

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS

National Executive Office: 735 Ash Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 0K5

\* \* \* WEEKLY UPDATE \* \* \*  
APRIL 5, 1985



To: Members, NAJC Council  
From: National Redress Co-ordinator  
#525 - 890 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1J9  
(604) 662-3200

1. Maryka Omatsu and I were asked by the Negotiation Team to go to San Francisco on behalf of the NAJC to meet with officials of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and compare our two redress campaigns. Immediately upon arriving on March 28, Maryka met with Chester Tanaka of Go For Broke Incorporated, a national association for Japanese American veterans. They talked about the efforts of Japanese American veterans to gain the support of veterans associations in the U.S. to counter potential opposition to the redress movement from veterans' groups. Maryka's report on this meeting and other aspects of our visit will be sent out to Council members as soon as it's received.

I plan to write an article on the current situation in the Japanese American redress movement next week, so my comments here will be minimal. Maryka and I met on March 29 with John Tateishi, Director, National Redress Committee, and Ron Wakabayashi, National Director, JACL. We engaged in a lengthy discussion on our respective redress positions. John explained in detail the history of their redress programme with the formation of the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, and their work since the Commission recommended compensation of \$20,000 per survivor (for approximately 60,000 survivors) and a \$300 million community trust fund (in total, \$1.5 billion). On March 30, we met with members of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRP), a community organization working with the JACL to ensure grass-roots involvement in the redress movement. The NCRP was the group that was instrumental in preparing the community to give testimony in the Commission hearings.

At present, a redress bill H.R.442 is with the subcommittees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Once the bill gets through the subcommittees, it will be placed on the floor of Congress for a vote. Until this time, the JACL and other Japanese American community organizations must lobby members of Congress to support the bill. The passage of the bill by Congress depends on the success of the lobbying process. John Tateishi could not be definite in predicting when H.R.442 will pass through the Senate and House of Representatives subcommittees to reach the floor of Congress, though this could occur as early as next year. The JACL still has a hard struggle before them.

The visit to San Francisco was extremely useful at this point in our redress campaign. It's obvious that the JACL's redress settlement will affect our movement in Canada, and vice-versa. I was also met with reporters from two community newspapers, the Pacific Citizen, the JACL's newspaper, and the Hokubei Mainichi. They've agreed to

continue reporting on our redress movement through updates from the NAJC. More on the American situation later.

2. The Negotiating Team held an hour telephone conference on Friday, April 5. Present were Art Miki, Lucy Yamashita, Roger Obata, Maryka Omatsu, Elmer Hara, Gordon Hirabayashi and myself. Absent were Harold Hirose and Rits Inouye who was out of town. Roy Inouye (Kamloops) was asked by Art to participate to get another view of discussions. Henry Kojima (Winnipeg) was present to report his perceptions of the meeting with Jack Murta on March 30. Cassandra Kobayashi was present as a member of the NAJC lawyers' group and as the Redress Coordinator's Assistant.

a) Art reported that he met with Murta on March 30 and conveyed our community's position that the \$6 million educational trust fund is not acceptable, and that we would like to begin a Feasibility Study (see attached letter from Art to Murta, March 27, 1985). Murta said the government would not fund the socio-economic study of losses because they are not interested in compensating for losses, and that funding the study might commit the government to a course of compensation. He also said that even though the government uses the word "compensation," in fact they have never considered compensation as a part of the redress settlement. Murta indicated that he has written to the NDP and the Liberals explaining the government's position.

Other points of information in the meeting:

i) The question of a Parliamentary Committee was raised but Murta rejected this option.

ii) He said that from now on he would be meeting with us directly; he will no longer be using government officials as intermediaries.

iii) He expressed some flexibility in the operational details of the government's proposal, such as considering whether our community could control the fund.

iv) He said that the government might suspend action on redress for an indefinite period of time if we couldn't agree on the details of his present proposal.

b) Maryka Omatsu and I reported on our visit to San Francisco. See my comments above; Maryka's written report is forthcoming.

c) Art reported that he had submitted a financial report on the first portion of our government grant of \$80,000, and is awaiting receipt of the second installment of \$40,000. The financial report will be distributed to Council members as soon as my office receives a copy of it, perhaps by the next weekly update.

d) Concerning immediate action, the Negotiation Team will prepare a report to Council on our dealings with the government thus far, and set forth some strategy options. A Negotiation Team meeting is



Vancouver Sun  
April 1, 1985

# Two wrongs

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planned for May 11 in Winnipeg. All Council members are urged to suggest strategy options for our redress campaign, either through written submissions to Art or directly by phone to him.

e) Plans are underway to organize the next Council meeting. Art has suggested that this meeting could be scheduled as a National Conference. Centres should begin fund-raising to send community representatives in addition to the official and alternate delegates. More on this soon.

3. Attached is an ad for the position of National Redress Coordinator. My three month term appointment ends the the first week of May. Council members should advertise the position in their area. The ad will be placed in The New Canadian, The Canada Times, and the next issue of the NAJC Newsletter .

4. Any comments on the distribution of the NAJC Newsletter ? Any special problems?

5. We're still waiting patiently for the Information Sheets we sent out in the first weekly update. The information will be useful for the next issue of the newsletter. We're trying to avoid the cost of long distance calls. Please try to co-operate.

6. Two Japanese Canadians, Jim Kojima of Richmond, B.C. and Henry Shimizu of Edmonton, have been appointed to the recently formed 60 member Canadian Multiculturalism Council. Mr. Kojima is a production controller for a B.C. steel company and Vice-Chairman of the local Sister City Committee. Dr. Shimizu is a plastic surgeon, President of the Edmonton Japanese Canadian Club and a member of the Alberta Cultural Heritage Council. The Multiculturalism Council will advise Minister of Multiculturalism Jack Murta on policy and the development of programmes relating to multiculturalism.

7. Attached are two recent editorials on redress: Toronto Star , March 20 (sent to us by Maryka Omatsu), and the Vancouver Sun , April 1.

8. The April issue of the NAJC Newsletter will feature reports on community meetings across Canada. Deadline: April 10. Some Centres promised to send in reports of meetings, but these have not reached us. It's important that Centres share information on redress activities in their areas to develop the national strength of the NAJC. In short, Centres would like to know what's happening in other Centres. If you're really stuck for words but have news to report, leave a message in our office (604 - 662-3200) and we'll call you back to get your report on the phone.

9. The brief in Japanese is selling steadily. Vancouver just purchased 150 and Calgary asked for 30. Since we only printed 600, Centres that haven't ordered any copies yet should not wait too long. Price, \$2.50 for Centres; suggested retail price, \$5.00 each.

Roy Miki

Top Story 20.3.85

# Where's the promised apology?

Instead of vowing never to compensate Japanese Canadians for their wartime internment, the Conservative government should get on with its promised parliamentary apology for the mistreatment. A few tough words from Multiculturalism Minister Jack Murta telling us that cash payments aren't in the cards only muddies this central issue.

Before the general election last year, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney said an apology to the Japanese Canadians would tell "all visible minorities in this country that this kind of heinous action will never again take place in Canada and, if it does, that we will have the nerve and the courage to stand up and apologize for it and deal with it honorably."

Yet Mulroney's government has been in power now for more than six months and no apology has materialized and there is no progress on financial compensation. As Opposition Leader, Mulroney told Parliament last June 29 — Pierre Trudeau's last day in the Commons as prime minister — that an immediate statement acknowledging the historic wrong inflicted upon 22,000 Japanese Canadians "does not preclude" the government from acting later on the issue of appropriate compensation.

Instead of continuing in this spirit, Murta is slamming the door on one form of settlement: cash payments to those whose homes and businesses were wrongly confiscated. Indeed, his strong statement against individual compensation may spread the unfortunate impression that Japanese Canadians are primarily interested in collecting large sums of money as compensation for their ordeal.

In fact, the Japanese Canadian community is deeply divided over the issue of proper redress.

## Two wrongs

VANCOUVER SUN  
APRIL 1, 1985

The federal government should quit dealing with Japanese Canadians at arm's length and spend more time talking to them face-to-face about their treatment during the Second World War.



MURTA

Multiculturalism Minister Jake Murta was at it again the other day, declaring in a press interview that the citizens wronged by internment and confiscation of property won't get individual compensation.

They don't necessarily want individual compensation — something

that would be terribly difficult to calculate — but they do want more sensitive attention than they have received ever since Brian Mulroney promised during the election campaign that they would be compensated.

The take-it-or-leave-it offer of a \$6 million foundation to benefit all Japanese Canadians isn't satisfactory. An outright apology, which Mr. Murta seems prepared to give, is essential. Not everyone agrees but we think that should come first to clear the air.

Then the government should spend more time trying to work out a settlement that is reasonable but that is identifiable with the wrong. The government's behavior to date only looks like a second wrong.

Some want individual payments, while others favor a suitable memorial fund to promote the fight against racism in Canada. Still others, anxious to forget about the miseries they and their families suffered, would like the whole problem to go away.

On the urgent need for a proper apology, with dignity, there can be no disagreement. But that apology will sound hollow indeed unless the government promises to redouble its efforts to assess the damage that was done and find a form of compensation acceptable to those who suffered it. The process of arriving at a just settlement is every bit as important as the settlement itself.

How the government treats the Japanese Canadians will be one of the best yardsticks by which we'll be able to measure its Throne Speech commitment to "a new era of national reconciliation, economic renewal and social justice."



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS

National Executive Office: 735 Ash Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 0R5

PLEASE ADVERTISE IN YOUR AREA

## NATIONAL REDRESS COORDINATOR (term position)

The National Association of Japanese Canadians requires a Redress Coordinator for the National Redress program which is presently underway. The redress office will be located in one of the major cities. The position is available immediately and terminates March 31, 1986.

Reporting to the National Executive Committee, the Coordinator will be responsible for:

- . administrating the National Redress program and office
- . preparing the NAJC Newsletter
- . coordinating research projects
- . organizing meetings and issuing press releases
- . directing the public relations campaign
- . communicating with National Council members

### QUALIFICATIONS

The candidate should possess experience in organizing community projects and activities, research and report writing skills, communication skills, and an in-depth knowledge of the current Japanese Canadian redress issue.

### SALARY

\$2,500 per month or more, subject to review of qualifications.

Interested persons should send a written application, including a brief resume, by May 24, 1985 to:

Art Miki, President  
N.A.J.C.  
735 Ash Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3N 0R5

Note: THIS POSITION IS SUBJECT TO FUNDING

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS

National Executive Office: 735 Ash Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 0R5

March 27, 1985

The Honourable Jack Murta  
House of Commons  
OTTAWA, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr Murta,

At our last informal meeting I had indicated that the National Association of Japanese Canadians was conducting public and house meetings in various parts of Canada. The purposes of these meetings are to inform the grass roots level of our communities of the Government's redress offer, discuss and receive their comments.

During the last months meetings were held in Kamloops, Steveston, Vancouver, Aldergrove, Lethbridge, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Hamilton and Toronto. At each of these meetings the individuals were asked whether they supported:

- a) the Government's proposal of a six to ten million dollar trust foundation
- b) the NAJC's position that a compensation figure should reflect the losses suffered by our community.

A show of hands at the meetings in all cases indicated little or no support for the Government's proposal of the trust foundation and a strong support for compensation based on a documented estimate of losses.

Another issue that received much discussion was the method in which the Government's trust foundation proposal would be administered and controlled. There was unanimous support that any compensation funds should be in direct control of the Japanese Canadian community and that the Japanese Canadians determine the manner in which the funds may be utilized for the benefit of all communities.

These discussions and feedback from the grass roots level were valuable and provides the NAJC with a clearer mandate to pursue redress objectives based upon community input.

At this time the NAJC wishes to have the Feasibility Study for the Socio-economic Study of Losses begun. As an initial step a meeting will be held to discuss the feasibility of conducting a loss study to which members of NAJC, Government officials and selected professional consultants in this area of expertise be invited. Such a meeting was suggested by some of your officials would help define what is possible related to conducting a study



of this nature. We ask that you give serious consideration to this proposal.

We have received a proposal from Price Waterhouse to conduct the feasibility study. This proposal will be sent to you for your perusal.

I appreciate that a meeting with you was arranged for this Saturday, March 30, 1985 in Winnipeg.

Sincerely yours,

*Art Miki*

Art Miki  
President

AM/JO

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  - ii) He said that from now on he would be meeting with us directly; he will no longer be using government officials as intermediaries.
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