

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS

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MAY 16, 1985

PRESS RELEASE

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JAPANESE CANADIANS (NAJC) IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE AN AGREEMENT WITH PRICE WATERHOUSE TO COMPLETE A SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY TO ASSESS LOSSES SUFFERED BY CANADIANS OF JAPANESE ORIGIN AS A RESULT OF WARTIME INJUSTICES. THIS DECISION ON THE PART OF THE NAJC TO REQUIRE A STUDY BY AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY PRIOR TO A REDRESS SETTLEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT AFFIRMS THE ORGANIZATION'S EFFORTS TO PLACE ON RECORD, FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL CANADIANS, THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF LOSSES.

AT COMMUNITY MEETINGS IN JAPANESE CANADIAN COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS, THE NAJC WAS ENCOURAGED TO SEEK A PROFESSIONALLY DETERMINED ESTIMATE OF THE IMPACT OF THE FORCED UPROOTING, INCARCERATION, CONFISCATION AND LIQUIDATION OF PROPERTIES, BELONGINGS AND BUSINESSES DURING THE WAR, AND THE POST-WAR DISPERSAL ACROSS CANADA. THE STRUGGLE TO REDRESS THOSE INJUSTICES MUST BE BASED ON AN AUTHORITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THOSE WHO WERE AFFECTED.

LAST MONTH, NAJC PRESIDENT ART MIKI MET WITH THE HONOURABLE JACK MURTA, MINISTER OF MULTICULTURALISM, TO DISCUSS THE NAJC'S REQUEST FOR A SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY AND WAS INFORMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED AGAINST SUPPORT FOR SUCH A STUDY. ADMITTING ITS EDUCATIONAL AND HISTORICAL VALUE, MR. MURTA COMMENTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT FAVOUR COMPENSATION TO JAPANESE CANADIANS AND THAT THEIR SUPPORT OF THE STUDY COULD COMMIT THEM TO COMPENSATION.

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IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT SINCE DECEMBER 1984, THE NAJC HAS EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A STUDY TO ASSIST IN REACHING A REDRESS SETTLEMENT. THE ORGANIZATION'S BRIEF, DEMOCRACY BETRAYED: THE CASE FOR REDRESS, SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT THE MONTH BEFORE ON NOVEMBER 21, 1984 HAD CALLED FOR COMPENSATION TO JAPANESE CANADIANS FOR THE WARTIME INJUSTICES, AND THIS POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED.

THE STUDY PROPOSED BY PRICE WATERHOUSE WILL COVER SUCH AREAS AS:

- A) LOSSES SUFFERED THROUGH THE CONFISCATION AND LIQUIDATION OF PROPERTIES, BELONGINGS, AND BUSINESSES;
- B) LOSS OF INCOME;
- C) DISRUPTION OF EDUCATION;
- D) LOSS OF LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES AND PENSION BENEFITS;
- E) LOSS OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SUCH AS SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

THE STUDY WILL ALSO ACCOUNT FOR THE LOSS OF SAVINGS AND CAPITAL TO JAPANESE CANADIANS RESULTING FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF REQUIRING THOSE FORCEFULLY UPROOTED AND RELOCATED TO PAY FOR THEIR OWN INCARCERATION.

THE STUDY REPRESENTS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN THE NAJC'S STRUGGLE TO CARRY OUT A REDRESS PROGRAMME THAT SUBSTANTIATES THE WARTIME EXPERIENCE OF CANADIANS OF JAPANESE ORIGIN. PRICE WATERHOUSE WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH THIS SUMMER, INCLUDING AN INVESTIGATION OF RELEVANT GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES, AND COMPLETE THEIR REPORT BY THIS FALL, 1985.

THE NAJC IS ENCOURAGED BY THE GROWING NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHO SUPPORT A REDRESS SETTLEMENT THAT REFLECTS THE LOSSES SUFFERED BY JAPANESE CANADIANS. IN THE INTERIM PERIOD, THE NAJC WILL ENDEAVOUR TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT OF THEIR COMMUNITY'S LONGSTANDING CLAIM.