

Lesson 7: Japanese Americans Look Back and Post 9-11 Issues

Japanese American Redress Movement: Timeline of Events

March 20, 1946: Tule Lake is the last incarceration camp to close.

1948: President Harry S. Truman signs the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act. The law authorized payments to Japanese Americans who had lost property after being incarcerated. However, filing a claim was a long and difficult process, and the payments did not cover the full cost of lost property. For every dollar of lost property, the government paid approximately nine cents.

1952: The Immigration and Nationality Act, also known as the McCarran-Walter Act lifts the restriction on Asian immigrants becoming U.S. citizens. Issei are now able to apply for U.S. citizenship.

1950s: Attorney Wayne Collins helps 5,000 Japanese-Americans who were pressured to renounce their citizenship file court cases to regain their citizenship.

1965: The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolishes the national origin quota system, opening the doors to increased immigration from Asia.

1966: Washington State's Alien Land Law is repealed, allowing immigrants to lease or purchase land.

1970: The Japanese American Citizens League endorses Edison Uno's resolution calling for compensation for Japanese Americans confined in the wartime detention camps.

1973: Henry Miyatake and other Seattle-area activists form the Seattle Evacuation Redress Committee.

1976: Michi Weglyn publishes *Years of Infamy*, the first comprehensive book about the Japanese American incarceration. This book helped bring increased attention to the subject and provided evidence for the redress and reparation movement.

February 19, 1976: President Gerald Ford officially revokes Executive Order 9066.

November 25, 1978: Japanese-Americans in the Seattle area organize the Day of Remembrance at the Puyallup fairgrounds, where Camp Harmony was located.

1980: Los Angeles area activists form the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations.

July 31, 1980: President Carter approves the creation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). The Commission is charged with investigating the facts and circumstances surrounding Executive Order 9066.

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July-December 1981: The CWRIC holds hearings in ten cities across the United States, allowing more than 750 individuals to testify about their experiences.

February 24, 1983: The CWRIC issues its final report, *Personal Justice Denied*. The report finds that there was no military necessity for detention, but rather was caused by "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. The Commission recommended that Congress issue an official apology, establish a fund to provide \$20,000 to each person of Japanese ancestry incarcerated, and create an education fund to inform the public about the incarceration.

November 10, 1983: Fred Korematsu's conviction for defying the evacuation order is formally overturned.

1984: Minoru Yasui's conviction for violating the curfew is overturned, but the court does not declare the curfew order unconstitutional.

1987: Gordon Hirabayashi's conviction for violating the curfew and evacuation orders is overturned.

August 10, 1988: President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act into law. The act grants redress of \$20,000 and a formal presidential apology to every surviving individual of Japanese ancestry incarcerated during World War II. The act also creates a public education fund.

October 9, 1990: A ceremony is held to present the first redress checks to nine Issei,

October 14, 1990: Redress checks are presented to five Seattle Issei.

1993: The government completes the process of issuing redress checks. A total of 82,219 former camp inmates or their heirs receive reparations.

2001: Japanese American activists, including Fumiko Hayashida, speak out against treatment of Arab Americans, Sikh Americans, and Muslims after the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Present: Japanese Americans continue to make pilgrimages to former incarceration sites, raise public awareness about the incarceration, and ensure that every American's rights are protected.