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Vietnamese American Veterans Associations Coalition

National Japanese American Memorial Foundation

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20th Anniversary Tribute to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988



Here we admit a wrong.
Here we affirm our commitment
- as a nation -
to equal justice under the law.

President Ronald W. Reagan
Upon signing the Civil Liberties Act
August 10, 1988

Sunday, August 3, 2008
National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism
Washington, DC
2:00 pm—3:30 pm

Remembering...

Dear Supporters of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988:

On behalf of the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, I welcome you to the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II.

NJAMF built this Memorial so that we could share our aspirations with the American public that America's promises of freedom and equality are to be enjoyed without the constraints of hatred, prejudice, and hysteria.

We are very proud of this National Memorial for its artistic beauty and for its profound historic significance. *The Washington Post* in its July 25, 2008 edition, shared this view, as it selected the Memorial as one of the 10 most memorable memorials in Washington, DC.

The Memorial is an appropriate site for today's 20th anniversary tribute to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. This historic legislation mandated a national apology for the wrongful internment of over 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry by the U.S. Government during World War II and authorized symbolic compensation payments to redress those wrongs. This Memorial is a place where the American public comes to understand why the national apology was needed and stands as an ongoing reminder that what happened to our community must never be repeated.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the organizations that have joined in co-sponsoring this event. Their support shows that the Civil Liberties Act served to benefit all ethnic, religious, and civil rights groups. I also would like to thank and acknowledge the contributions made to NJAMF in support of today's event.

Dr. Craig D. Uchida, Ph.D.
Chairman of the Board

The Japanese American men and women served courageously in combat to defend freedom during World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars, including 1,161 who made the ultimate sacrifice in these three wars, contributed to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. We are proud to participate in this event.

Japanese American Veterans Association

As we did over twenty years ago as an early supporter of Japanese-American redress legislation, the American Jewish Committee is proud to stand in solidarity with the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation in remembrance of a tragic episode in American history when our fellow citizens were branded potentially disloyal on the basis of their ethnicity alone. As AJC's Board of Governors said in a resolution it adopted in May 1984, "Treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II was a national disgrace."

We came to this issue against the background of our own community's horrendous experience during World War II when European Jewry was singled out for destruction on the basis of ancestry. In the wake of that experience, and as we swore "never again," we well understood that the lessons of the Holocaust are not only that we must remain vigilant to assure that *never again* will the Jewish people find itself without a nation to call its own as a haven against persecution, but also that *never again* should the world stand by in silence while ethnic or religious communities are singled out for hardship, humiliation or loss of personal freedom.

American Jewish Committee

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 brought justice to the relatively small number of Japanese Americans from Hawaii who were interned during World War II and led to the rediscovery of a part of Hawaii's history that had been forgotten. We are honored to join the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation in recognizing the 20th anniversary of this landmark legislation.

Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii

Remembering...

Twenty years ago, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was passed to acknowledge and apologize for the “grave injustice” done to people living in this country, an injustice caused by prejudice, racial profiling, and a failure of political leadership. Unfortunately, today the U.S. government appears to be repeating some of its earlier mistakes. Across the U.S., certain communities are facing similar “grave injustices” perpetrated by racially and politically motivated forces. In the name of national security, the Department of Homeland Security is raiding homes and workplaces, detaining families and asylum-seekers, and targeting particular communities for special security checks on the basis of their national origin, religion or race. Such actions deny both citizens and immigrants their basic human rights, civil liberties and due process protections. We will work to eliminate these policies that echo the injustices addressed by the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 so that liberty and justice are secured for all.

Rights Working Group

All Asian Pacific Americans, particularly members of the Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN), have been direct and major beneficiaries of the pioneers and leaders in civil rights who paved the way in the face of significant hardships and barriers. Our mission is to build on the early foundations created by these leaders so that future generations can enjoy the freedom and liberty that our parents, grandparents, and ancestors dreamed of when they came to America.

Asian American Government Executives Network

President John F. Kennedy stated on the inauguration day of his presidency: “... pay any price, bear any burden, reach out anywhere, support any friend, oppose any foe... to assure the survival and success of Liberty...” Although each of our heritages has a distinct history and culture, we always share the desire for Peace, Justice, Human Rights and Liberty. Let us join hands to become One Asian Community for Freedom, indivisible with Liberty and Justice for all.

Ms LamBaoNguyen

*The Vietnamese Community of Washington DC, MD & VA
Maryland Co Chairman, Public Relations*

Welcome Remarks by Dr. Craig D. Uchida
*Chairman of the Board
National Japanese American Memorial Foundation*

Presentation of the Colors
*Kelly Kuwayama
Grant Ichikawa*

Laying of the Wreath
World War II Veterans

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
*Former U.S. Secretary of Commerce,
Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation*

Presentation of Cranes by Dr. Donna Shimoda Hollingshead
*on behalf of the Japanese American Citizens League and
Cranes for Compassion*

Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki
*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the
United States of America*

Robert Nakamoto
*President
Japanese American Veterans Association*

Melanie B. Maron
*Executive Director
American Jewish Committee, Washington Chapter*

Professor Frank H. Wu
on behalf of the Committee of 100

Closing Remarks by Dr. Craig D. Uchida

On front cover, photograph of President Ronald W. Reagan signing the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, from left to right: Sen. Masayuki "Spark" Matsunaga (D-HI), Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA), Rep. Pat Saiki (R-HI), Sen. Pete Wilson (R-CA), Rep. Don Young (R-AK), Rep. Robert T. Matsui (D-CA), Rep. Bill Lowery (R-CA) and Harry Kajihara, President of the Japanese American Citizens League.

Remembering...

On February 19, 1942, during the early months of the Second World War, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing the military to exclude persons of Japanese ancestry from the western part of the United States.

Forty years later in 1982, the Report of the U.S. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of



Civilians concluded that “Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity” and that Executive Order 9066 decisions were shaped by “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership”.

On August 10, 1988, the Civil Liberties Act (Public Law 100-383) was enacted and directed the Federal Government to apologize for the unjust relocation of more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from their homes and businesses.

Symbolic compensation payments for the wholesale infringement of those rights and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution accompanied the apologies.

The National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism has stood on Capitol Hill since 2000. The Memorial was authorized by Federal law to honor the distinguished military service of Japanese Americans who defended the United States, to their families and friends imprisoned in America behind barbed wire, and to stand as a lasting reminder to this Nation’s commitment to equal justice under the law even during wartime. The Memorial was donated in 2002 to the federal government as a gift from the Japanese American community to the American people.

Today we join to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Enactment of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 is the beacon of hope holding out the American promise that all of us are entitled to enjoy liberty and equality free of prejudice, hatred, and war hysteria. The Civil Liberties Act was the first step towards healing the hurt inflicted by racially motivated governmental policies on an innocent ethnic group. The healing process continues, and the 20th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the need to avoid government sanctioned discrimination justified in the name of national security.

Japanese American National Heritage Coalition

NJAMF deserves a lot of credit for highlighting an important civil liberties act such as the one being commemorated today. TAA Foundation, Inc. joins you in this event. Twenty years is a long time, but the impact of the humiliation, social and economic losses, and violation of basic human rights are still discussed and felt to this day. The CLA of 1988 should be a precursor of future unwarranted and discriminatory action and treatment of an ethnic group in peace and at war. We hope that such actions become a lesson for other nations. People are human beings, individually and collectively, and should be treated with dignity and justice.

Ike F. Santos

President and Executive Director

TAA Foundation, Inc.

The Committee of 100 is proud to join in this event. All of us who care about the American Dream share the ideals of our Constitution. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was a triumphant moment for all Americans. It showed that our diverse democracy is able to correct its mistakes. Leaders of all backgrounds have recognized the internment of Japanese Americans as wrong. Our ability to welcome people from around the world as equal members of our society is what has made us great. We celebrate that tradition today.

John L. Fugh

Maj.Gen. US Army (Ret.)

Chairman

Committee of 100