

CONTRIBUTIONS OF JAPANESE AMERICAN BASEBALL PLAYERS

• Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a group of Americans that contributed greatly to the game of baseball. Although not widely known in this country, the Japanese American community has contributed a significant chapter to the history of baseball as it has to many other important aspects of American society.

Beginning at the turn of the 20th century, Issei, or first generation Japanese Americans, developed a love for baseball that led to the creation of an extensive network of Japanese American leagues throughout the United States. Japanese American baseball leagues began to appear in towns and cities throughout Hawaii and the western continental United States. The popularity of baseball spread to the point where there was a team in nearly every Japanese American farming community.

By the 1920's, more than 100 teams had been formed consisting primarily of talented Nisei, or second generation Japanese Americans. Because of the discrimination and forced segregation of the time, the Nisei teams, like the teams in the Negro Leagues and in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball Leagues, played mostly against each other. However, they also successfully compete against high school, college, and semi-professional teams from white America, teams from the Negro Leagues, and even against baseball legends such as Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Ted Williams, Jackie Robinson, and Joe DiMaggio.

In 1937, all-star teams consisting of Nisei players from California traveled to Japan, Korea, and Manchuria as ambassadors of goodwill. The Nisei teams competed throughout Asia where they impressed audiences with their talented play, sportsmanship, and aggressive style of fast-paced American baseball. However, the outbreak of World War II abruptly ended their overseas campaign as ambassadors of American goodwill. In the following months, many of these players and their families, because of their race, became the object of suspicion and mistrust in their own country.

The serene life of farming and playing baseball ended abruptly with the announcement of Executive Order 9066. More than 120,000 Japanese Americans were relocated to remote internment camps across the United States. In an effort to preserve a sense of community and improve the living conditions of the internment camps, Japanese Americans set about recreating many of the social networks and clubs that were an integral part of their lives prior to their internment. For many of the younger Japanese Americans this meant banding together and forming baseball leagues that played several seasons behind barbed-wire fences.

For Japanese Americans interned during World War II, playing, watching and supporting baseball was an impor-

tant reprieve from the harsh nature of camp life. Popular Japanese American baseball players, such as Kenichi Zenimura, made it a mission to bring baseball to the internment camps. He and the Japanese American community worked tirelessly to build makeshift baseball stadiums where, for several hours each week, Japanese American communities could forget their worries and enjoy their worries and enjoy their favorite American pastime. For the many Japanese Americans who participated in the baseball leagues and the thousands who watched and supported the teams, the baseball leagues helped to rebuild a sense of civic pride and dignity which had greatly suffered as a result of their forced internment.

In the post-war years, Japanese American baseball players took up their former role as ambassadors of goodwill and began traveling across the Pacific to play exhibiting games in Japan. In addition, prominent Japanese American baseball players, like Tsuneo "Cappy" Harada, contributed to the explosion of baseball's popularity in Japan by bringing famous Americans such as Lefty O'Doul and Joe DiMaggio to Japan for exhibitions and public appearances. These efforts by Harada and other greatly contributed to the internationalization of baseball as a professional sport and the popularity of baseball in Japan. The current practice of playing exhibition games in both American and Japan was started by Japanese American baseball players and provides opportunities for both American and Japanese players to compete in each other's countries. In recent years, American Cecil Fielder played for the Hanshin Tigers in Japan's Central League, while Japanese players, like Hideo Nomo, have competed for American teams. In addition, American and Japanese All-Star teams regularly compete in Japan.

In spite of this rich tradition and history, the popularity of the Nisei Baseball Leagues gradually waned as discrimination and segregation faded in American society. By the 1970's the leagues had almost completely disappeared. However, the important contributions of Japanese American baseball players had, in recent years, been rediscovered for the benefit of all Americans. Historical exhibits, like "Diamonds in the Rough: Japanese Americans in Baseball," which have traveled to many sites throughout the United States, have brought to the public's attention the important role Japanese Americans played in baseball's history. In addition, many younger Japanese Americans, have begun to participate in the historic Japanese American baseball leagues again.

It is a great privilege to bring to the attention of the Congress and the American people the important contributions of the Japanese American baseball players. From their early days playing in segregated Japanese American leagues to their more recent role

as promoters of baseball around the world, they have consistently demonstrated an incredible ability to overcome adversity and make the most of opportunities in even the most difficult of circumstances. In light of their many accomplishments, I am honored to commemorate the Japanese American baseball players today. •

VIOLENCE IN ALGERIA

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, few weeks pass when there is not a report of an appalling atrocity in Algeria. The testimony of eyewitnesses echo the same refrain—a tale of slaughter, decapitation, mutilation, burning, and shooting of innocent men, women, and children. Thousands of civilians have fled their homes as the violence has escalated, but the protection and safety they seek is difficult, if not impossible to find.

The reaction of the international community has not been one of outrage and alarm, but a quiet, almost uneasy expression of concern. It is almost as though the reports are too grisly, too horrific to even broach—as though by addressing the subject and opening it up to scrutiny, one will somehow be tainted by the extreme levels of violence and degradation. However, the subject must be addressed and a credible investigation must be carried out.

Time and again around the world, we have seen the needless suffering that occurs when governments and the world community as a whole are too slow to shoulder their mantle of moral responsibility. The crisis in Algeria presents another opportunity to change this pattern and set a new standard for the next century.

Mr. President, on January 26, 1998, fifteen Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, Senators and Representatives, sent a letter to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on the tragic situation in Algeria. I ask that the text of the letter be printed in the RECORD.

The letter follows:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 26, 1998.

Hon. MADELEINE ALBRIGHT,
Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SECRETARY: We are writing to express our alarm concerning the recent massacres in Algeria, which have brought the toll of those killed in the five-year civil war to an estimated 80,000 persons, mostly civilians. The Algerian Government has consistently failed to adequately investigate the atrocities and bring those responsible to justice. The administration's call for an international inquiry is an appropriate and necessary first step in responding to this crisis.

Since the civil war erupted in 1992, extremist opposition groups have increased their attacks on innocent people. The tactics of these groups rank among the most inhumane seen anywhere. While their conduct should be strongly condemned, there are persistent reports that Algerian security forces have failed to stop or prevent the massacres or to arrest those involved. Eyewitnesses to the violence report that terrorist groups have operated in collusion with, and under the