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My name is Tetsu Saito. I am an eighty-one years old first-generation (issei) Japanese American presently residing in Los Angeles, California. I first came to the U.S. as a student in 1921. I went back to Japan to marry and then later returned to the U.S. with my husband to settle permanently.

Prior to World War II our family owned a hotel on Main St. in east Los Angeles. We later moved to another hotel, the Ruth Hotel on E. 5th St., which still stands today. The Ruth Hotel was a two-story, 37-room operation. It's pre-war value was estimated at approximately \$6,000. At the time of World War II we had managed to save enough money to pay off the mortgage and own the hotel outright. As the evacuation notice gave our family little time to sell our property, when a caucasian man offered us \$300 we decided to sell for that amount. We gathered our belongings and appliances and packed them in 64 crates and 6 trunks. These we left in the custody of the Nichiren Church. After the War when we tried to reclaim our belongings, we found that all of it had been either stolen or looted. Our only possessions were the suitcases which we had carried with us at the time of evacuation to the assembly center.

My family was evacuated to the Santa Anita assembly center. We found our horse stall accommodations very bad and the facilities unsanitary. My gravest concern was the lack of and the poor quality of the food. There was not enough milk for my children and they were always hungry. I can remember that a letter writing campaign was initiated to complain about the assembly center food. As it later turned out, a camp official was involved in stealing from the food supply and was selling goods on the outside. He was eventually exposed and dismissed.

From Santa Anita my family was sent to Amache, Colorado. I remember the terrible ride in that broken-down train. Arriving in Amache, again we found the food poor and lacking. Generally, the conditions and facilities in Amache

Were very primitive. Water in the tanks was polluted and only later did the quality improve as wells were completed. The barracks provided were very crude and did little to protect us from summer dust storms and winter blizzards. I worked as a janitress cleaning toilets and showers while my husband worked in the boiler room.

In camp I became very upset when I learned of the drafting of young niseis (second-generation) into the army. To begin with, I felt that it was bad enough aliens like myself were imprisoned, but to incarcerate citizen niseis was an unprincipled act on the part of the U.S. government. Shipping the niseis out to the front lines, I felt surely that they would be used as mere "cannon fodder" in the war.

After the War, we returned to California to live in the trailer camps in Lomita. My family later moved to Burbank and then to Winona, California. My husband worked in a nursery and I found employment doing housework. By this time my husband's health was rapidly deteriorating, so we decided to return to Japan where he died two years later. After his death I returned to the U.S. with my son. Shortly after camp my daughter had died of leukemia. I returned to the Boyle Heights area where I presently still reside. I live alone. There is no longer a Japanese community where I live as the community never recovered after its dispersal and destruction at the time of evacuation.

The monetary compensation, which I feel is rightfully due us, will never repay the Japanese for all the property losses, or the physical and mental hardships we experienced. However, I feel very strongly that compensation is necessary in order for the U.S. government to fulfill its responsibility to make restitution with the Japanese people who endured evacuation.

_____ Date

Jetse Saito

Signature