

ORGANIZING PEOPLE

What was NCRR's contribution to redress in relationship to the community? One is that we never gave up on the idea that we could win redress. We also believed that the people's involvement was important. We did things that some thought were perhaps radical. Rallies, marches, candlelight ceremonies--organizing people! We insisted that people be allowed to speak in their own language (Japanese) at the Commission Hearings with translations. We, (NCRR) made an impact on the community, saying that everyone's voice should be heard. Some did not agree with that. They thought that only the experts should be allowed to speak and that those in the academic fields should speak for the people. We opposed those kinds of ideas and promoted the idea that people should speak for themselves!

We were out in the community all the time! Giving presentations, doing the "Days of Remembrance," and writing letters. We were always leafleting at different community events. We had tables in the Japanese Village Plaza. We collected and sent thousands and thousands of letters, over and over again! We had mail-outs and we were also able to get people to send telegrams during key periods. It was intense! Everyone in NCRR was mobilized to do things.

We were also able to connect redress to other issues and as we began to get support from other groups. It gave us a lot of encouragement! We responded to every opportunity that came our way. If there was a request from a university or school, we went out there! One thing can lead to another. For example, the Rev. Paul Nakamura of the Lutheran Church in Gardena became very active and took the case of redress before the Synod. This gave us a nationwide audience! We tried to seek support among groups like that because we also realized that we had to have national support.

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