lindsay Line. It was deserted, except for a few sturdy folks guards warming themselves over a fire. There had been rumors of a tidal wave and the public was crazy for the heights of Dominguez hills.

We came back in the dawn past soldiers on guard in the de- cluttered streets of Long Beach and through the fallen street furniture. It was peaceful and quiet.

Not all were quiet.

A few months the people of Little Tokyo will be scattered via walls of the Arizona desert. The lands of the Minia and the Sands of death. Little Tokyo had its hearts of gold and laughter, births and deaths.

When Japanese words was "lower case" those days.

Karl Kinaga from San Jose, breathless after receiving "the kiss" to which he had been looking forward with comments added (p: 13. 1964) Karl, a recipient of the JACL's "Lifer's Award," told me he had never had anything like it. When it was given to him, it will go into the Little Tokyo Centennial time capsule.

And from K. Patrick Okura, now of Washington, D.C. (here a few past week when the City of Los Angeles presented its report to Nixon, the employees who were markedly dismissed from their jobs because of their ancestry in early 1942) comes this note about another Nixon stare of prejudice (or "thief's eye," in our language). This was reflected in the scenes. Some wondered if this collection of sketches might someday be in book form. "It's not in the same league with the JACL, granted, but it will go into the Little Tokyo Centennial time capsule."

By Harry Honda

The Thousand Club Kiss

By Dr. Frank F. Sakamoto, 1901 Club Immediate Past National Chairman

Good morning, people.

First of all, the 'THOUSAND CLUB KISS,' delivered at the national convention in Hawaii by Ellen Kubo and Mitzi Baba, was enthusiastically received. They did a great job and became a "Lifer." Then came Ted Imouye and Northern California-Western Nevada-Pacific Governor Yosh Nakama. Lily Abiko of San Francisco didn't care to kiss by a member of her own gender but nevertheless thought it was a lot of fun and became a "Lifer." And Rose Nakamura of San Francisco just as did did Dan Nish of French Camp. Our good friend John Yasumoto said, "Please accommodate me for this is the first time I'm getting something for joining anything besides getting a handshake." (the above was written by PC.)
in the war, the Kidos moved to married she was then moved to Fong.

...is one of the former internees...and is living here...Yasui i, dr Barbara, br

...tired from a post with the state...Ministry was interned with her husband...Japanese father

...Eldest of the...children, ...was interned with her husband...Los Angeles; 23. - Takeo Aka

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'Japan Experts'

The longer I stay in Japan, the more I realize that I cannot be a Japan expert, so I easily amused myself when people who have worked in Japan for a few years representing U.S. firms or who have studied on do some research on special phases of the Japanese economic, political or social structures are categorized as "experts."

Bluntly speaking, a foreigner who regards himself as being a Japan expert is either an egotist or a dunderhead. Admittedly, there are a number of persons who are extremely knowledgeable in certain fields, among them former U.S. Ambassador Edwin Reischauer and writers like Donald Keene and Frank Gibbons. To this group could be added a number of former Nisei like Mas Ogawa (former Japan Times editor), Wally Shobata (Mainichi Daily), Chugyo Koito (Kyodo News and UN University), Kay Tateishi (AP) and about a dozen others who have earned their living as journalists with the local media. From the business field, such individuals as Shig Yamada (Duty Free Shopper), George Tanaka and Koyo Nagami (Nissei Corp.), Ken Kono (JTBI & New Otani), Sen Nakajima (U.S. Embassy Security Corp.) and scores of others may be added as experts in some fields.

Then, there are a dozen foreign correspondents who have been in Japan from a dozen to 35 years. Some have married Japanese women and have become almost bicultural. Yet, most of them are too modest to say that they are "experts."

A foreigner coming to Japan tends to move within certain narrow circles, especially if he looks non-Japanese or does not speak the language. His impressions are formed from what he can glean within his small circle of associates. This is further narrowed by the reluctance of these associates to say things which may offend him.

What can be said is that Japan has changed completely and dramatically in many respects but that it still retains some basic elements of its ethnic background. Without some knowledge of prewar Japan, the postwar period, the startling phenomena of the 1960s and 1970s and the changing aspirations of the current generation, an observer's viewpoint can cover only one small tile of the mosaic pattern. If one is to understand the psyche of a nation more intimately, this can be best be done through osmosis, or the continual association with all types of people and situations. A good understanding can be achieved by massive reading of the vernacular publications and literature, but such knowledge needs to be verified by actual experience.

For example, a Sansei who works for a major Japanese corporation will gain a truer picture of the Japanese society than a scholar who visits Japan for one or two years' research, because he will acquire a "gut understanding of what makes his associates tick. He will encounter the semipai-kohai relationships, the chagren and oseteki, the sobeisai, kurashi, osoni and even kodens and customs and may relive his overtime frustrations by taking up karaoke or mah jong.

If you if people several knowledgeable persons talking about Japan there will be many differences to opinion, proving that while much of the mystery of Japan has been exposed, differences in interpretation still remain.

Thus, as I ride the commuter train every morning and evening for fifty minutes, listening to the casual conversations, or observing my fellow passengers reading or standing in silence, I realize that I am still learning. The more than 11 million people in Tokyo do not represent Japan, so I watch the wide varieties of programs on Japanese TV, realizing that these programs present items and stories that have commercial appeal and not the down-to-earth roots of the Japanese people.

Explaining Japan is like explaining the English language—there are more exceptions than general rules. At best, one can write about some rules and some exceptions.