

Frank A. Tsuboi
Flight Engineer
Seattle Resident
Age, 57 years

After approximately 40 years since Executive Order #9066, I have been reflecting almost an equal number of years on the whys, causes and effects good and bad of Executive Order #9066. I welcome this once in a lifetime opportunity and privilege of addressing the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to relate a portion of one family's story.

I cannot help but conclude that Executive Order #9066 was truly an unjust act on a group of loyal Americans innocent of wrongdoing.

It is my hope the Commissioners will come to a similar conclusion and act on their findings to Congress to rectify past wrongs, act to prevent repetition of acts similiar to E.O. #9066 and educate on a national level the true plight of the Japanese Americans after December 7, 1941.

I wish to thank those whose effort made possible the COWRIC. Namely, President Jimmy Carter and the Nikkei representatives in Washington, D.C.

On December 7, 1941, I was an 18-year old student at Curtiss Wright Technical Institute of Aeronautics in Glendale, California. The FBI rounded up the approximately 6 to 8 Nisei students and individually questioned us in depth.

In early February 1942, all Nisei students were ungraciously asked to leave, expelled. That temporarily ended my pursuit of an aviation career. To the credit of my fellow Caucasian students who were a cross section of Americans, we received much sympathy. I suspect the school administrators in concert with the FBI had privileged information of the forthcoming expulsions of the people of Japanese ancestry.

I drove home to Seattle in my 1932 Chevy convertible and sold it to a friend for \$50. Shortly thereafter came the military directives and Exclusion Order. We had to leave Seattle.

My father had to sell his grocery business. He was one of the more prosperous independent grocers. He felt fortunate in making the sale of his business, stock, fixtures and furniture for \$2500. Thus, on that day in April, virtually his entire estate was sold (lost) for \$2500. My father never regained his prewar economic stature in the postwar period due to lack of capital, spirit, or the combination of both. He is now retired and resides in Seattle.

His prewar affluence allowed my older sister to attend Julliard School of Music in New York City and me to attend aviation school in California. I would conservatively estimate his financial loss at \$50,000. My sister later returned from New York City to join us in Hunt, Idaho, because the financial burden was too heavy to sustain.

Our family consisted of Mom, Dad, three sisters and two brothers. Approximately May 2, our family taxied to an appointed departure point and boarded a bus for Puyallup. We carried all our worldly goods consisting of clothes, blankets and toilet articles.

As I walked through the guarded gate into the Puyallup fairgrounds, I had terrible visions of things to come. My thoughts ran to what we had learned about democracy and the Constitution; they went out the window. To what limits would the United States Government go I wondered -- if they arbitrarily confiscated my civil rights and imprisoned me without due process. I truly feared for our survival, especially when we were at the mercy of a racist like General DeWitt.

Camp life was primitive, confining, crowded, lacked privacy. It was like a prison but we endured. There was a bright side, though; we were among friends.

I remember the guard who attended his 50 Cal. machine gun on top of the grandstand overlooking our living quarters, and his search light at night. I remember the plugged toilets and a chance to leave the area for a few hours one

day. I was on a detail to scoop out the sewerage from the cesspool into garbage cans which were loaded onto trucks. We were allowed temporary freedom when we dumped the contents of the cans into the Puyallup River. That short respite from confinement was a fine feeling.

We were moved to Minidoka, Idaho, in September 1942, and I found living conditions and the harsh desert atmosphere worse than I could have imagined. Camp life in Hunt was harsh and one had to adjust to change in environment -- the extreme temperature in the summer, the frigid winters and the ever present dust. But we did endure.

The government further complicated our lives with the loyalty questionnaire which had serious consequences if answered in the negative. I had never considered myself other than a loyal American. My country had done me wrong but unquestionably I would be loyal to the end. That was my sentiment in total.

To the credit of our Niseis who were part of the 442 RCT who werved, fought and died; they made the greatest contributions for the Nisei cause and I will feel forever grateful to them. Memories are short, however. Many Americans do not even know of their existence.

I served my 18 months in the Army shortly after the VJ-Day, took advantage of my GI Bill and completed an A & E course some 6 years after the interruption in California.

Without question, all evacuees suffered financially, socially, psychologically, physiologically but individually, by different degrees. Many have been unable to adjust and are today dependent on the dole.

Redress is necessary. An apology from the government is inadequate. Damages inflicted by the government through their misjudgment must be compensated. That's the American Way!