



STATE SENATE
DISTRICT 25

Nancy Ouchida-Howells, my friend since 1st grade sent me this letter regarding her family's experience during World War II Japanese Internment.

"Thank you very much for asking about our internment.

My Mother and Father and all their brothers and sisters were born in the United States and thus, were American citizens. Grandmother and Grandfather had immigrated from Japan to the USA in about 1910 and employed in the timber and railroad building; later they worked so hard and saved enough to establish a farm near Powell Valley Road, in Gresham.

After the 7 December 1941 Pearl Harbor attack, they lived in fear. From the Executive Order 1066 internet:

"Ten weeks after the outbreak of war, on February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which gave to the Secretary of War and the military commanders to whom he delegated authority, the power to exclude persons of Japanese ancestry, from designated areas in order to secure national defense objectives against sabotage and espionage. The order was used, as the President, his responsible Cabinet officers and the West Coast Congressional delegation knew it would and resident aliens, from the West Coast. Over the following months more than 100,000 people were ordered to leave their homes and farms and businesses, "Voluntary", [redacted] branded as potentially disloyal by the War Department and who were recognizable by their facial features was not feasible. Not surprisingly, the politicians and citizens of Wyoming or Idaho believed that their war industries, railroad lines and hydroelectric dams deserved as much protection from possible sabotage as did those on the Pacific Coast, and they opposed accepting the ethnic Japanese. Most of the evacuees were reduced to abandoning their homes and livelihoods and being transported by the government to interior regions of the west.

"relocation centers" in desolation." As the Executive Order made plain, these actions were based upon [redacted] whether this massive eviction of an entire ethnic group was justified. In three cases the Supreme Court reviewed the Executive

EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 49 resettlement of people who had been a necessity." The government has never fundamentally found a single case of violation of the Order in the context of convictions for violations of military orders issued pursuant to it, but the Court chose not to review the factual basis for military decisions in wartime, accepting without close scrutiny the government's representation that exclusion and evacuation were militarily necessary. Forty years later, the nation is sufficiently concerned about the rights and liberties of its citizens and residents, that it has undertaken to examine the facts and pose to itself the question of whether, in the heat of the moment, beset by defeat and fearful of the future, it justly took the proper course for its own

protection, or made an original mistake of very substantial proportion. "Peace hath her victories/No less renowned than war."

My family was given a weeks notice to vacate their homes and businesses and report to the Portland Assembly Centre which were the stockyards where cattle was sold for slaughter. They were allowed to take whatever they could carry- including bedding, clothes, books, etc. But NOT cameras, radios, or weapons. They left most all their possessions, horses and livestock, farming tools and equipment, planted crops, etc. and stored their furniture in a locked shed, but it was looted. They also lost their first-born son and their freedom- with soldiers with guns, guard towers, barb wire, German shepherd dogs.

Father's brother, Tom who was attending Oregon State College, studying chemistry had just five days notice to leave College and report to the Assembly Centre. Everyone on all levels of school/education was now excluded.

Please see attachments for: Letter to OSU

In all of this prejudice shown to American citizens of Japanese ancestry, both the brothers on my Father's side and Mother's side enlisted into the US Army to prove their loyalty to America.

My Family left the "restricted area" in February 1947, to return to Gresham, where they were greeted with signs in stores saying, "No Japs here". After nearly five years of being interned, friends helped them start over again. Zimmermans 12-mile store allowed them to buy food and merchandise, Mitzi Falmer's dad bought strawberry plants for my Father so he could start farming again and many more kindnesses. We had to start over again.

PERSONAL JUSTICE DENIED

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Was a policy of exclusion militarily justified as a precautionary measure? This is a core initial question because the government has conceded at every point that there was no evidence of actual sabotage, espionage or fifth column activity among people of Japanese descent on the West Coast in February 1942.