

Janice Tanaka, Tom Kean, and *Right of Passage*

Re: Why Reagan Signed is No Mystery.

Dear all on the email list:

Let me add to the exchange between Janice Tanaka, Governor Tom Kean and me below.

Janice said Alan Simpson first saw Reagan about our bill on February 18, 1988. Problem with that, as the White House visitor logs show, is that Chief of Staff Ken Duberstein told me in his office on the morning of February 14, 1988, that the President was going to sign HR 442.

So Tanaka's video has Simpson showing up to begin to help us at the White House four days *after* Duberstein announced that the issue had long since been settled in Reagan's mind. After twice lobbying the President face to face in late October of 1987, Governor Tom Kean sent June Masuda Goto's letter about her brother Kaz to Reagan on November 19, 1987. I think Reagan decided to reverse the position of the Administration on our bill sometime in January of 1988.

But maybe Simpson never said anything to anybody about redress. White House logs also show that on February 18 when he appeared at the White House, the subject to be discussed was the Administration's budget delivered to Congress on that day. With Simpson were Bob Byrd, Jim Wright, Tom Foley, Bob Michel and John Stennis. Republican Minority Whip Bob Michel had already voted against HR 442 in the House because Mitsubishi and Kobota were competitors of Caterpillar, which is based in his Peoria district. And CAT workers were organized by the United Auto Workers, unhappy to say the least with Japan at the time. John Stennis was a segregationist Senator from Mississippi. A predecessor of his, Senator Theodore Bilbo, recommended that Japanese American males in camp be castrated. So in that company there was virtually no chance that Simpson could squeeze in a word about Sparky's redress bill.

The bottom line in any case: When Janice Tanaka (and Alan Simpson) said he showed up at the White House to help us, redress was already all over but the cheering, which BTW didn't really begin until April when the Administration first announced publicly that Reagan was signing.

Two other things. Right after I walked out of Duberstein office, I called Sparky to tell him that he could start moving his bill in the Senate, which, thanks to Matsunaga, passed S. 1053 with a 69-vote, filibuster-proof majority on April 19, 1988.

Later in July, a White House aide called me and said that because the bill was controversial, especially in Republican ranks, there was not going to be a signing ceremony. I said fine. Whether Reagan signed publicly or privately made no difference to me. Then on August 8, 1988, I got another call in Seattle from a Reagan PR aide saying they did want to have a signing ceremony. Maybe 70 people left the Seattle JAACL Convention for DC the next day. I don't know why they changed their minds, but it was nice that they did.

Grant

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Sent: Mon, Nov 16, 2015 4:24 pm
Subject: Your email to Governor Tom Kean

Dear Janice,

Governor Kean forwarded to me the email you recently sent to him. Thank you for all the time and effort you put into your video.

The problem for me in what you sent to the Governor is a certain lack of familiarity with the ways of American politics and what politicians do. This may be because you didn't have a lot of time to study what happens in our political culture. As for me, I don't know what goes on in the culture of Hollywood, Silicon Valley or Wall Street, places sometimes more complicated than Washington.

Let me speak to some specific examples where the inexperience

shows.

First, there has never been a position in our political system called "The Deputy Chief of the GOP." This is like calling a second baseman a right side mid-fielder. Alan Simpson was the Minority Whip in the Senate, which because it was controlled by the Democrats in 1988, left him with very little power. All the committee chairmen were Democrats, which allowed Sparky Matsunaga, and Sparky virtually alone, to move our bill to passage. Committee chairs control almost everything. John Glenn, Chairman of the Government Operations Committee, moved Sparky bill without a single objection from any of its members. As our bill was being finalized in committee, Jeff Bingaman, a member of Government Operations from New Mexico, said, "Sparky really has this thing greased."

Second, even in Washington worried about the deficit, \$2 billion dollars in the 1989 federal budget was a rounding error. The actual amount of money expended was \$1.6 billion in individual payments after Bob Matsui and Dick Darman came up with an additional \$400 million not authorized by HR 442, plus \$50 million authorized for the community at large.

Third, in Washington a decision to spend \$1.65 billion dollars on a program can easily be made by a politician -- especially by the president, but also by a committee chair or an individual member of Congress -- on the advice given by a single person in a telephone call, at a lunch, or in a memo. It happens all the time and every day in Washington. Then too our money came out of the Treasury over the span of three fiscal years or a little over \$500 million annually. So just Kaz, June, and Tom moving President Reagan to act is not all something improbable, as you mistakenly assert in your email.

Fourth, because the consideration of HR 442 did not involve matters of national security, it is hard for me to believe that any of the documents relating to it would be classified. But I am willing to be convinced otherwise if shown that there were.

Fifth, the bill was call HR 442, or House Resolution 442, for a reason, one which I think so far escapes you. No 442, no Kaz, no redress.

Finally, Governor Kean is, as you say, a seasoned politician, and so I think

he also found your email puzzling in the ways I suggest above. A national figure since 1982, Tom was a friend and adviser to Ronald Reagan, G.H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and G.W. Bush. He was also the much-praised Chairman of the 9/11 Commission.

Thank you again for the time and effort you have expended.

Warm regards,

Grant

From: Janice Tanaka

Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2015 8:27 AM

To: Nicole Costanza on behalf of Tom Kean

Cc: 'Ai Tokuno'

Subject: RE: Why Ronald Reagan signed HR 442 is not a "mystery."

Dear Governor Kean,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. Contrary to what you might have heard, we have included yours and Grant Ujifusa's interviews in the film. We also acknowledged your contribution and Grant's to the historic passage of HR442.

Responding directly to your email, we examined more than 10,000 documents, including several recently declassified memos and letters at the Reagan Library which shed light on what went on behind the scenes. Along with our interviews with then White House Chief of Staff, Ken Duberstein and Senator Alan Simpson, then the Deputy Chief of the GOP, who watched movies with the President and acknowledged that he told him about being an eyewitness to the Heart Mountain Concentration Camp, we uncovered there was a lot more to President Reagan signing the bill than just his memory of the 1945 Kazuo Masuda ceremony. We found documentation that the White House knew about the Masuda story as early as 1985, so it was not a revelation in 1987, but we do acknowledge the story and your part in enlightening President Reagan in the film. However the Masuda story was definitely not the only factor.

A seasoned politician such as yourself surely realizes that signing a \$2-billion spending bill entails more than just "a touching memory about one Japanese

American veteran," especially in Washington, especially for a fiscally conservative President. We don't dispute that President Reagan called you to tell you he was signing the bill, but it does not negate the several other documented facts that led President Reagan to change his mind and sign HR442. There were budgetary compromises, 1988 Presidential election politics, his legacy, his desire "to redress a wrong," his knowledge of the bravery of the 442, to name a few. He even watched a movie about a murdered Japanese American who had been incarcerated called "Bad Day at Black Rock" just days before he changed his mind. So with all due respect, Governor, we know from our research and over 30 interviews that many factors played a role in President Reagan's decision to sign HR442. So we posed it as a mystery at the beginning of the film because the vast paper trail we found shows it took several incremental moves to bring him around, including encouragement by a variety of people like Senator Simpson and yourself, to name just two.

The film has been viewed by academics and scholars, who have called it the first comprehensive film about Japanese American Redress because it recognizes the fact that it took many years and many people, not just a handful, contributing in many different ways, at different times, to win justice. I am happy to provide you with a confidential link for your viewing only if you want to watch it. It is an hour and a half long. Thanks again for your participation in the film.

Warm regards,

Janice Tanaka

Director, "Right of Passage"

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Dear Ms. Tanaka and Ms. Tokuno,

I have learned that you were not aware that I received a call from [the White House](#) informing me that [the President](#) was going to sign the Japanese American redress bill. Let me say now I [did get that call](#). As you may know, I had asked him in two face-to-face

meetings to change his Administration's position on HR 442, and he did.

Grant Ujifusa and I worked together to remind the President about his speaking at a ceremony for slain 442 hero, Kaz Masuda, in 1945. The President said to me that he remembered the event for the Japanese American soldier and asked if his mother was still alive.

Based on my conversation with the President, I believe that his memory of the heroism of Kaz Masuda was a critical factor in decision to change the position of his Administration and sign HR 442. Accordingly, I don't feel that why Ronald Reagan changed his mind can be characterized as a "mystery," something I have been told the video does.

I also spoke about my own personal lobbying of the President on HR 442 and his call to me saying he was going to sign the bill, both recorded in the Asia Society video below. You might begin to watch it about 34 minutes into the production.

[\[PDF\]Read by Reagan](http://www.grantujifusa.org/pdfs/Read%20by%20Reagan.pdf)
www.grantujifusa.org/pdfs/Read%20by%20Reagan.pdf

[Japanese-American Internment Redress | Video | C-SPAN.org](http://www.c-span.org/video/?313359-1/japaneseamerican...redress)
www.c-span.org/video/?313359-1/japaneseamerican...redress -

Please call me if you have any questions at 908-304-0770.
Or email me about my role in Japanese American redress.

Or, Janice, come visit me again in New Jersey. It would be nice to see you.

Warm regards,

Tom Kean

