



# JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE / JACL

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NJAMF Holds Redress Ceremony at the Capitol**

*Washington, D.C.* -- The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) held a ceremony at the nation's capitol to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which brought redress in the form of an apology and reparations to members of the Japanese American community who were wrongfully interned during World War II. The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) voted at its National JACL Convention in 1978 to undertake the movement to secure Redress. Many leaders within the JACL worked very hard during the 1970's and 1980's on the Redress Movement.

Craig Uchida, chairman of the NJAMF board and past president of the Washington, D.C. JACL Chapter, whose father and family were taken from their home in Pasadena to the internment camp at Gila River during the war, was in charge of the event. He acknowledged the work of Gerald Yamada, executive director of the NJAMF, and the volunteers. He introduced members of Congress and NJAMF board members who were present.

Several of the key players in the Redress effort from Congress were present and spoke at the event. Congressman Mike Honda (San Jose) introduced Doris Matsui (Sacramento) and Norman Mineta, who was the Congressman from the San Jose area when the Redress Movement was taking place. Congresswoman Matsui, who was born at Poston, spoke of her late husband Bob Matsui's involvement while he was a member of Congress and also spoke of her father's writings of that period in history. She stated that it is important to have physical, tangible evidence such as the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism and to have such occasions as the ceremony to remember the injustices suffered and the lessons learned. Secretary Mineta recalled the experience of leaving for camp in his Cub Scout uniform and paid tribute to some of his other former colleagues who helped in the Redress effort such as Alan Simpson, Don Edwards, Barney Frank, and Henry Hyde.

Senator Daniel Inouye, the third most ranking member of the U.S. Senate who was a major force in the Redress movement, along with his colleague, the late Spark Matsunaga, spoke to the group. He relayed the story of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 100th Battalion from Hawaii as the Japanese American soldiers from Hawaii first learned of the internment camp experience suffered by the mainland Japanese Americans by visiting the camps at Rohrer and Jerome in Arkansas.

Senator Ben Cardin of Virginia talked of being a newly elected congressman when he became a co-sponsor on the Redress bill after being visited by Bob Matsue. He stated, "It was the right thing to do." Congresswoman Shelley Berkley from Las Vegas stopped by and said that she felt this was an important ceremony to commemorate the travesty and disgrace suffered by Japanese Americans and the bright spot which came after that dark spot in the nation's history.

On hand were members of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), whose resolution in 1978 initiated and unified the Redress movement, including Floyd Mori, National Executive Director, and Washington, D.C. chapter president, Ayame Nagatani, who works in Congressman Honda's office. Members of the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA), including Bob Nakamoto, President, and Terry Shima, Executive Director, were also present as were representatives of the Embassy of Japan as well as other organizations and groups.

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*The Japanese American Citizens League, established in 1929, is the oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States. Our mission is to secure and maintain the human and civil rights of Americans of Japanese ancestry and others victimized by injustice.*