Finding aid for the Japanese Americans Citizens League, Washington, D.C.
District Office Records

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Collection number: 2000.403.9

Japanese American National Museum
Los Angeles, California

Processed by:
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Encoded by:
Yoko Shimojo

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Japanese Americans Citizens League, Washington, D.C. District Office records

Dates: 1941-2000

Bulk Dates: 1985-1999

Collection number: 2000.403.9


Collection Size: 31.75 linear feet

Repository: Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Los Angeles, California 90012

Abstract: The records of JACL, Washington, D.C. District Office (JACL-DC) document the administration, JACL-endorsed advocacy issues, and reference files. The collection includes numerous court cases involving employment discrimination, immigration, military, and redress. In a number of these cases, JACL was directly involved in legal representation.

Physical location: Japanese American National Museum 100 N. Central Ave., CA 90012

Access

By appointment only. Please Contact the Collections Management and Access Unit by email (collections@janm.org) or telephone (213-830-5615).

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation


Project Information

This finding aid was created as part of a project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project started in 2007. Project Director was Yoko Shimojo and Project Archivist was Marlon Romero.

Biography / Administrative History

Founded in 1929, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is the nation's oldest and largest Asian Pacific American civil rights organization. It was originally formed to address racial discrimination against Americans of Japanese ancestry, and was one of few organizations in the 1920's and 1930's to challenge racist policies of state and federal governments. JACL's headquarters are located in San Francisco and currently has five regional offices, including Washington, D.C.

JACL has achieved many civil rights victories, including the co-founding of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights in 1948, the successful elimination of the term "Jap", which was replaced by "Jpn" as the official abbreviation, the lobbying of various legislative measures, including the 1952 Walter-McCarren Act, which allowed naturalization rights to Japanese immigrants, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the 1988 redress legislation (Civil Liberties Act of 1988), which compensated Japanese-Americans for their internment during World War II.

Today, the JACL continues to work toward the elimination of racial stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, advocates for more effective federal and state civil rights laws, promotes the accurate portrayal of Asian Pacific American culture and
history, invests in youth education, and fights hate crimes and bias incidents.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

Overlapping of topics and issues, particularly racial discrimination, occurs throughout the collection; therefore, materials pertaining to a particular topic may be found in other parts of the collection. For example, the issue of racial discrimination has its own subseries, and this issue can also be found in a number of court cases and other documents in Military, Employment, and Redress subseries. Employment has its own subseries and can also be found as a topic within the Women’s Issues subseries. Where possible, materials were kept in original order, which also accounts for the overlapping of documents on a particular topic or issue.

Materials related to JACL may also be found in the JACL, Pacific Southwest District Office Records, and JACL, Headquarters Records.

The collection is arranged into the following series:

1) **JACL-DC Administrative Files, 1983-1999**
2) **Civil Liberty and Human Rights Issues, 1941-2000 (bulk: 1985-1999)**

**Series 1: JACL-DC Administrative Files, 1983-1999**
This series documents the history, management, staffing, and finances of JACL-DC. The series includes fact sheets, board of directors correspondence, JACL chapter newsletters, and district activity reports.

This series comprises the bulk of the collection (23 linear feet), and underscores JACL’s mission to advocate for civil rights not only for Japanese Americans but also for all Americans. The materials documents the issues for which JACL advocated, including Affirmative Action, Education, Employment, Gay Rights, and Immigration (see below for complete list). The series is arranged alphabetically by subject, beginning with general civil rights topics. Under each subject, miscellaneous or general documents are listed first, followed by materials on specific topics pertaining to that subject.

A highlight of the series is the numerous court cases involving discrimination against Asian Pacific Americans. JACL was directly involved with several court cases and served as legal representation. In the employment discrimination suit, Atonio v. Wards Cove Packing Company (1.5 linear feet of material), more than 2,000 Asian Pacific Americans and Native Alaskans repealed the special interest exemption from the Civil Rights Act of 1991 of Wards Cove Packing Company.

Also documented here are materials on the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) and on the redress legislation (Civil Liberties Act of 1988) and its amendments. Materials on redress include correspondence, newspaper clippings, memoranda, copies of legislation, and documents on several internment camp sites, including Manzanar and Poston.

Other materials pertaining to this series may also be found in the chronological section of correspondence and newspaper clippings within Series 3.

This series documents other Asian Pacific American civil rights and human rights organizations and provides some context for JACL’s activities in advocacy and education. Also documented here are issues that JACL-DC advocated but are not covered in Series 2. These issues include the U.S. Census and the counting of Asian Pacific Americans and the Presidential Campaign Fundraising Scandal of 1996, which raised concerns about the fund-raising efforts by the Democrats from Asian Americans. Documents include correspondence and memoranda, newspaper clippings, and press releases.

The series also contains material on various individuals, including a number of prominent Asian Americans such as Senator Daniel Inouye, Congressman Norm Mineta, and Congressman Spark Matsunaga. In addition, Series 3 documents other minority groups, including Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and Korean Americans.

The end of Series 3 includes the chronological run of materials by medium, including correspondence, memoranda, newspaper clippings, newsletters, and press releases.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog.

- Japanese Americans
- Politics and government
- Washington (D.C.)
- Redress

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Native Americans (n.d.)
State Registration Laws and Procedures (n.d.)
"200 Years of Expanding the Franchise" conference (1988)

(See also Box 33)

Box 33
Voting Instructions, sample (n.d.)

Box 22

Subseries N Women's Issues

Brochures and Flyers (1988-1992)
Correspondence and Memoranda (1989-1995)
Meetings (1993-1995)
Resources and bibliography (ca. 1994)
Statement (1994)
The Arts (1996)
Equal rights amendment (1995)
George Mason University rape case (1991-1992)
Health care (1994)
Immigration (1988-1999)
Mail order brides (1985-1986, n.d.)
National Council of Negro Women (1993)
Older Women's League (1993-1994)
PBS campaign (1994)
U.S. Supreme Court cases (1995-1996)
Women's Research and Education Institute, 2 folders (1992-1995)


AFL-CIO (1992, 1999)
African-Americans, 3 folders (1986-2000)
Alliance for Justice (1993-1995)
Amerasians (1990, n.d.)
American Bar Association (1989-1993)
American Civil Liberties Union (1989-1995)
American Jewish Committee (1989-1994)
American Jewish Congress (1994)
Americans with disabilities (1989-1996)
"America's War on Poverty" (1995)
Anti-Defamation League Spying (1990-1995)
Asian American Almanac (1993)
Asian/American Center, Queens College, New York (1993)
Asian American history (ca. 1988-1993, n.d.)
Asian American myths and facts (1989)
Asian American perception of other Asian Americans (1992)
Asian American policy review (1990)
Asian American resources (n.d.)
Asian Americans and philosophy (1992, 1994)
Asian and Pacific American Civil Rights Alliance (1987-1993)
Asian Association of human services (1993)
Asian California (1992)
Asian Indians (1993, 1999)
Asian legal services organizations, 2 folders (1989-2000)
Asian organized crime, 1991-1993
Asian/Pacific American Association of AT and T (1995)
Asian Pacific American Bar Association (1990-1995)
Asian Pacific American Coalition (1997)
Asian Pacific American Federal Foreign Affairs Council (1999)
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, 2 folders (1990-1995)
Asian Pacific American Municipal Officials Conference (1990)
Asian Pacific Council (1992)
Asian Pacific Environmental Network (1994, n.d.)
Asians and the media, 5 folders (1982-1996, n.d.)
Book reviews on Asian Americans (1989)
Campbell Secret Evidence Amendment (1999)
Center for Campus Organization (1995)
Center for Democratic Renewal (1995)
Children's Initiative (Center for Assessment and Policy Development, 1989-1992)
Chinese (1989-1992)
Chinese American Citizens Alliance (1993)
Civil Rights March - 30th Anniversary, 23 folders (1993)
Communitarian network (1993-1994)
Box 26, 34
Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership, 2 folders (1990-1999)
Congressional Black Caucus (1993-1995)
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, 3 folders (1992-1994)
Contra Costa JACL Awards Dinner (1989)
Democratic Leadership Council (1992-1993)
Democratic National Committee, 2 folders (1989-1995)
East Coast Asian Student Union (1988-1993)
Ethnic content analysis of Bay Area News Media (1991)
Fairness Doctrine, The, FCC (1994)
Family Violence Prevention Fund (1993)
Fundraising correspondence samples (1990-1992)
Hawaiian sovereignty (1992-1993)
Heritage Foundation (1989-1990)
Hispanic Americans (1988-1998)
Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (1993-1996)
Hmong Americans (1993)
Interracial relationships (ca. 1990s, 1995)
JACL-Legislative Education Committee / LEC, 1990
(See also Box 34)
Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (1996)
Japanese Canadians (1994)
Jewish community (1989-1994)
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Amendments (1992)
Land Ownership (1989)
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (1990-1995)
Legal Services Reauthorization Act of 1993 (1993)
Mansfield Center for Pacific Affairs (1999)
Maryland's elected officials (1994)
Media (1990-1995, n.d.)
Minorities and women in Congress (1990)
Minority participation in education and American Life report (1988)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People / NAACP, 4 folders (1989-1999)
National Association of Arab Americans (1991)
National Association of Asian American Professionals (1992)
Native Americans (1988-1997)
New Coalition of Conscience (1993)