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Testimony of: Teimei Tim Okimura

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I was born in Florin, Sacramento County, California, on November 20, 1917. My schooling was in Sacramento County, California.

About mid-December, 1941, I went into the draft board to volunteer. I was turned down and put into classification 1B. On May 27, 1942, we were evacuated into Fresno Assembly Center, and in October, to Arkansas. WHY only the Japanese people must evacuate at that time, and why not the Germans and Italians????? Why were we put behind barbed wire without trial, without conviction? Why did the government use machine guns on us? Because the government took our cameras away, I do not have pictures to prove it. This hurt my feelings.

1943--We had to register for the selective service system. The very last question I wanted to face--I was very unhappy being treated like an Enemy Alien, behind barbed wire, and having my rights taken away. Therefore, my answer was NO, although if I was drafted by law, I would go and obey.

I left the camp for one reason and that was to find a doctor that could treat my back pain. And I wanted some freedom. I went to Ann Arbor, Michigan, as a kitchen helper for University of Michigan Service to U. S. Navy. (Michigan people treated me well and the doctor too.) The only thing that got to me was a display sign of the Bill of Rights. It boiled my heart, and I had to try to hold my temper many times.

Upon returning December 1, 1945, all tools, farm implements were worn out, and had to be replaced or repaired. The land was not in productable shape as before, the yards were like a garbage dump and junk yard. There was lots of work, expense, and no money.

Teimei Tim Okimura