

relating to legislation, civil rights, public issues, media, and public relations; and

Whereas, currently there is a national committee on Ethnic Concerns, but it is not specific to civil rights and has not been highly visible within the past four years; and

Whereas, currently there is no national standing committee addressing civil rights in this civil rights oriented national organization;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the National Council of the Japanese American Citizens League create a national standing committee on civil rights.

ADOPTED

### 31 Res. 13 — Recognition of Draft Resisters

By Seattle JACL Chapter

Whereas, the United States has made a significant and symbolic gesture serving to begin the healing process of deeply felt injuries caused by the gross injustice perpetrated against Americans of Japanese ancestry in 1942 with the mass incarceration of those people in detention camps by the passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and

Whereas, after December 7, 1941 the United States stopped inducting Americans of Japanese ancestry into the U.S. armed forces; and

Whereas, the Selective Service reclassified all qualified Americans of Japanese ancestry to Class 4-F, then to Class 4-C, further degrading and humiliating the Japanese Americans; and

Whereas, because of JACL objections and other strong protests to such reclassification, President Franklin Roosevelt authorized only the Army to accept volunteer Japanese Americans for military service on January 31, 1943; and

Whereas, the War Department issued a call for volunteers for an all-Japanese American segregated combat team and actively recruited all those of military age in the camps, and to carry out this program the War Department directed the War Relocation Authority to determine evacuee loyalty by means of a questionnaire to all males of military age in the camps; and

Whereas, the specific questions No. 27 and No. 28 presented an unresolvable dilemma to both Issei and Nisei, causing irreparable psychological and emotional damage to interned JAs; and

Whereas, a total of 3,500 JAs did volunteer and served with unprecedented valor and bravery on the battlefields in the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, earning fame as the most highly decorated unit of its size in American military history; and in all

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submit to military service under a government that had violated their constitutional rights as citizens by imprisoning them in concentration camps as "enemy aliens" and that had blatantly discriminated against them solely on the basis of their racial ancestry; and

Whereas, those draft resisters who declared their loyalty but who acted out of their belief that America's fundamental principles based on constitutional rights deserved to be upheld, were convicted of violating the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, and many were sentenced to federal prison terms,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the JACL recognize that those Japanese American draft resisters of World War II, who declared their loyalty to their country, but who were also dedicated to the principle of defending their civil rights, were willing to make significant sacrifices to uphold their beliefs of patriotism in a different form from those who sacrificed their lives on the battlefields; and that they, too, deserve a place of honor and respect in the history of Americans of Japanese ancestry; and

Be it further resolved that the JACL regrets any pain or bitterness caused by its failure to recognize this group of patriotic Americans and further resolves to educate our own community and the public that loyalty is not necessarily demonstrated in any singular form but can be manifested in other praiseworthy and admirable acts, and that by this recognition the JACL strives to promote and nurture the healing process of an issue that has divided our community; and

That coupled with its acknowledgement is a reminder that we were all victims of a shameful racist policy perpetrated by the U.S. Government — a government which nearly 50 years later has acknowledged its grievous error and has pledged to make amends for the injustices which it caused.

ADOPTED

### 31 Res. 16 — Additional Scholarship Funds

By Eastern District Council

Whereas, costs for college and university education have become prohibitive for many families; and

Whereas, local chapters are now awarding scholarships from \$500 to \$1000; and

Whereas, the National JACL Scholarship Program utilizes much staff time and the program needs funds for administrative costs; and

Whereas, increasing freshman scholarships will permit students to get started on higher education while graduate students are in a better position to get to sources of other scholarships and fellowships,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that JACL actively seek additional scholarship funds for its National JACL Scholarship Program with emphasis on College Freshman Scholarships; and, further, increase the amount of awards, setting the minimum of \$1000 award for scholarships administered by the national organization. Guidelines need to be developed for individuals/families/corporations who wish to establish scholarships in their own names.

ADOPTED