

My Written Testimony To The Commission On Wartime Relocation  
And Internment Of Civilians.

My name is James m. Itami residing at [REDACTED]  
Sumner, Wash. 98390. I am retired from working as a carpenter  
since 1976. This coming July 21st. I will be 67 years old.

My reaction was surprized and confusion, our family was  
operating a truck farm in 1941 located in Fife, Wash.

We had most of the field planted about twenty acres in all  
when we were told to evacuate, after we heard on the radio if,  
we were loyal to keep the crop growing as they were necessary  
for the war effort.

We were given one week to prepare to evacuate, not much time  
to collect, hardly any money coming to us, although, I manage  
to pay all my debt. Me, and my family consisting of father,  
mother, brother and two sister, one sister was married.

We crated all of our kitchen utensils, bedding and the  
government truck took them away for storage. We sold our new  
tractor (1942) Olivier Crawler and 1940 chevrolet car at a  
loss. Our living room furniture were loaded on our farm truck  
(Chevrolet 1938 1½ ton), and hired a Caucasion friend to move  
them to my brother- in -law living in Quincy, Wash.

Our farm loss was about three thousand dollars expended to  
for seeds, fertilizer, gasoline, labor and our gross income  
Which was left because of evacuation ordered by the army.

I would like to emphasize we did not wanted to leave the  
farm.

In our loss, I did not include our Disc, Plow, Meeker Harrow,  
100 cold frame glasses for starting of transplant, hand spray-  
er, water pump, and other items, which was stored on the farm  
shed and locked.

Meanwhile, the government ordered equipment held in storage should be taken out and used, to promote the war effort.

We were not compensated for their use and they were lost. Because we were put in concentration and could not protect our property.

In Camp I remembered much confusion and unfinished construction in Puallup fair grounds.

I worked as a meat cutter and learned to cut all the meat off of a bone and to wash the mold off of ham and bacon that was rejected by the army and navy. After the mold was taken off the meat was distributed to the mess hall.

It was very boring to live in camp, and the American soldier could be heard swearing at us, I felt sorry for their ignorance.

As far as loyalty was concerned, I told my brother we should be American as we did not own anything to Japan and although my father was Japanese he did not contradict us. Yes, the feeling that the government had was reflected, also in some of the soldier that was guarding us.

While in camp, I saw an add offering work on a farm. After clearing by the F.B.I., my wife and I went to work in Moses Lake, Wash. for Mr. George Shuster. After working one year, I quit and went to work for Cedergreen farm in Quincy, Wash. It was steady working all year round.

I will always remember WW11 Incarceration, If my name was James Smith would it raised a protest from any American?. If James Smith was incarcerated for the same reason how much damage would the United State Pay?.

I believe in all fairness we should be compensated and at least a government recognition of the wrong done by putting these loyal American in concentration camps.

In closing, losing our farm was bad, my father, mother, brother and sisters could have helped the war effort on the farm..My father died in camp..WE went out of camp to work as farm hand and had a very hard time to recover. The Japanese-American never had a chance to be what we were capable of as a whole, in the war effort at home or in the battlefield.

This testimony is written in behalf of my family, may it be resolved before we all pass on.

Our Faith Is In You,

*James M Stami*