Min Yasui Dies at 70; Services Held in Denver
by Robert Shimabukuro

DENVER — On a clear, crisp and sunny Rocky Mountain day, over 200 friends, relatives, political activists and advocates from across the country crowded into the Fairmount Mortuary Chapel to pay their respects to human rights activist and former JAACLREC chair Minoru Yasui Nov. 16.

At the age of 70, the retired attorney and Denver Community Relations Commission director who devoted his life to the cause of human and civil rights succumbed to cancer on Nov. 12.

Violated Court Order

On March 28, 1942, Yasui walked into a Portland police station and surrendered to authorities to test the constitutionality of the military curfew order which prohibited Japanese and Italian nationals from being on the streets between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. The curfew had been ordered following the establishment of military zones prescribed by President Franklin Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066, issued on Feb. 19, 1942.

On Nov. 16, 1942, Yasui was convicted for the curfew violation because he was found by District Court Judge Alger Lee Tregler in contempt of court for curfew violations on June 21, 1943. Yasui appealed his conviction.

Wartime Laws Upheld

The U.S. Supreme Court, however, upheld both Yasui’s and Gordon Hirabayashi’s convictions for curfew violations on June 21, 1943. The court ruled that Judge

Continued on page 5

Eu Injured by Burglar; Reward Being Offered
by Lynn Sakamoto-Chung and J.K. Yamamoto

LOS ANGELES — More than $6,000 in reward money has been collected by the local chapter of Chinese American Citizens Alliance for the arrest and conviction of the man who attacked and robbed California Secretary of State March Fong Eu on Nov. 10 and Nov. 16.

The reward fund, initiated by CACA the day after the assault, is being spearheaded by an ad hoc committee of CACA members led by national president Irvin Lai. Lai told PC he hopes the money will provide the incentive for “a good citizen or an officer to forward with information about the attack.”

“Someone out there knows who did it,” he added. “Maybe by putting a price on his [the attacker’s] head, that someone will turn him in.”

Lai acknowledged that the attack was probably not racially motivated. But, he said, “The Asian community wants to fight back. This is a war for everyone to participate. We can exercise our strength and fight crime.”

Released From Hospital

Eu, 64, was released Nov. 16 from Westside Hospital, where she was treated for multiple cuts and bruises. Earlier reports that she would require plastic surgery to repair facial scars have been dismissed.

“I’m very pleased to be alive,” Eu said at a Nov. 17 press conference. “That as you can see, it’s been just one week and I’m doing very well. I surprised myself, how quickly I recovered. The psychologist says I’m doing extremely well. The doctor says I’m doing extremely well.”

The recently reelected secretary of state joked, “It helps to be a politician in a situation like this, because we have pretty good doctors.”

The Appeals Court also rejected the government’s contention that payments made under the 1946 Evacuation Claims Act constituted just compensation.

Claims Eliminated

However, the court also eliminated 22 of the 24 claims in the original suit, leaving only one dealing with loss of property. In a sort of testament filed in the Supreme Court in August, NCJAR sought restoration of the other claims, which include violations of constitutional rights. The petition also seeks the waiving of sovereign immunity, which requires that the government consent to be sued before it can be sued.

The government also filed a petition in the Court, charging that “the statute of limitations has long since run out on the constitutional claims that are not barred by sovereign immunity,” according to U.S. Solicitor General Charles Fried.

Hori was not surprised that the government’s petition was granted first. “The government’s petitions for certiorari are usually granted,” he said. “Our petition has neither been accepted nor rejected, but remains pending.”

The Court, he speculated, “may want to treat the government’s petition first, and then treat ours if that case is lost.”

Rep Robert Matsui (D-Calif.) said, “I’m disappointed that the Court decided to take up the Justice Department’s appeal, because a well-established rule in the law is that individuals can have recourse in the courts if the government seizes property without due process.”

Continued on Page 3

Asian Candidates Victorious in Washington, Texas Races

Continued from last week, PC presents election results involving Asian American candidates.

The Nov. 4 elections ended in easy wins for three Washington candidates, defeat for a first-time mayoral candidate in Oregon, and a historic victory in the race for the Los Angeles City Council.

Two Chinese American Democrats retained their seats in the Washington State House of Representatives, defeating their Republican opponents by comfortable margins.

Art Wang of the 27th District (Tacoma) received 11,781 votes to Bill Donaldson’s 3,734. Gary Locke of the 37th District (Seattle) beat Bill Baylor, 17,212 to 10,832.

Seattle Municipal Court Judge Ron Mamiya (Position 3) was re-elected with 81,241 votes.

Mayoral Race

In Oregon, Ore., a community of 9,500 near the Idaho border, George Iseri lost the mayoral
CHERRY HILL, N.J. — Longtime JACLer Jack Kunio Ozawa died suddenly Nov. 8 at age 78. He had retired from ARCO last year and was serving his second consecutive term as president of Philadelphia Chapter JACL.

Originally from Seattle, he attended the University of Washington and was evacuated to the Minidoka, Idaho camp during WW2. After graduating from the Missouri School of Mines, he was employed as an engineer at Atlantic Refining Company of Philadelphia in 1946. He later worked for W.T. Kellogg in New York and Harvey Research Laboratory near Chicago, then returned to ARCO in Philadelphia to work in research and development.

Ozawa was president of Philadelphia JACL in 1947-48 and 1965-66, and of New York JACL in 1964-66. He also served as Eastern District Council treasurer and vice governor and was a recipient of the Silver and Saphire pins. He was a member of 1000 Club, cochair of the Philadelphia Redress Committee and an LEC prime solicitor.

He also served as treasurer for the Pan Asian Association of Philadelphia and the Pan Asian Conference for Economic Development, and was a board member of the Japanese House of Fairmount Park.

A board member of Nationalities Service Center, he was able to receive the NSK Award on behalf of Philadelphia JACL in December at the Union League. "Jack was always generous of his time, talents and resources for JACL, Pan Asian, and others," said Hiroshi Uyehara of Philadelphia JACL. "His presence will be greatly missed by the Greater Philadelphia community and Philadelphia Chapter board."

MIT Professor Gets Japan Physics Prize
CAMBRIDGE — MIT Professor Toyohi Tanaka has been awarded the Nishina Memorial Prize, one of the highest awards presented by the Japanese physics community, for his "fundamentally important contribution to physics."

Tanaka was cited for his discovery of a phase transition and critical phenomena in polymer gels and his explanation of their physical and chemical basis.

San Francisco Police Arrest Youths for Attacking Asians
SAN FRANCISCO — Three high school students were arrested Oct. 22 and charged with assault with a deadly weapon and robbery in connection with an attack on eight Asian teenagers last June.

According to police, on Oct. 16 a group of about 20 Black youths attacked eight Asian students as they got off a bus at the corner of Palou and Phelps streets.

Two of the victims were treated at a hospital with wounds from a metal hook, and Officer Eddie Dare of the SFPD Community Services Department. Police detined to the names of the victims and of two of the three arrested because they are minors.

Dare said the Black students had verbally harassed one of the Asian students many times as he rode home from Philip Bu School on the No. 44 O'Shaughnessy bus. The Asian student was riding with two friends from the Cameron House bilingual after-school program on Oct. 16 when he was again harassed by Black youths.

The three friends, ages 14, 15 and 16, along with five other Asian students, got off the bus and were quickly shadowed by 20 Blacks from the same bus, according to Dare.

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San Francisco Police Arrest Youths for Attacking Asians

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LOS ANGELES — The power and fragility of liberty were the combined messages delivered to the approximately 200 people who attended the Nov. 9 unveiling and dedication of the Nikkei Veterans Monument in Little Tokyo Square.

The sculpture, by local artist Marlee Wilcomb, depicts a raised hand holding a lit torch and is based on a design by Karl Oike, which in turn was based on the emblem of the 100th Battalion of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team. But, while honoring the thousands of Japanese Americans who have served their country, the monument will also serve as a reminder of the plight of the more than 120,000 Japanese American citizens and resident aliens who were uprooted from the West Coast and incarcerated during W.W.2.

This irony was alluded to often by ceremony speakers and several 442nd veterans who were in attendance. One such veteran, Motomo Nakasako, was interned at Heart Mountain, Wyo., when he was 17. Like many of his fellow Nisei, he left the camp to become a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which distinguished itself in several European campaigns.

Nakasako, currently director of Veterans Affairs for Los Angeles County, told the Los Angeles Times, "We must look back in history and be reminded what happened to the Japanese American soldiers...so future generations will be reminded when there is a breakdown in our constitutional guarantees."

The ceremony included a dedication by the Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation, a speech by former assemblyman Paul Bannai, and a performance by Senrei Tailor.

Plans for the sculpture were started five years ago when a businessman, who wished to remain anonymous, donated $40,000 for the creation of a monument to honor Japanese American veterans. Since that time, the project has been under the auspices of the Nisei Veterans Coordinating Council.
Good Night, Sweet Prince

by Gracey Ueyehara
LEC Executive Director

Do not go gentle into that good night
Old age should burn and rave at close of day
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light
— Dylan Thomas

While in the midst of writing my LEC Update, I received the call letting me know Minoru Yasui, our primary spiritual leader for JACL’s redress effort, was called on Nov. 23 to his final rest.

Though we had been informed how seriously he was ill, we still held hoping for his recovery, I am sure Min, too, hoped that he could recover and gain sufficient strength to continue the fight.

In his last letter to me before his surgery, he wrote, “I truly de-plore quitting the redress battle, at this juncture—but the physical deterioration of the kind of functions needs to be faced realistically.”

He started out by saying, “Ah, well what will be will be.” That was not Min, for he was not one to give up the fight which he started in 1942. And so, in his formal letter regretting the resignation of the JACL-LEC board of directors, he will request that he be allowed to remain on the board.

As chairman of the JACL National Redress Committee, Min went north and south, east and west, throughout the United States—even to Hawaii and Japan —to bring the redress message to people who needed to learn what can happen in a democracy if we are not vigilant about our individual freedom.

He said that we have to see that the Constitution and the Bill of Rights is held high as a standard of equal weight for all people who reside in this nation, and that we have to uphold this principle in America if we are to live the rest of the world to freedom.

We were fortunate that we had the total dedication of Min Yasui for the long fight. Redress requires inner strength and belief that justice will be done. All of us must combine our inner strength and fire in action wherever he spoke.

He wrote me a final delivery, and the words of Dylan Thomas aptly describe Min, who gave his very best in the redress movement advancing when others no longer believed in the great tragedy of 1942. Min raged at the injustice which resulted from the years of racism experienced by our people.

I recall how many times he would say, “I’m getting too old for this fight,” but he never stopped until his body made it impossible for him.

Just last weekend, during my presentation to the Mountain Plains District Council, many of us talked about Min. I closed with the statement that President Reagan, in the recent election campaign, was exhorting voters to work together to win one more for the Gipper.” I challenged the JACLs to put forth their best efforts to complete the task which had Min Yasui at the forefront.

Minoru Yasui raged with all his might at the inequalities and the injustice suffered by American of Japanese ancestry, and in the process led the fight for the rights of all Americans. All of us who worked with him on redressing the wrongs so that America will live up to the noble goals enunciated by the Founding Fathers now put with Hamlet’s words:

“Now crick a noble heart.
Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.”

Statement from JACL President Harry Kajihara

On behalf of all JACL leaders, I wish to express deepest condolences to the immediate family of Minoru Yasui: Truth daughters Iris, Laurel and Holly; brothers Ray, Robert and Homer; sisters Michi and Yuko, and his five grandchildren.

We Americans, in particular those of Japanese ancestry, are very proud of Min Yasui. He showed “guts and courage” beyond the measure of many of us, when he stood up against the government in 1942 to test the constitutionality of the curfew and other adverse government actions flowing from Executive Order 9066.

Min will live forever in our hearts as one illustrious and courageous individual who devoted his life work for equality and justice for all Americans. He will be severely missed in the current rediss pursuit.

A Charitable Deduction

Tax advisers have been suggesting that taxpayers who itemize their deductions will do well to speed up their charitable giving, in light of the fact that President Reagan has proposed tax reform legislation. And, taxpayers who do not itemize will no longer qualify for charitable deductions in 1981.

Contributions to the JACL PAC Citizen TypeSetter Fund, which recently sealed $77,000, have pushed the fund to within 20.5 percent of the $400,000 goal. Please help the JACL PAC Citizen attain this goal by the end of the year by sending your donation to the PC, 941 E. Third St., Room 200, Los Angeles, CA 90013.
Min Yasui: A Lifetime of Fighting for Justice

After 70 years of a life devoted to the pursuit of justice and civil rights for all Americans, retired lawyer, administrator, and champion of Japanese American rights Minoru Yasui died of cancer in a Denver hospital Nov. 12.

Yasui’s cancer had been diagnosed during the summer. He had entered the hospital for surgery Sept. 6. The former JACL-LEC chair resigned from his post Aug. 31, citing his deteriorating health as the reason.

Yasui was born Oct. 19, 1916, in Hood River, Ore., the third of Masuo and Shidzuyo Yasui’s nine children. Yasui’s father had immigrated to the U.S. in 1903 at the age of 16. Physically unsuited for manual labor, Masuo dreamed of becoming a lawyer while working as a houseboy in Portland.

But he soon found out that only citizens could become lawyers, and because he was neither Caucasian nor Black, he could not become a citizen.

So the energetic Masuo decided to pass on his dreams to his children and instead opened a mercantile store in Hood River in 1906. Slowly, Masuo and his brother Reichi acquired lands and orchards, and by 1940 had owned outright or accumulated interest in close to 1,000 acres of farmland in the Hood River valley.

Masuo became a prominent member of the Hood River community, a friend and neighbor to some of the most influential people in Oregon.

Minoru was born 10 years after his father first settled in Hood River, and his father’s dream of becoming a lawyer was passed on to Min. He seemed the ideal person.

His most outstanding quality was his desire to help other people. He always was willing to champion other people, and he never cared whether someone had enough money to pay for his services. He could talk on any level and people liked what he spoke. While still a law student, he lectured in the House State on parliamentary procedure. He was an expert parliamentarian.

—Ron Shinzaki

Yasui was graduated from Hood River High School and enrolled in the University of Oregon. During summers, he worked at the family’s apple and pear orchards and the general store. Yasui graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Oregon in 1937.

He then became a student of law at the university’s law school and graduated with an LLB in June 1939. The following September, he was admitted to the Oregon State Bar.

Yasui accepted the position at the age of 23. From March 1, 1940 until Dec. 7, 1941, Yasui worked for the consulate.

It was because of his employment with the consulate that District Court James Alger Fee would later rule that Yasui had elected to be rich by now.

—Bernard Kitts

Yasui found job opportunities for young AJA attorneys fresh out of law school scarce in 1939. Starting a practice seemed even more difficult. Through his father’s influence, Yasui was offered a job with the Consul General of Japan in Chicago. The single, and free-spirited Yasui accepted the position at the age of 23. From March 1, 1940 until Dec. 7, 1941, Yasui worked for the consulate.

It was because of his employment with the consulate that District Court James Alger Fee would later rule that Yasui had elected to be a citizen of Japan rather than the United States.

Because my duties were not overly onerous at the consulate, I was personally engaged in running a Boy Scout of America troop, and I participated in various community groups. I led a hyperactive social life, carousing in the bars along North Rush Street, playing poker all night, and generally running around too much.

—Min Yasui, quoted in And Justice For All (1984) by John Tateishi

On Dec. 7, 1941, Yasui was outraged that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. He immediately quit his job with the consul general. Soon after, he received orders to report for active duty with the U.S. Army at Camp Vancouver in Washington.

Upon returning to Portland and reporting for duty across the Columbia River at Camp Vancouver, Yasui was instructed to wait for further instructions. So he returned to Hood River.

Yasui followed with interest the U.S. government’s response to the rising anti-Japanese sentiment. Daily, the newspapers chronicled the mounting tension and agitation against Japanese Americans.

The FBI arrested several thousand Japanese.

Buddhist priests, Japanese-language teachers, martial arts instructors, leaders of community organizations and other persons of Japanese birth were deemed “suspicious” and summarily arrested. Included in the mass incarceration was Yasui’s father. At a subsequent hearing, the elder Yasui was put on trial in early 1942 to determine whether he should be held permanently as a dangerous enemy alien. The hearing was conducted by the Justice Department, and with the younger Yasui present to assist his father, Masuo was adjudged a dangerous alien and incarcerated in a Justice Department camp. He was not released until the spring of 1946.

It was during this period of heightened anti-Japanese sentiment that many and political leaders called for the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast.

On Feb. 19, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which empowered the Secretary of War to prescribe “military areas” and to either exclude any or all persons from such areas or to establish the conditions under which persons might enter, remain in, or leave such areas.

It was during this period of heightened anti-Japanese sentiment that many and political leaders called for the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast.
Yasu was awaiting action on the appeal of his conviction, Yasui spent much of his time appealing on behalf of Yasui had not forfeited his citizenship, but that the military curfew would not be constitutional, Judge Fee found that Yasui's nine months in jail was the summer of 1944. He was not of high enough moral character to practice law in the house. Yasui was granted permission to practice in January 1946. }

While Yasui was awaiting action on the appeal of his conviction, he was not of high enough moral character to practice law in the house. Yasui was granted permission to practice in January 1946.

Yasu was granted permission to rejoin family members in Denver in the summer of 1944. In June 1945, Yasui passed the bar examination, receiving the certificate and gold pen presented to the first lawyer of Japanese ancestry to pass the California bar examination. He was finally sworn in as a member of the bar on December 15, 1945.

As of December 1945, Yasui was working on a number of cases, including the appeal of his conviction in the United States v. Yasui case, which was heard in the Supreme Court. He was also working on legal cases for other Japanese Americans, including the case of four Japanese American citizens who were denied the right to practice law in California due to their race.

Yasu continued his legal practice in California, and in 1947, he was appointed to the bench of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, becoming the first Japanese American judge in California. He served on the bench until 1970, when he retired due to health reasons.

Yasu's appointment to the bench was a significant milestone in the history of Japanese American legal professionals in California. It represented a recognition of his contributions to the legal profession and the community, and it set a precedent for future generations of Japanese American lawyers.

Yasu's legal career and contributions to the legal profession were important in paving the way for other Japanese Americans to follow in his footsteps. His appointment to the bench helped to break down barriers and open doors for other Japanese American lawyers, and it helped to ensure that the legal profession would continue to be a source of pride and opportunity for future generations.
SACRAMENTO — Actress Kim Miyori and actress/tv writer Lane Nakihara will be the featured performers of what is being billed as a "Japanese American Redress Event" Nov. 26, 7 p.m., at Sacramento City College Auditorium, 5850 Freeport Blvd.

Nakihara will be presented in his one-man play, "Life in the Fast Lane," which examines the Japanese American experience. Also scheduled to participate in the event are California Reps. Robert Matsui and Norman Mineta. Both will provide an update on redress efforts in Congress. Also invited are Sana Daniel Knox and Spark Matsunaga of Hawaii.

Proceeds from the event, sponsored by Americans for Fairness, will go toward educational efforts and lobbying for redress. Ticket sales will benefit the non-profit person. For more information contact Ray Kyono, (916) 974-6990.

Donations to Pacific Citizen For Typesetting Fund

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Supporter of Redress Defeated in New York Congressional Election

NEW YORK — A congressional candidate who had promised to support redress legislation was defeated by the incumbent in the Nov. 4 election.

George Hirsch, a Democrat, sought to represent the 13th District, which runs along the East River and includes Chinatown and parts of Soho. He lost to Republican Bill Green, 40,340 (50%) to 36,454 (49%), with 99 percent of the precincts reporting.

During an Oct. 14 meeting with members of the 13th Congressional District Rainbow Club, he addressed the issue of redress: "The dignity and rights of the Japanese Americans interred during WWII cry out for reparations and redress by our nation. I am in full support of congressional action — providing for a national apology to those Americans of Japanese ancestry who were interned, and the establishment of a trust fund for educational and humanitarian purposes, as well as monetary compensation for surviving interests." "National action on this fundamental issue of civil rights and human dignity is long past due," from a report by New York Nisei Bibliophile.

YASUI: FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

Continued from Page 6

From 1946 to 1962, Yasui practiced law in Denver. His first clients were primarily indigent minorities, who oftentimes, once acquitted, would neglect to pay him. In 1967, Yasui was appointed executive director of Denver's Commission on Community Relations, a position he held until he retired in 1981.

In 1963, racial violence erupted in the Five Points section of Denver. Yasui decided to see first hand what was happening. He found out. First he was beaten to the point of being hauled through the air. Then he got jumped, beat up, and relieved of his wallet by three neighborhood toughs.

James Meadow, in Rocky Mountain News, Jan. 16, 1984

Yasui served on numerous Denver agencies and organizations. He was also active in issues of concern to Japanese Americans.

From 1946 to 1962 he served as the Tri-District representative of the JACL. In while in that position he worked for the passage of the Japanese Evolution Claims Act. After Congress passed the act, Yasui helped AJAs file claims.

Uncle Min just never gave up. He was obsessed with justice being done, even when other people thought he was crazy for trying to see justice done. He's a real American folk hero.

—Sharon Maeda

In 1979, Yasui was appointed chair of the JACL Committee on Redress, and in 1982 he was asked to chair the newly-formed Pacific American Red­

Continued from Page 6

nated Education Committee, which was activated in the 1984 Na­

tional JACL convention in Honolulu.

On Feb. 1, 1983, Yasui filed a petition for writ of error coram nobis in the Federal District Court of Oregon, requesting a vacation of his 1941 conviction. The case is presently pending, pending appeal in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I have to say that I came to JACL because of people like Bob Takasugi and Min Yasui; the people who made an exception of me. They took their special talents to advance our interests. When you look at this bill, he was an exception of me. He was a real one-of-a-kind individual, at the point of his death. He was a special person. He was an excellent role model as a man of the bar serving the public interest.

—Rose Ochi

Min Yasui stood up, came forward and challenged what he believed to be unconstitutional law, while others faltered or acquiesced. He placed his career, his reputation and his freedom on the line.

Peggy Nose contributed to this article.

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not meet, Yasui until 1985, he became an advocate of Yasui while at law school when he read about Yasui v. the United States in his constitutional law class.

It was then that he learned of the enormity of what had happened to 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry, said Matsu. "That one decision, in my opinion, has put myself and other lawyers who have read that case in a position where we think we have an understanding of justice and what it all means."

"So I would have to say that through that case, Matsu continued, "Minoru Yasui will live in the minds of literally millions of people as long as we have a democratic form of government."

Minita mourned the death "of a friend and a champion," and Yasui had fought for "what he knew to be right: the reversal of injustices," a "spirit of justice in the minds of literally millions of people as long as we have a democratic form of government."

The family of Minoru Yasui gratefully acknowledges the messages of sympathy sent by his many friends, supporters and associates. We are certain that Min's spirit and commitment will be carried by others and that his voice will continue to be heard.

The family has requested that the presence of Portland, Ore., Robert Okamoto and his daughters Iris, Laurel, and Holly of Denver; brothers Hay of Hood River, Ore., Robert of Williamsport, Pa., and Homer of Portland, Ore.; sisters Miehi of Denver and Yuji of Rockville, Md.; and five grandchildren.

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