

Pacific Citizen

Newstand: 25¢

\$1.50 postpaid (U.S., Can.) / \$2.30 (Japan Air)

#2933/ Vol. 131, No. 14 ISSN: 0030-8579

National Publication of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)

SEPT. 22-28, 2000

JACL Applauds House Vote for Stronger Hate Crimes Legislation

In a bipartisan show of support for stronger hate crime legislation, the House of Representatives on Sept. 14 passed a motion by a margin of 232-192 to include the Senate-passed hate crimes amendment on the final version of the Department of Defense Reauthorization bill.

While non-binding, the motion, introduced by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., and John Conyers, D-Mich., instructs the conferees on the Reauthorization bill to retain intact the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act amendment (previously the Hate Crimes Prevention Act) as passed by the Senate on June 20.

Although the conferees still have the discretion to strip the amendment from the bill, the vote indicates the will of the House with an unequivocal public statement in support of hate crimes legislation.

Voting in favor of the motion was Congressman Xavier Becerra, D-Los Angeles. "Let the message be clear — acts of violence stemming from prejudice and hatred will not be tolerated," said Becerra. "Such crimes not only hurt the individual, they wound and scar entire communities. Just last year, Los Angeles experienced the repercussions of violence based on hate when Buford Oneal Furrow shot and killed Joseph Ito, a Filipino postal employee, and violently attacked the North Valley Jewish Community Center, wounding five people. These shootings not only shattered the lives of these individuals and their families, but also threatened our efforts towards building a safer community that is based on respect and tolerance."

"We commend the House of Representatives for putting people before partisanship by supporting this motion," said JACL National President Floyd Mori. "The JACL now calls on the conferees to maintain the integrity of this vote and implement the wishes of both the

House and the Senate by including the hate crimes amendment in the final version of the Defense Reauthorization bill."

"Hate crimes are particularly insidious because they send a message of intolerance to an entire community," said JACL Midwest Regional Director Bill Yoshino, who serves on the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes. "This legislation is vital because it would empower local law enforcement agencies with the tools to fully investigate and prosecute hate crimes, so that the tragedy of the crime is not compounded by the travesty of an inadequate investigation."

"As a country that celebrates its diversity and believes in justice, the United States can do no less than take a strong moral stand against immoral acts of hate by enacting protective measures such as the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act," said JACL Vice President of Public Affairs Ryan Chin.

John Tateishi, JACL national executive director, added, "The strong bipartisan support in both houses for this bill confirms that the American people believe this and want this legislation. We urge the House to pass the bill out of conference and to the president for signature."

If passed by the House, the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act would strengthen existing law in two ways: by broadening the categories of bias violence to include sexual orientation, gender and disability (in addition to race, religion, national origin) and by removing the intent requirement that the offender harmed his/her victim because (not simply while) he/she was participating in a federally protected act. But federal jurisdiction would be limited to cases of actual or attempted bodily injury. Federal involvement can be in the form of prosecutorial, forensic and/or financial assistance. ■

Author Offers Insight on Hirohito and Japan's Wartime Accountability

By TRACY URA
Writer/Reporter

PASADENA, Calif.—Emperor Hirohito may no longer be living but the life and legacy of one of the 20th century's most notorious leaders just got a lot more complex, at least according to a new book which offers potentially controversial insights into Japan's culpability for crimes committed during World War II.

Amidst current lawsuits filed in the United States and legislative efforts to hold the Japanese government accountable for wartime atrocities, historian Herbert P. Bix spoke about his new biography, "Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan," on Sept. 14 as part of the Pacific Asia Museum's "Authors on Asia Series."

The book, which has yet to find a Japanese translator and publisher because of its politically charged content, was released in the United States by HarperCollins on Aug. 27.

It is being hailed by scholars as one of the most incisive portraits of Hirohito to date, revealing fresh evidence that his role in shaping Japan's aggression during the 1930s and 1940s was more active than previously portrayed.

"When I began to research and

to eventually produce this biography, I was already convinced that the American image of Hirohito was inaccurate," said Bix, a renowned professor of history at Hitotsubashi University, who

shielded from scrutiny," he said.

Bix's extensive research involved sifting through letters, diaries and documents from the Imperial Court, various Japanese Cabinet officials and the U.S.

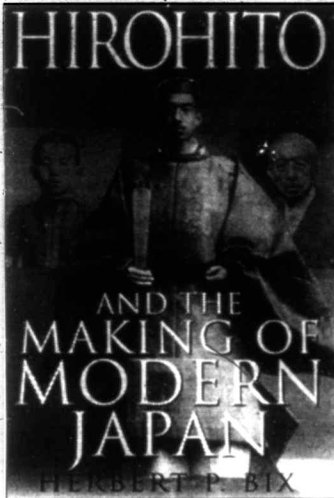
National Archives, which held records of meetings between Hirohito and Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Much of these materials has begun to trickle out only in the last decade.

Based on these findings and the secondary scholarship he consulted, Bix asserted that Hirohito was "not Japan's Hitler," nor was he simply a passive pawn caught up in a militarist bureaucracy. Although the latter was the persona Hirohito often hid behind, the author concluded that the person behind the image was "a stubborn, complex, conflicted man who had to assume responsibilities that no human being could possibly measure up to."

Hirohito assumed the throne in 1926 at the age of 25 and reigned until his death in 1989.

The publication of this biography comes at a particularly heated time, coinciding with a number of U.S. lawsuits against Japan alleging sex slavery and forced labor in various Asian

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managed to uncover sources to which no other Western writers previously had access.

"Unfortunately, most of the records that have survived deliberate Japanese destruction of government in 1945 remain

Yoshihiro Uchida: Founding Father of Judo in the Olympic Games

By MITSUKO IWAMA
Special to the Pacific Citizen

At a mere 5'2", Yoshihiro "Yosh" Uchida's physical stature belies the great contribution he has made to athletic history, and in particular, getting judo recognized as an Olympic sport.

Neither age (he's 80) nor one bad eye has slowed down the seventh-degree black belt, who is currently at the Sydney Olympics, supporting judo athletes from around the world. He is credited as the founding father of judo in the modern Olympics.

Uchida's love of judo gave him the determination to establish judo as a world recognized sport. War, fear and hate had destroyed his boyhood home and separated his family from the nation he loved, but Uchida sought to heal these wounds through the two holds of judo — respect for himself and respect for others.

"I reflected upon why Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps during World War II," said Uchida. "I realized the importance of education, community and political involvement. I considered what had given me the strength to survive through the war. The discipline of judo had given me tremendous inner peace and courage. I believed that if I could

share with others this ancient Japanese art, they could learn the value of sharing the wealth of cultures in the world. Through understanding each other, we can work towards unity and peace in the world."

Judo premiered in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. But, the road to global recognition was long.

Uchida was born in 1920 in Calexico, Calif., a small U.S.-Mexico border town. His parents came from Kumamoto, Japan, seeking the American dream. His father labored on the railroads, earning a dollar a day, and then worked on a farm with other Japanese immigrants.

Since the Issei wanted their children to learn to respect their ancestral traditions through the martial arts, they scraped their small savings to convert a warehouse into an athletic facility.

In this dilapidated warehouse, Uchida trained rigorously in the art of judo. He studied the intricate movements, techniques that he would later pass on to future champions. But most importantly, Uchida absorbed the discipline and strength of character required by judo.

Then World War II came. Like many young men, Uchida, 22 at the time, enlisted in the U.S. Army. He left his family on Feb. 27, 1942.



Public Responds to Lee's Release

By Pacific Citizen Staff
and Associated Press

Public reaction was swift following the Sept. 13 release of Wen Ho Lee, 60, a former Los Alamos laboratory scientist, after he pleaded guilty to one felony count of mishandling weapons secret.

Soon after Lee's release, the 80/20 Initiative started a national petition drive asking President Clinton to grant Lee a presidential pardon. Asian American leaders also brought up their concerns at the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Is-

landers' meeting in New York on Sept. 20. They called for an investigation into whether racism played a role in Lee's case.

The Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) and CAUSE-Vision 21 both applauded U.S. District Court Judge James Parker for speaking out against what they deemed as excessive abuse of power by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and also called for an independent investigation.

In a written statement, OCA, one of eight parties that submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. District Court this August, said, in part: "This is a serious miscarriage of justice and, if condoned by senior government officials, is deeply troubling. OCA calls for an independent inquiry into how this case

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Commentaries on the Wen Ho Lee Case

Wen Ho Lee Case Recalls WWII Internment Camp Prejudices

By PHIL SHIGEKUNI
San Fernando JACL Chapter

The unconscionable treatment of Wen Ho Lee triggers painful remembrances of the treatment Japanese Americans received at the hands of our government 58 years ago. His experience should motivate us to work to improve the way our government deals with all Asian Americans.

To be sure, there are differences between the two events. In 1942, 120,000 of us received no due process, while Lee has a cadre of attorneys. That notwithstanding, to place him in solitary confinement with one hour of exercise each day and one hour to visit relatives each week — fully manacled — raises serious questions concerning the treatment of someone who, under the Constitution, is presumed to be innocent.

The FBI admits lying to him concerning his polygraph test results to extract a confession. Prior to releasing him, Judge Parker apologized on behalf of the government, citing how he was misled by "misinformation" given to him in sworn testimony by an FBI agent. Attorney General Reno refused to apologize, saying Lee needed to "look within himself" as to why he was unwilling to tell what he did with seven missing tapes. She, in essence, implied he was confined to break his will and force this information from him. This seems hardly the way the American justice system should operate and is greatly at odds with the standards we hold up for other nations.

The conclusion of the Redress Commission (CWIRC) in 1982 was that the internment resulted from "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." Lee was one person versus 120,000 JAs. But all of the above forces have resulted in similar injustices. Racial profiling of Lee prejudged that because he was Chinese, though he was a naturalized American, his loyalty was suspect. In 1942, it was war hysteria that led to suspicion of our loyalty. In 1999, it was fear that China secured secret missile information. After

three years of costly effort, the FBI only charged Lee with downloading secret information on unsecured computers. Then it was revealed that John Deutch, former CIA director, downloaded similar materials on his personal computer which was far more accessible. He has not been charged. The *New York Times*, without any evidence, announced that Lee was being accused of espionage, thus pandering to the prejudices of the American public. This line was eagerly picked up by other media. In 1942, the *Los Angeles Times* and other newspapers printed blatant lies concerning the loyalty of JAs, pandering to the racial prejudices of those times.

The year 1942 was a presidential election year. Some historians say President Roosevelt used the JA incarceration to deflect criticism for being caught unaware at Pearl Harbor. This is also an election year. The Cox Commission's investigation prompted Republicans to accuse the administration of lax security. Lee was the scapegoat to deflect this criticism.

In 1942, then Attorney General Earl Warren, who was running for (California) governor, stated something to the effect that the fact that no espionage had occurred thus far only meant the JAs were plotting to "spring it on us." Last year, the New Mexico's attorney general, who was running for Congress, eagerly backed the FBI's incarceration of Lee as a suspected spy.

The JACL has stated a commitment to telling the story of our incarceration so it does not happen to anyone else. It seems to me when our government discriminates against anyone, it is incumbent upon us to recall our experience, to defend the rights of those affected. Some Sansei and Yonsei JACLers are saying they cannot relate to what happened to their parents and grandparents during World War II. They also say they are more in touch with identifying AA, rather than purely JA. Perhaps the older JACLers can help the younger JACLers relate our WWII experiences to current injustices so they may be empowered to work for the benefit of all AAs. ■

Lee Case Proves 80-20, Democrats Not Representative of AAs

By ROGER MINAMI

The dismissal of all but one count against scientist Wen Ho Lee is proof that the 80-20 Initiative and Vice President Gore do not represent Asian Americans.

Bill Richardson, who was once under consideration by the vice president as his running mate, replied, "The issue here is, are we getting the tapes back. I think that is the key. The plea bargain enables us to get that information."

First, Lee's attorneys sent letters to the Justice Department shortly before he was indicted, offering to take a polygraph test to answer questions about the "missing" tapes. Secondly, a senior law enforcement official involved in the case told the *Los Angeles Times* that "the government now accepts Lee's claim, made through his lawyers, that he destroyed the seven tapes." Secretary Richardson, speaking on behalf of the Clinton-Gore administration over the past months has made a number of misleading statements regarding Lee's case. Speaking on behalf of the administration, he should have the decency to simply apologize to this man for the damage they have brought upon him.

As to the government's claim that the case against Lee was not racially motivated, is there anyone in or outside of the Asian American communities that really believes that? Even Robert Vrooman, who was then head of counterintelligence at Los Alamos, believed the case against Dr. Lee was unfounded. His disgust at the Energy Department over their handling of the case prompted him to go public about racial profiling and the complete lack of evidence against Lee.

The 80-20 Initiative has solicited financial support of the AA communities to benefit the vice president. Might I suggest they use their relationship with the vice president to contact Richardson about an apology to Lee? In releasing Lee, U.S. District Judge James Parker rebuked the Clinton-Gore administration saying "they have embarrassed this entire nation and each of us who is a citizen of it." ■

Democrats Unsupportive in Wen Ho Lee's Case

By DR. JANE HU
China Foundation

This "spy" case revealed the true face of the Democratic administration under President Clinton and Vice President Gore, who claimed themselves to be sympathetic and friendly to minorities. Judge Parker also questioned the unfair manner in which Lee was held in custody, the severity of the original charges and an unexplained White House meeting just before the indictment. Senior officials pushed solitary confinement to make life as difficult as possible to Dr. Lee. This was a cruel and unjust action against Lee's human rights.

During the national Republican convention, the National Asian American Republican Coalition passed a resolution to support Dr. Wen Ho Lee and demanded his immediate release. We are very happy that Lee is finally free with an apology.

I have serious doubt that Vice President Gore is a true friend of the minority members of this country. He never offered his help to Lee. He even claimed that his very personal letter to his Chinese American friend, who will spend years in prison for helping him raise campaign money, did not mean anything.

I question his character and sincerity. Without proper guidance and instruction, many innocent Chinese did their best and raised campaign money illegally. Gore used them and made them scapegoats to shoulder all the blame. Can we trust him to be the president of the United States? ■

WEN HO LEE

(Continued from page 1)

was investigated and prosecuted by Federal agencies."

Charlie Woo, CAUSE-Vision 21 chair, said they plan to write to their elected officials for a congressional hearing on racial profiling of Asian Americans in the national defense sector.

"We have always said the guilt or innocence of Wen Ho Lee is not the main issue," said Woo. "We might have just seen the tip of the iceberg in terms of the government's bias against Asian Americans in sensitive professions. The Wen Ho Lee case has been a wake-up call for our community. We have learned how to organize, galvanize and mobilize to protect ourselves. We must take advantage of the momentum and the publicity generated in this case and push for congressional action that could end discrimination against all Asian Americans once and for all."

Meanwhile, in a rare public disagreement, Clinton said on Sept. 14 that Lee's long detention "just can't be justified," but Attorney General Janet Reno refused to apologize and said the confinement was the nuclear scientist's own fault. Reno said Lee could have avoided nine months in detention by agreeing earlier to plead guilty and tell the government what happened to the seven missing tapes. The government dropped 58 other counts.

Hours after Reno spoke, Clinton expressed an opinion far closer to that of U.S. District Judge James Parker, who said Lee's detention "embarrassed our entire nation."

Saying he was "terribly disturbed" by this case, Congressman Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., said, "No American deserves to be treated in such a roughshod manner. Certainly as a sovereign nation, we have a right to guard our national secrets. But we also have an obligation to uphold our Constitution and its guarantees afforded to every American." ■

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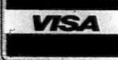
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COMMENTARY

OHA Trustees Resign as Congress Weighs Status of Native Hawaiians

By ALAN T. MURAKAMI
and DAVID FORMAN

The aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Rice v. Cayetano* has resulted in the mass resignation of all nine trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The trustees resigned en masse, so as not to risk giving Gov. Ben Cayetano the opportunity to appoint a majority of trustees whose terms would extend until the 2002 election.

Much to the consternation of many Hawaiian leaders, Cayetano took the legal position that the trustees should be removed immediately and replaced by his appointees for the remainder of their terms. The resignation of the trustees not facing election in 2000 now allows for a special election to fill those vacancies.

This decision added to the turmoil already facing the Hawaiian community, which is reeling from a political backlash emboldened by the Rice decision. Under the Rice decision, the U.S. Supreme Court held that state-financed elections of trustees for the OHA could not be limited to Hawaiians, under the 15th Amendment of the Constitution.

The state of Hawaii and the federal government argued unsuccessfully that they have long considered there to be a political relationship based on prior dealings and on the history of U.S. involvement in the overthrow of the former Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893. In 1993, the United States even apologized for its improper involvement in that overthrow and pledged to pursue political reconciliation with Hawaiians.

However, the court based its decision on the absence of any formal recognition by Congress of a political relationship with Hawaiians. Meanwhile, 560 Indian tribes and

Alaskans have that relationship, which justifies programs that benefit them. Ironically, Congress has already enacted dozens of programs intended to address unique and serious health, education, employment and housing problems facing Hawaiians.

In the wake of the Rice decision, Hawaiian leaders fear that other legal challenges could undermine the constitutionality of the host of state and federal Hawaiian programs that have been operating for years under the assumption that no constitutional impediment existed. If the logic of the Rice decision, which was based on the 15th Amendment's bar against racial discrimination in voting, is applied to these programs, the court could deem programs aiding Hawaiians unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

For example, the Campaign for a Colorblind America (a national organization with substantial resources) advertised for plaintiffs to file legal challenges to these programs immediately after the Rice decision was issued. Its position is that Hawaiian programs are based on racial classifications that are destructive to the fabric of our community and are, therefore, illegal under the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

In rejecting the state and federal positions, the court ignored affirmative efforts endorsed by a majority of a multiethnic community to actively address the poor health, education and social welfare of Hawaiians, as was promised by Congress when it admitted Hawaii as a state in 1959. Accordingly, Sen. Daniel Akaka's proposed legislation would formally acknowledge this political relationship to neutralize the effects of Rice.

Despite the threat posed by the Rice decision, Hawaiians appear split on the issue of whether this

bill should pass. Many Hawaiians who advocate for total independence of the state have expressed opposition because they believe the bill restricts their political options. The senators have proposed specific language to neutralize this concern. They and supporters of the bill place priority on protecting existing programs and support the opportunity to establish a transition process as a prelude to formal recognition of a Native Hawaiian self-governing entity.

In recognition of this momentous time, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has scheduled a public forum on the implications of the *Rice v. Cayetano* decision. The commission intends to hold a one-day forum on Sept. 29, at a location yet to be announced, to hear input from scholars and the public on the impacts of the decision on the civil rights of Hawaiians.

Members of the Hawaiian Advisory Committee (HAC) to the commission pushed for this session, alarmed by the potential impacts of the Rice decision on the various federal programs that currently address problems from which Hawaiians suffer disproportionately. Hawaiians have long suffered from poorer educational achievement than other groups in the state. The Native Hawaiian Education Act, for example, offers various programs to help Hawaiians attain higher levels of education through scholarship, counseling and other assistance programs. Congress enacted this measure, along with 150 other similar pieces of legislation, to address the special problems Hawaiians face.

The commission is a bipartisan body organized to educate the public and advise Congress on civil rights problems affecting Americans across the country. It has previously investigated incidents of concern to national civil rights ad-

vocates, such as the police shooting death of Amadou Diallo in New York City, racial and ethnic tensions in Los Angeles and allegations of discrimination against Asian Pacific Americans during the investigation into illegal campaign contributions. The commission has an advisory committee in every state to help it identify and address the most critical civil rights issues across the country.

Charles Maxwell, the current chair of HAC, believes that the Rice decision raises fundamental issues concerning the civil rights of Hawaiians. In 1991, the HAC issued a groundbreaking report on the Hawaiian homestead program titled, "A Broken Trust: The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act." In it, the HAC criticized the failure of the U.S. and state governments to support the long-neglected program, even though the state of Hawaii pledged to implement the program as a condition of receiving statehood.

At the time, the HAC recommended that Congress, in order to remove a potential legal cloud over any federal support for the program, enact legislation immediately to declare an explicit political trust relationship with Native Hawaiians. It feared that doubts previously expressed about this relationship were a major obstacle to receiving federal financial support for the program.

Congress never took action on the recommendation, although Sen. Daniel Inouye introduced legislation in 1990 to recognize that trust relationship. However, opposition from some segments of the Hawaiian community contributed to the failure of that bill to pass. Now, a decade later, the HAC finds its concern ripening into a potential nightmare for Hawaiians in the wake of the Rice decision.

The current controversy requires

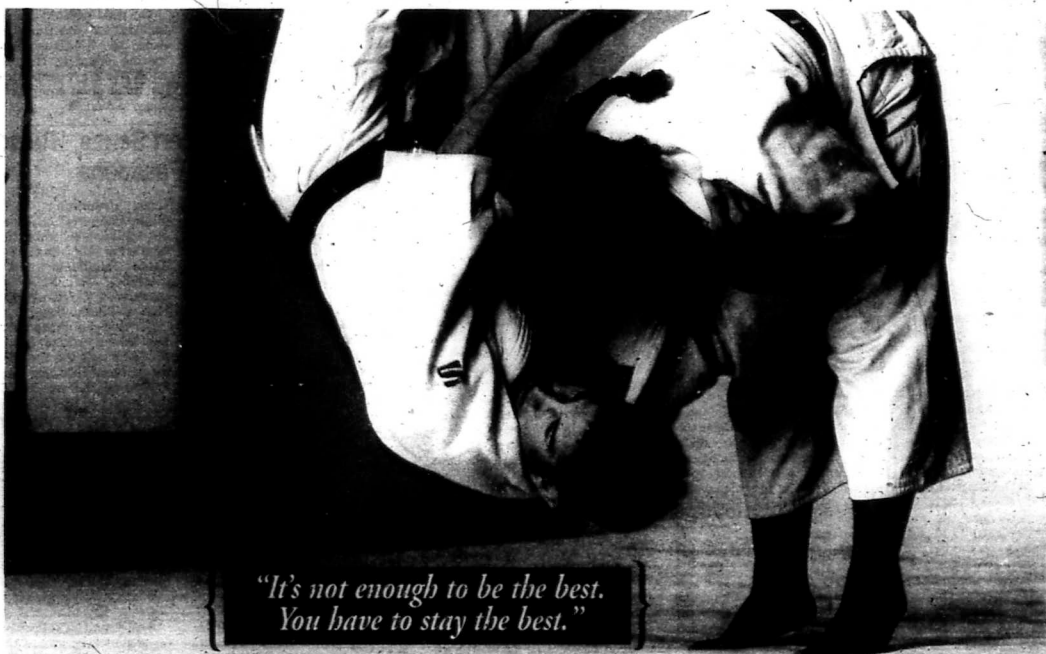
all in Hawaii to re-examine the aloha spirit that this community once took for granted. It forces them to examine the larger question of whether true self-determination must emerge in order to perpetuate longer-term peace and harmony amongst those in Hawaii who have, for too long, had the luxury of presuming it would last forever. While that re-examination may seem sudden, it demands that all citizens focus on understanding the history and issues related to the colonization of Hawaii and current efforts to re-establish political structures that were once forcibly removed. Non-Hawaiians can no longer just defer these questions to members of the Hawaiian community.

Last June, at the national JACL convention in Monterey, the Honolulu chapter successfully spearheaded the adoption of a resolution urging Congress to formally recognize a political relationship with Hawaiians and ultimately establish a government-to-government relationship with them. The resolution also calls on the national and regional staffs of JACL as well as all chapters to support such efforts by urging their individual congressional representatives and senators to endorse this effort.

The Hawaii senators sponsoring S. 2899 (H.R. 4904) face the daunting challenge of passing this resolution before the current Congress recesses in October. The Honolulu chapter is calling on all chapters and JACL national and regional staff members to take action in accordance with this resolution so that support for federal recognition comes swiftly.

For more information, contact Alan T. Murakami at 808/521-2302 or amurak@nhlchi.org, or David Forman at 808/524-1800 or dforman@ahfi.com.

Alan Murakami and David Forman are members of the Honolulu JACL.



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UCHIDA

(Continued from page 1)

rent to a J.A. Uchida found an elderly farmer who allowed him to live in a shack on the farm property.

Uchida's first job was teaching self-defense at a San Jose police school, where many of the students were WWII veterans. The first time Uchida stepped onto the floor, wearing his traditional judo-gi, he was immediately assailed with racial epithets. One man yelled, "A Jap killed my best friend in the war. I hate Japs." Uchida replied almost in a whisper, "I am an American. I am here to teach you judo for self-defense."

During the lesson, he demonstrated his mastery of judo, and gradually, the students began to respect him.

In 1946, Uchida let his father know he was now an instructor in physical education and had recently organized a judo team at San Jose State University, where he was head coach. His ailing father passed away shortly after receiving the news of his son's achievements.

Although judo was not a recognized sport at the time, Uchida was committed to establishing it as a global sport. Henry Stone, a University of California, Berkeley physical education instructor impressed by Uchida's determination, introduced him to Avery Brundage, then president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Brundage suggested to Uchida that he follow the AAU's regulations to organize judo competitive divisions by weight, a practice already used in wrestling. Brundage promised that after 10 consecutive years, he would acknowledge judo as a sport recognized by the AAU. In 1953, the first AAU judo championship was held at SJSU. That same year, Uchida was selected Pan American Games coach and manager.

As judo gained popularity, Uchida's weight regulations came under scrutiny since the ancient art of judo was not practiced with such modern guidelines in Japan, and the people of Japan denounced him. This came like a slap in the face for Uchida, but it also empowered him to draw from the strength of his American identity.

With the help of Brundage and Stone, Uchida succeeded in establishing judo as an Olympic

sport, and at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, Uchida was sent as the first U.S. Olympic judo coach.

"It was the proudest moment of my life to take American champions into my father's native land and to have judo recognized as an Olympic sport for the first time," he said.

Due to Uchida's influence, more than 400,000 Americans competed in judo by the mid-1970s. By then, the AAU had registered over 100,000 judo competitors. Students from around the world flocked to Uchida at SJSU. Under his tutelage, two athletes from Africa clinched medals at the Olympics.

In 1986, the Emperor of Japan awarded Uchida the Order of the Sacred Treasure, one of the highest awards granted by the Japanese government.

San Jose State University also recognized him in 1997 by renaming the former Spartan Complex into the "Yoshihiro Uchida Hall Complex."

This May, the California State Universities Board of Trustees honored Uchida for his efforts at SJSU. He was also named in the *San Jose Mercury News*' millennium issue as among the 100 people who have made Silicon Valley what it is today.

Uchida has been affiliated with many organizations including: serving as director of the United States Olympic committee (USOC), president of United States Judo, Inc., past chairman of the Japanese American National Museum, lifetime member of the JAACL, board of directors of the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation.

Perhaps Uchida is the very embodiment of the Olympic spirit. ■

Shirley Iwama Archer and Mia Iwama also contributed to this story.

HIROHITO

(Continued from page 1)

cific countries during WWII, recently-published historical accounts of the Nanjing Massacre and legislation such as AJR 27, a much-debated California measure sponsored last year by Assemblyman Mike Honda, D-San Jose, which asked the Japanese government to issue a formal apology and reparations to former "comfort women."

The most recent lawsuit was filed Aug. 22 in Los Angeles County Superior Court against the Mitsui and Mitsubishi conglomerates. The class action suit was filed on behalf of nine Chinese plaintiffs — four living in Southern California and five living in China — who allege they were forced by the companies into slave labor during WWII.

"It's not that the Japanese leaders, particularly in the 1990s, have not apologized repeatedly and repeatedly," Bix said, responding to the apology issue. "It's that they're not believed by other Asian countries. And why are they not believed? Why are they not trusted? It's because for so long they pursued the government stance about the war, saying one thing and yet sustaining, in complex, indirect ways, the validity of the old view of the war."

In his book, Bix describes a "complex system of political irresponsibility" adopted after the war by both the Japanese and American governments, which each did their parts to perpetuate a false appearance of Hirohito's wartime role and to shield him from investigation, trial and punishment.

"After the shock of Pearl Harbor wore off — not on the American people but among our decision-makers in Washington — they were very careful never to demean, defame or undermine the authority of Hirohito," he said.

This "impunity situation" com-

bined with the fact that the Japanese people never saw Hirohito apologize or take any public official action to remedy the disasters it had wreaked heavily contributed to Japan's climate of selective memory well through the 20th century, Bix explained.

"This is a very difficult issue, a nation coming to terms with the war," he said. "I would fault Japan's conservative leaders for their policies which, throughout the Cold War, kept the subject of the Asia Pacific war out of school textbooks so that junior high school students matriculated knowing nothing about their own history."

Part of the problem is that censorship and actions by the right-wing leave many in the dark about the extent of Japan's wartime atrocities and thus its responsibility. Bix was careful to point out the difficulty that Japan has had in seeing past years of one culturally ingrained view, saying, "I don't want to leave the impression for a minute that the Japanese people haven't struggled to come to terms with the war." ■

A Quarter of Foreign-born U.S. Residents Have College Degrees

Just over half of the 26 million foreign-born residents of the United States are from Latin America, and a quarter are Asian, the U.S. Census Bureau reported Sept. 11.

Foreign-born residents are about as likely as other Americans to be college graduates, but the ones who don't have degrees tend to be less educated than the rest of the population.

The bureau said 25.4 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. That compares to 25.2 percent of native-born Americans with degrees.

The report said that about 4 in 10 foreign-born adults had a high school diploma only, compared with more than 6 in 10 for native-born adults. Nearly 1 in 4 of the foreign-born adults had less than a ninth-grade education, compared with 1 in 20 of the rest of the 25-and-over population. ■

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