

Seattle, Wash.
Aug. 1, 1981

Ms. Joan Bernstein, Co-Chairperson
Commission on War-time Relocation and Internment of Civilians
17th St.,
Wash. D. C.

Dear Ms. Bernstein :

I am writing in regard to hearings being conducted by your committee on WW II internment of Japanese nationals. To date little has come out of the hearings to indicate President Roosevelt had the slightest justification for invoking Executive Order 9066. It would seem, that as conductor of these proceedings, you should make every effort to uncover factors that might have precipitated such an order. In my opinion there was substantial cause for the President's action.

I lived in Los Angeles from 1922 to 1942 at which time I entered U. S. Armed Forces. Many Japanese nationals lived in our immediate area. Most were hard working industrious people but generally lived out of the mainstream of Southern California life. They operated most of the plant nurseries in the area and many fruit-grocery stores. One such fruit-grocery complex abutted our property. A few months prior to Pearl Harbor I remember witnessing young Japanese practicing close-order drill in their back-yard at night. I even picked up a drill and company organizational manual in their store which was a product of the Japanese military. Other instances, one I observed at a Japanese operated nursery, made it clear to me that there was much sympathy among West Coast Japanese nationals for the expansionist policies of the Japanese military-industrial complex.

It is true that many Nisei served with distinction in both Pacific and European theaters. We had them with us on three amphibious landings in the Pacific and I respected these Nisei as comrades-at-arms. But, the more I hear of this reparations business, it serves only to revive bitter memories. What's to be gained from it after forty years ? What else will result but to open old wounds ?

After WW II America was generous to a defeated adversary. We set Japan on her feet and she went on to establish herself at the top of the emerging post-war industrial powers. Would any victor be expected to do more ? In battle the Japanese were a cunning resourceful enemy. Many of my friends did not return from the Pacific. Many hundreds remain entombed aboard the Arizona at Pearl. What of these ? The climate set by your committee almost reflects an apology for American involvement in the Pacific.

Internment camps were referred to as like barbed-wire Nazi enclaves.

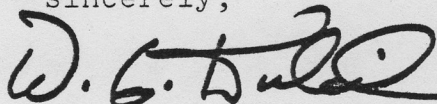
This is not accurate. Our unit moved into a former Japanese Relocation camp at Marysville, Calif. and found it no more spartan than any other U. S. military camp of the period. In fact, we would consider this camp better than most we endured. Please remember, this was war-time and we did not have a choice of reservations.

It is my opinion that General DeWitt's implementation of the internment order was not unduly harsh, certainly no more harsh than the unruly uprooting of thousands of American youth such as myself who were 'invited' to join the U. S. Armed Forces. A trecherous enemy had just destroyed half our Navy by a sneak attack. We had reason to be 'running scared'. Self-preservation was first priority. I know there was a lump the size of a cantelope in my throat the night my unit sailed out of Puget Sound bound for 'whatever' in the Pacific.

Please accept the foregoing comments in the context they are offered. Maybe you would have to have been there, as I was, to appreciate just why things happened as they did. Hope I do not represent a concept many moderns would like to forget. If I have a glaring fault it is that I have an all-consuming love for my country and all that it stands for.

If you are interested in portraying the 'other side' of this question I would be pleased to testify when your committee convenes in Seattle. Please advise as to dates so I might adjust my schedule.

sincerely,



W. G. Kubick

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