

To: The Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians
Written testimony of Thomas T. Shigio.

My name is Thomas T. Shigio, [REDACTED], Auburn, Washington 98002.
I am 66 years old and at present a semi-retired truck farmer. I live with my wife Mitsie and our son and daughter is living away from home.

Prior to the Evacuation of 1942, I was living at 2110 Tacoma Avenue, Sumner, Washington 98390, working on the family truck farm with my parents and brothers.

My reaction to the evacuation order was that of being "stunned", as to such an action being ordered. Our family had less than 60 days to prepare to leave for destination unknown. We were able only to take a few clothing and some necessary cooking utensils. We were forced to leave behind our home, our personal belongings, the farm and all the farm equipments.

In the spring of 1942, we had put in the vegetable crops, but did not have a chance to harvest any of the crop. The fertilizer, labor, tractor use, seed and all were lost. I would estimate the crop loss at \$10,000 of 1942 dollars.

Our family was sent to a temporary camp at the Puyallup Fair grounds for a number of months, and later transferred to the Minidoka camp in Idaho. Both the living quarters and the food were bad at the Puyallup Fairgrounds, but did improve a little at the Minidoka camp. Transportation from home to the first camp was by trucks and the transportation between camps were by old railroad cars.

My initial impression on arriving at the camp was that of feeling like a "prisoner" in a prison. It was difficult to adjust to the lifestyle necessary to survive in stable mental manner, since camp life was so different from that of home. The poor health facilities and conditions were of a great negative impact on the family.

I had volunteered to work on the nearby Idaho farms, after a period of time in the Minidoka camp.

After the return to the West Coast was permitted, I returned to the farm in

Sumner to restart its operation. Our family encountered many difficulties, the main being a very difficult time getting any financing from the local banks. The farm land had deteriorated during our absence, now full of weeds, making a profitable operation very difficult.

I feel very strongly that the incarceration in the internment camps affected our family's life mainly by setting our finances back by ten years.

I feel very strongly of direct financial redress for the time spent in the camps, for the financial losses sustained at the time of the evacuation as well as during the the time of the incarceration--the financial loss were on the crop, the farm equipments, and personal property.

Sincerely,

Thomas T. Shigio

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