

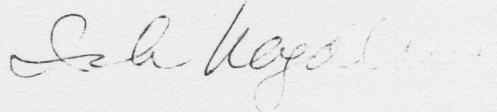
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For your information, I submit the following, outlining a Bainbrigde  
Islander's account of the events just prior to our evacuation from  
Bainbridge Island on March 30, 1942.

Yours very truly,



Ich Nagatani

1

On Tuesday March 24, 1942 notice to evacuate Bainbridge Island by March 30, 1942 was posted on the Island. In addition an 8 P.M. to 6 A.M. curfew was imposed during these seven days. Living on an island was particularly restrictive as we were only allowed to leave the Island on Thursday and Friday of that week to go to Seattle. Confinement to the Island posed a particular hardship since in those days there was no attorney practicing on the Island and shopping was extremely limited.

Our family used the two days in Seattle to see our attorney to consummate business dealings in preparation for our absence of undetermined duration. We also took time to buy luggage that we would need, and which most of us in those days did not have. We had to pack carefully because we were limited to only what we could carry. Because the actual order to evacuate came so suddenly and only allowed one week to prepare, the real hardship was to dispose of the businesses each of the families on Bainbridge Island owned.

During this time I was chairman of the Bainbridge Committee of The Seattle Chapter of the J. A. C. L. and I was designated as the liason between Lt. Col. Malone representing the Army in Seattle and Major Besinius commanding the Army detachment stationed on the Island to enforce Executive Order 9066 and the Civilian Exclusion Order. Most of my liason work was done through Lt. Rousch of the Island detachment. This consisted mainly of making certain that all persons of Japanese ancestry living on the Island knew exactly what was required of them, what they could and could not do so the evacuation would be carried off without any hitch. Lt. Rousch and I made certain all families were registered and my principle responsibility was to make certain every family and every family member was accounted for. Because



2

of this I do have a somewhat dubious distinction, I was the first person to register for the evacuation, our family was number 001. Along with registration there was a medical examination conducted by a team of Naval Medics. We also had to be sure that every evacuee had a "Change of Residence" form - this really was a travel permit, although it's any one's guess why we needed a travel permit since we were travelling under controlled conditions and escorted by armed guard. During the week I was informed by Maj. Besinius that a delegation of Causcasian farmers from Moses Lake, Washington wanted to meet with us regarding relocation, en masse to Moses Lake to farm, principally to grow carrots and onions for a dehydrator that was being planned there. Thinking that it would be wonderful opportunity, about four of us, accompanied by a civilian (I believe his name was McQuarry) took two precious days to investigate the situation in Moses Lake. We found the farmers and landowners very cooperative and with consultation between our group and theirs, we were able to get a commitment from them for a farm for every family from Bainbridge Island. The morning after we got back to the Island, we held a meeting at which each family was represented. Just as the meeting was called to order, Major Besinius interrupted to inform us that the Western Defense Command had denied us permission to move to Moses Lake as a group, but that a few approved families would be permitted to relocate there. Later that morning Major Besinius told me that my family would be approved for relocation and that he strongly recommended we do so. However, because of my position during this period I did not feel relocation to Moses Lake would be what we wanted to do. I felt that we would be betraying a trust to the other families on the Island.

Much has already been written and documented about the financial losses,

3

the loss of Civil Rights, etc., etc., and I do not think it necessary to elaborate on that now, but I would like to note the difficulties the Japanese living on Bainbridge Island were confronted with.

All persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast were aware that they were subject to evacuation but I think we were all hoping against hope that somehow it would not happen. And when we were asked and permitted to go to Moses Lake by the Western Defense Command, we were all sure that this was our reprieve. So when the orders were finally issued, I am sure it was a terrible shock to all of us on the West Coast, but for those of us who were living on Bainbridge Island, it was an especially disheartening and disappointing experience.

In 1964 when our oldest daughter was a freshman at the University of Washington, she first heard about the evacuation in some depth. On her first visit home after that we had a discussion on the evacuation and after telling her my version and experience of it she questioned why we allowed such a thing to happen. My answer to her was that in those days and under those particular conditions there was no such thing as civil rights, especially with a detachment of armed soldiers around to enforce a form of martial law. I didn't agree with her, but she thought that it was an exercise of adding insult to injury when the same army drafted some of us from behind the barbed wire that they escorted us into.

On the issue of redress, and speaking only for myself, I feel that since I was unnecessarily deprived of some of the most productive years of my life and since my civil rights were abridged, I should be and deserved to be redressed for that. I also feel that I alone should have the right to decide how any redress due me should be disbursed.



4

The question has been raised as to whether the evacuation was a racial issue. My only thoughts on that involve the Western Defense Command Form PM-2 (revised), "Change of Address Form", that required all Japanese, German or Italian aliens AND persons of Japanese Ancestry to obtain and complete any time they changed addresses within the area of the Western Defense Command. It was apparent that Form PM -2 (revised) was aimed purely at only the people of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast of the United States. Also, I do not feel that it was necessary to require people such as my father who was age 63 at the time, to register for the draft after being incarcerated. This was purely an act of intimidation.