

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Sheldon Gen

From: Kathy Yu

Date: October 8, 2007

Re: Stakeholder analysis on “Against All Odds: The Campaign in Congress for Japanese American Redress”

Background:

After reviewing the case on Japanese American Redress, I would like to highlight some of the key stakeholders that were involved in the policy process. Before I begin my analysis, let me begin by briefly summarizing the background of the case. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 that ordered Japanese Americans into relocation centers at remote places such as Idaho, Arizona and Wyoming, in fear that they were spies of the U.S. enemy, Japan. As Naito and Scott note, “German Americans and Italian Americans were not subjected to mass exclusion and relocation,” while the Japanese Americans, in which a majority of them were US citizens, were “singled out as objects of suspicion and hostility.” This shows that the executive order violated the Constitution and that the internment of Japanese Americans was indeed “motivated by racism.” The whole policy process started when there was “a surge of interest among many Japanese Americans in seeking legal redress” for having their constitutional rights violated. They felt that an apology from the government was not enough, and that “monetary compensation for the loss of their freedom” should be granted. (Naito and Scott).

Stakeholders and their roles in the policy process:

There were many political players involved in the entire policy process, but here are some of the major ones:

- A. The prominent key stakeholder in the whole process is the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), chaired by John Tateishi. Though the JACL had chapters nationwide, the Seattle chapter played the most active role in problem identification and agenda setting. They set up the JACL's National Committee for Redress and proposed a plan to be presented to the Congress. This committee persistently utilized different ways to get their bill to Congress. While the bill was fighting its way up, JACL changed its emphasis to focus from "education to lobbying" in which they activated the Legislative Education Committee (JACL-LEC) and hired Grant Ujifusa who played a significant role in the lobbying process. Ujifusa, who co-authored the *Almanac of American Politics*, was "politically savvy" had a great advantage in lobbying Congress. His position as the co-author of the *Almanac* gave him "power" to get access to members of Congress as well as "airing pro-redress arguments and criticizing anti-redress members" in his almanac (Naito and Scott). Later, Ujifusa hired Grayce Uyehara to "lead and co-ordinate the lobbying effort" in Washington. Ujifusa, together with Uyehara, helped in getting more supporters of the redress from other communities and organizations. This was essential because it made the issue of redress not just a "special interest bill" but "that this was a broader bill about the whole nation" (Glenn Roberts). I think Ujifusa and Uyehara played an important role in agenda setting and formulation stages of the policy cycle.
- B. Another set of key stakeholders who played a significant role in agenda setting and policy adoption are the various members of Congress. As Theodoulou and Kofinis says, "members can define problems, set the agenda, formulate policy solutions and assist in the adoption of a specific course of action," and that "only a member can formally introduce, discuss, and negotiate legislative proposals"(p. 57). There were many members of Congress involved in this case, but the important ones are the Japanese American members of Congress which include; Representatives Norman Mineta, and Robert Matsui, and Senators Daniel Inouye, and Spark Matsunaga. Though they did aid the JACL in getting the proposal into the House and the Senate, they did not take an active role in the beginning. This was because they believed that a proposal with monetary compensation was not going to be successful. Furthermore, Naito and Scott note that Inouye, "was not inclined to take a leading role in the campaign." Nonetheless, they took on a more active role as the redress began to get more support from Congressional members and other organizational groups. It was then that they

began to play a bigger role in the agenda setting, policy formulation and policy adoption processes.

- C. Other key members of Congress included House leader, Rep. Jim Wright who became the lead sponsor of the redress bill. Sen. Alan Simpson, who was childhood friends with Norman Mineta, helped support the bill. Sen. Barney Frank, who became the chairman of Subcommittee on Administrative Law, helped pushed the bill even further as he had been a supporter of redress “from its beginnings” (Naito and Scott). Secretary of Education William Bennett who promised Ujifusa that he would mention his support of the bill to the president, also helped by getting more members of Congress on their side. All these members of Congress played a role in the agenda setting, which contributed to the adoption of the bill. As Theodoulou and Kofinis says, “each member can prove significant in shaping the eventual direction of the policy process”(p.57).
- D. The other two important stakeholders were President Reagan and Governor Thomas who contributed significantly to the final adoption of the redress bill. Governor Thomas, who told an anecdote to the president during a brief encounter, served as momentum in changing the direction in the White House. President Reagan was receptive to the story and finally agreed to adopt the bill. He, of course, also played a role in the policy implementation process after this bill adoption.
- E. Finally, another group of stakeholders that also played an important role in problem identification and agenda setting is the National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR). This group was also pursuing a monetary redress, however, they were pursuing redress by filing “a class action suit” and wanted a higher amount of redress of up to \$220,000 for each of the internees, while the JACL only asked for \$20,000 per internees (Naito and Scott).

Analysis:

Throughout the battle for the redress, there was much opposition to the bill especially concerning the monetary compensation portion of the bill. Many Congressional members viewed that an apology was enough and that “financial restitution could set a dangerous precedent for the redress” of other mistreated groups in the past (Naito and Scott). Some members of Congress

did not even acknowledge the existence of the internment, while others confused the Japanese Americans as the enemies of the war. Despite oppositions that JACL faced, they utilized all their connections and personal relationships with important players in the Congress and the White House. Japanese American members of Congress, in particular, used their personal relationships and told stories about their internment experiences as children to win support in the redress bill in both the House and the Senate. Other members of Congress like Rep. Jim Wright, Sen. Alan Simpson and Sen. Barney Frank, being on the same ground with the four Japanese American Congress members helped make the process smoother and it was this cooperation among them that contributed to the adoption process. Another potential for coalition is that JACL could have easily formed an alliance with NCJAR as both groups were pursuing redress for the internment. Also, it was the dissemination of the stories about internment via the press that made the American public aware of the situation. As Rep. Mineta said, “It was only after talking about it that people could go on to the next step and actually do something about it.” Above all, the lobbying efforts of Uyehara in bringing support from other organizations, in conjunction with the potent tactics that Ujifusa used made the pro-redress side much more powerful. With all the stakeholders listed above, I think it was the combined efforts of the press, the lobbying efforts directed by Uyehara and Ujifusa’s legislative strategies, and the personal relationships that the Japanese American members of Congress have with other Congressional members, that all contributed to the final success of the adoption of the bill. As Theodoulou and Kofinis asserts, both institutional and non-institutional actors play important roles in the policy-making process and that “no one actor possesses omnipotent influence across every stage of the policy process”(p. 55).