

CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE:
REDRESS NOW FOR JAPANESE LATIN AMERICAN INTERNEES!

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 24, 2007

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**New Federal Bill Introduced to Study U.S. Gov't Actions
Against Japanese Latin Americans During WWII**

Bill Proposes Learning From Past So Mistakes Won't Be Repeated

Los Angeles - A coalition of civil and human rights groups known as the "Campaign for Justice: Redress Now for Japanese Latin American Internees!" asked the public to take action to support a bill that would establish a federal commission to study the wartime violations committed by the U.S. government against Japanese Latin Americans during World War II.

The bill is named the "Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act of 2007," and was introduced today into the new Congress by Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI) in the Senate, joined by Senators Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Robert Bennett (R-Utah), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), and in the House of Representatives by Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif) joined by Rep. Daniel Lungren (R-Calif), Rep. Mike Honda (D-Calif), and Rep. Chris Cannon (R-UT)

"The lessons of history," Senator Inouye said, "can be painful. But that pain can also strengthen our nation, and our commitment to its democratic ideals, which include equal justice for all."

When asked why he was introducing the bill, Rep. Becerra stated "Only by dedicating ourselves to understanding how we compromised liberty in the past can we renew our resolve for a better future."

Rep. Lungren said "With the 26th Anniversary of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment comes the reminder that another aspect of this unfortunate part our nation's history has yet to be explored. As a member of the original Wartime Relocation Commission, I appreciate this further opportunity to co-sponsor legislation with the purpose of gaining a greater understanding of the wrongs that were committed."

Two groups that led the campaign for redress for Japanese Americans in the 1970s and 80s - the *Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress* (NCR) and the *Japanese American Citizens League* - joined the *Campaign for Justice: Redress Now for Japanese Latin American Internees!* to develop the bill and urge people to call and write their representatives in Congress.

"Few people know about the nearly 2,300 men, women and children who were essentially abducted and forcibly deported from 13 Latin American countries to the U.S. during the 40s," said Richard Katsuda of the NCRR, "This largely unknown history needs to be fully explored, not just buried in an appendix to the 1981 Commission's report," Katsuda added.

"My father was among those who were uprooted from his home and family in Peru, and brought to be used by the U.S. in prisoner exchange with Japan," said Grace Shimizu of the Campaign for Justice. "Yet, these Japanese Latin American former internees have been denied equitable redress, and most Americans don't even know about what happened."

Between December 1941 and February 1948, approximately 2,248 people of Japanese ancestry were forced to leave their homes, the victims of a mass abduction and forcible deportation from 13 Latin American countries to the United States. The U.S. government orchestrated and financed the deportation of Japanese Latin Americans to be used as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan, without the benefit of due process rights. Over 800 individuals were included in two prisoner of war exchanges between the U.S. and Japan. The remaining Japanese Latin Americans were imprisoned in internment camps until years after the end of the war.

For more information on how you can support the bill, go to
www.CampaignForJusticeJLA.org, call (510) 459-7288, (323) 899-4731,
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