



WRA suggestion box. Circa 1944. National Archives. (Bottom)

"It is shocking to the conscience that an American citizen can be confined on the ground of disloyalty, and then, while so under duress and restraint, be compelled to serve in the armed forces or be prosecuted for not yielding to such compulsion. [The] defendant is deprived of liberty without due process of law and by reason thereof, [his] plea is not and cannot be voluntary." - Judge Louis Goodman, U.S. District Court, July 22, 1944

ees. The questionnaire was then used to expedite the resettlement of internees away from the West Coast by determining individuals' loyalty or disloyalty to the U.S. Entitled "Application for Indefinite Leave Clearance," the questionnaire was given to every person over the age of 17 regardless of whether they intended to seek resettlement or not. The controversial questions were Numbers 27 and 28.

Question 27: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered"? was asked of draft-age men. For others the questionnaire asked whether they would be willing to join the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps.

Question 28: "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?"

Question 28 for Issei, who were not allowed to become naturalized U.S. citizens, was particularly ambiguous and confusing. If they answered "yes" to being loyal to the United States, they were left without a nationality and thus no governmental protection. And the questionnaire did not describe what the consequences would be for answering the questions. Nisei answering the questions were



May Yasutake, a former internee from Minidoka, resettled to Cincinnati, Ohio to work as a cashier at the University of Cincinnati cafeteria. June 1943. Permission of the Bancroft Library.



Sam Kimura and Cliff Dakama, former internees from Minidoka, and Fujisada Takawa, former internee of Topaz, pile up shells at a Nebraska depot. November 11, 1944. Photographer: Takashi Sidney Aoyama. Permission of the Bancroft Library.



Relocating from Minidoka. Circa 1944. National Archives.

not sure if answering “yes” to both meant they were volunteering for the armed forces or if they answered “no” would mean removal to Japan. Some internees answered “no” to protest the injustice of the whole internment and incarceration or because they had suffered economic tragedy and they believed prospects in Japan may have been better. Others answered “no” simply because they were loyal to Japan rather than the

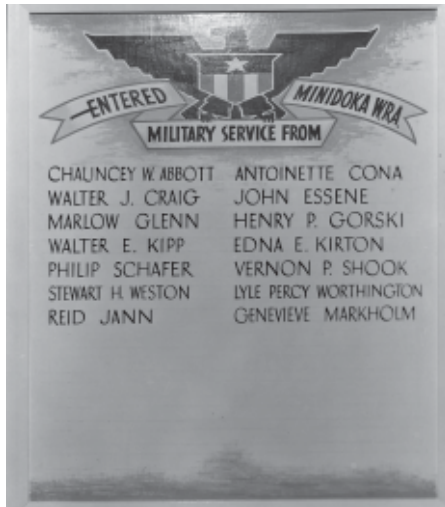
U.S. The responses to these questions would determine the fate of each internee confined in the centers. At Minidoka, 97% of the population answered “yes-yes” to the loyalty questions, the highest rate of “loyalty” of the 10 camps.

Those who answered “no” to either question were considered disloyal or “segregants” and sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center in northern Cali-



"A Minidoka Relocation Center evacuee and an evacuee being transferred to the Tule Lake Center grasp hands in a final farewell as the train carrying the 254 evacuees to the Tule Lake Center prepares to leave." September 5, 1943. National Archives. (Top)

High school teachers assist arriving internees from Tule Lake. September 5, 1943. National Archives. (Bottom)



WRA staff honor roll. Circa 1944. National Archives. (Top)

fornia. A total of 328 internees from Minidoka, including those who answered “no” to one or both questions, and their family members were sent to Tule Lake in 1943. Nearly 2,000 internees who answered “yes” at Tule Lake were transferred to Minidoka in 1943.

Tule Lake was originally a WRA Relocation Center, however, it was selected as the segregation center as nearly 50% of its population refused to take the questionnaire or answered “no” to one or both questions. Other people who were sent to Tule Lake included: those who applied for expatriation or repatriation to Japan, those denied leave clearance due to some accumulation of adverse evidence in their records, aliens from Department of Justice internment camps who were recommended for detention, and family members of segregants who chose to remain with family (U.S. CWRIC 1997: 208).

Internees who answered “yes” were allowed to apply for release from the WRA centers on indefinite leave for employment, education, and the armed forces which began in 1943. Over 4,000 internees left Minidoka on the indefinite leave program, with roughly half going to farm work in the local Idaho and eastern Oregon area. Others left for work and settlement in Salt Lake City, Denver, Chicago, and major cities in the Midwest and Northeast. In 1943, Minidoka had the highest rate of resettlement for all centers, with 22 per 1,000 internees leaving the center per month, compared

with the average 14 per 1,000 for all centers (Sakoda 1989: 258).

Draft age men answering “yes” were then allowed to serve in the military. In 1943, Roosevelt established an all Nisei unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and called for volunteers from the WRA centers. Minidoka had less than 7 percent of the male population of all the centers, yet it provided 25 percent of the volunteers. The Nisei at Minidoka distinguished themselves as loyal citizens, and eventually 1,000 names were listed on Minidoka’s honor roll. Nisei from Minidoka served in the 442nd, Military Intelligence Service and Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps. Seventy-three soldiers from Minidoka died in combat during World War II. William Nakamura and James Okubo were formerly Minidoka internees who were awarded Medals of Honor posthumously for their service



Hatoshi Kanzaki, a soldier in the U.S. military, visits his parents at the Minidoka Relocation Center. National Archives.



Language instructor Grayce Nakasonke teaches students at the Japanese Language school at the University of Colorado. She was incarcerated in a WRA camp before volunteering to work as a language instruction for the Military Intelligence Service. April 22, 1943. National Archives.



Buddhist funeral service for a fallen Minidoka soldier. Circa 1944. National Archives.



"Sogoro Yamasaki, 75, born in Japan but an Oregonian for nearly 50 years, is extremely proud of his three sons, all Purple Heart veterans." November 30, 1946. Oregonian Collection. Permission of Oregon Historical Society.



Nikkei soldiers training for combat at Camp Shelby. These soldiers were incarcerated in WRA camps before training. July 1945. National Archives.



Christian funeral service for a fallen Minidoka soldier. Circa 1944. National Archives.

*"Loyalty," 'disloyalty,'
Such words to plague us
yesterday.
Today,
In eyes made red with weeping."
-Internee, 1942*

"It is the inherent right of every faithful citizen, regardless of ancestry to bear arms in the nation's battle...."

—Hon. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, Jan. 27, 1942

HONOR ROLL

MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER
HUNT, IDAHO
SERVING IN U.S. ARMY

"Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was a matter of race or ancestry...."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Feb. 17, 1942

ABE, GEORGE ABE, GEORGE J. ABE, HARRY AKAOI, ISAMU AKIMOTO, JACK JUN ANDO, BOB MINORU ADKI, TORU ADYAMA, SAMUEL SAKAE ARATANI, AUGUSTINE ARIYASU, TATSUYA ASABA, TAKAHICO ASAHARA, YOSHIO ASAKAWA, JACK ASHIDA, HARUO BABA, SADA DEGUCHI, MASARO MIKE DOI, AUTHER NOBUO EUGUCHI, EUGENE Y. ENDO, ROBERT TSUPPUSHI ENTA, BEN FUGAMI, ROY FUJIIHARA, JULIUS Y. FUJINO, YASUO FUJIOKA, TADASHI FUJITA, KANAME FUJIWARA, PETER FUJIWARA, ROY FUJIWARA, YOSHIO FUKUI, EDWIN YUKIO FUSHIMI, CARL NOBORU FUSHIMI, HERBERT W. GOSHIO, HENRY HIROHARU HABU, JACK HAGIWARA, MIKE HAGIWARA, PAT HARA, BEN HARA, MENDU HARA, NORIO HASEGAWA, MATHEW MASAO	HATA, GEORGE HATANAKA, FRANK HAYAKAWA, JUN HAYASHI, EUGENE HAYASHI, JOEZO HEYAMOTO, HIROGUMU HIDAKA, FRANK HIGASHI, KEN HIGASHI, ROY HIGASHI, SHO HIGASHI, TEDDY HIJURASHI, ISAMU SAM HIKIDA, GEORGE HIKIDA, ISAMU HINATSU, NAZUO HIRAKI, TOM HIRAI, HIROSHI HIRAI, TAKAARI HIRATA, OSAMU HIRATSUKA, FRANK F. HIROMURA, KOZO HIROO, SHODO HONGO, SHIGERU HORIITA, TADAO HOSHIOUCHI, BEN HOSHI, JAMES ICHIKAWA, ALBERT HIROSHI ICHIKAWA, JOE I. IHARA, BOB IHASHI, WILLIAM WATARU IKATA, HITOSHI IKEDA, KOWEI IKEDA, MASAO IKOMA, SADA IMAI, HIDEO IMAI, TAKAO IMORI, HENRY IMORI, THOMAS IMAMOTO, WILLIAM	INANISHI, MINORU INOUE, MIDORI IRINADA, FRED MITSUKARU ISHIDA, HARUO ISHII, KEIICHI ISHIKAWA, GEORGE ISHIKAWA, ITSUZO ISOSHIMA, TAKIO ITAMI, GEORGE ITO, BEN YOSHIO ITO, JOE ITO, JOJI IWAOKA, STEVE IWANO, SHIRO IZUI, VICTOR IZUMI, DAVID YUKIO HOKARI, SAMUEL YOSHIO KAGIWARA, FRANK KANEHASHI, JOHN SHUJI KANAYA, JIMMY KANAZAWA, HIROSHI KANEMITSU, HITOSHI KANO, NOBUYUKI KANZAKI, AKIRA KARIKORI, TEOY YUKIO KASHINO, SHIRO KATAOKA, HARRY KATAYAMA, SADA KATO, AKIRA KATO, HARUO KATO, YOSHIO KAWADA, NOBORU KAWAGUCHI, JOHN E. KAWAGUCHI, KENNY KAWAGUCHI, MASAO KAWAKAMI, IWAO KAWAMURA, SAM KAWATA, KATUYOSHI KAZAHARA, DONALD KESAHARA, JOE	KIKUCHI, ISAMU KIMURA, GEORGE KIMURA, KAZUO KIMURA, MAKOTO KIMURA, MICHIO KINOSHITA, FRANCIS KINOSHITA, YOSHIO KITAGAWA, HIROSHI KITAHARA, TOICHIRO KIYOHARA, ICHIRO ICHUKE KIYOMURA, KAZUO KIYOMURA, TOSHI KOMACHI, GEORGE KOMACHI, ROY KAZUO KOMOTO, GEORGE KOMURA, TOSHIKAZU KOURA, ART KOZU, HARRY SHINJI KOZU, PETE MASARU KOZU, VEICHI KUBOTA, TAKESHI KUBOTA, TOM KUMADA, TERRY TIMO KURIMURA, TERRY MASARU KYONO, HIROSHI MAEDA, RICHARD MANUECHI, MORIO F. MARUYAMA, MASAMI MARUMOTO, GEORGE YOSHIO MASUDA, MINORU MASUDA, MASAYOSHI MATSUMURA, FRANK MATSUMURA, JOHN TAKESHI	MATSUI, HIFUMI MATSUMOTO, DONALD MARCO MATSUMURA, HENRY TAKI MATSUMOTO, FRED ROCK MATSUMOTO, GEORGE MATSUMOTO, WAKAO MATSUYAMA, HENRY MICHIGAMI, MIKE MIMURA, GEORGE MINATO, HOWARD MITA, THOMAS MIZUKAMI, ROBERT TARO MIZUKAMI, WILLIAM MIZUKI, TAKESHI MIZUTA, YOSHITO MOCHIZUKI, AYAO MOCHIZUKI, YOSHISABA MOMOTA, SHIGERU MOMODA, TAKESHI MORI, MINO MORI, YOSHIO MORIHIRO, FRED MORIKAWA, MASATO MORIO, NOBORU MORTSHITA, GEORGE MORISHITA, YUTAKA MORINASHI, VICTOR ICHIRO MOTOKI, SEIICHI MURAKI, MINORU MURAKAMI, HISUO MURAKAMI, CHARLES MITSUO MURAKAMI, JOHN Y. MURAKAMI, LARRY TOSHI NAEMURA, JOE S. NAGAO, EIRA NAGAO, FRANK NAGAO, TOM KOHACHI	NAGASAKI, MASAYUKI NAGASAKI, JAMES ICHIRO NAGATA, HUIJIO NAKABAYASHI, KAZUO NAKAMURA, BINEICT ICHIRO NAKAMURA, BILL NAKAMURA, GEORGE NAKAMURA, KARL KAGRE NAKAMURA, NED T. NAKASHIMA, HIROSHI NAKASHIMA, VICTOR NAKASHIMADA, SUSUMU NAKATANI, NOBORU NAKATANI, ROY E. NAKAWATANI, TAKESHI NAMBA, TOM NEZU, SHIGEKI NIGUMA, KAY NINOMIYA, BEN NISHIKAWA, HARRY NISHIMOTO, MASAKI NISHIMOTO, ROBERT MASAE NISHIMOTO, YUJI NISHIMURA, FRANK G. NISHIMURA, HIROYUKI NISHIMURA, HISASHI NISHITANI, THOMAS NISHITANI, WOODROW NOSAKI, MASARU MAC NOJIRI, GEORGE NOMA, TOSHIO NOMURA, BICK NOMURA, FRANK S. NOMURA, PAUL NOBORU NOMURA, WAY NORISADA, TOM KOHACHI	NORITAKE, YOSHITO NOSE, JAMES CHIZUMI NUKUTO, TADASHI ORA, JULIUS ORA, STANLEY V. OGA, WILLIAM OGAWA, TERRY OGISHIMA, JOHN SABURO OHARA, JACK KAZUO OHKA, HENRY OHNO, ISAMU OKADA, FRANK CHIAKI OKADA, KIVOSHI OKADA, ROBERT OKADA, TAKAO OKAMOTO, HISAKA OKAMURA, GEORGE OKANO, GEORGE KOICHI OKANO, KOICHI OKANO, TEIJI OKAWA, HIROSHI OKAZAKI, ISAO OKAZAKI, K. 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DEC. 1ST 1943

Minidoka honor roll. Circa 1943. National Archives.

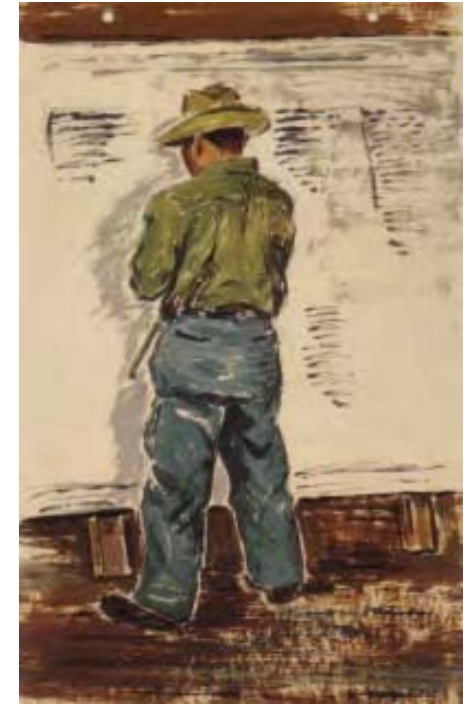
during World War II. At the end of WWII, the 442nd was known for its slogan, “Go for Broke,” and became the most decorated unit in American military history for its size and length of service.

Minidoka developed a reputation early on for its relatively mild social climate, patriotism to the U.S., good relations between the internees and the administration, and its success in relocating internees to the outside for agricultural labor and for re-settlement. However, some regarded the Minidokans as “knuckling under to administrative demands” (Sakoda 1989: 229). This moderate passivity changed late in 1943, when 2,000 “loyals” were transferred from Tule Lake to Minidoka, the camp’s administration was restructured, and a program was initiated to reduce the internee labor force by one-third while increasing hours in a work week (Sakoda 1989: 262). A series of strikes and protests resulted, progressively diminishing relations between the administration and the internees. The first was a boiler room labor strike, then a mail carriers strike, and then similar conflicts with the gatekeepers, telephone operators, warehouse workers, pickling plant workers, community activities section, and finally the construction crew working on the gymnasium (Sakoda 1989: 263). Most of these labor conflicts were never settled agreeably, leaving both sides dissatisfied with the mediation process and the decisions.

Closure and Nikkei Departure

On December 20, 1944, the WRA officially lifted the ban on persons of Japanese ancestry in military areas #1 and #2, effectively opening up the entire West Coast for Nikkei resettlement. All construction was issued to stop on February 10, 1945. All construction work was transferred to building crates and boxes for the internees returning to their homes along the West Coast or other destinations within the U.S.

While the internees were packing and preparing for their departure, the WRA opened bidding for the lease of the 758 acres of the center’s agricultural lands. During the late summer of 1945, despite the uncertainty of conditions on the West Coast, most internees hastily departed, eager to rebuild their lives. By September, there were empty barracks in every Block with miscellaneous



“The Sign Shop.” The man in the painting is printing the names on the Minidoka Honor Roll. Kenjiro Nomura. 1943. Courtesy of George and Betty Nomura.



Crowds at Fourth and Pike on V-J Day, Seattle. August 14, 1945. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

WAR II HISTORY PROJECT
Dr. L. S. Cressman, Director
Museum of Natural History, University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY REGULAR SESSION

House Joint Memorial No.9

Introduced by Representatives BULL, POOLE and ERWIN and read
February 28, 1945

1 To His Excellency, the Honorable President of the United States:

2 We, your memorialists, the forty-third legislative assembly of the state
3 of Oregon, in regular session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

4 Whereas the armed forces, through their duly authorized representa-
5 tives, have closed certain relocation centers and have issued orders per-
6 mitting certain Japanese aliens and United States citizens of Japanese
7 extraction to return to the west coast states, and particularly to the state
8 of Oregon; and

9 Whereas there exists in the state of Oregon considerable antagonism to
10 such return during the period of the war with Japan; and

11 Whereas such Japanese aliens and citizens of Japanese extraction are
12 safer and cause less civilian disturbance in the relocation centers or in their
13 present places of residence; now, therefore,

14 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Oregon, the
15 Senate jointly concurring therein:

16 That your Excellency, the President of the United States of America,
17 as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, is respectfully requested to issue
18 such orders and directives as will prevent the return of said Japanese aliens
19 and said citizens of Japanese extraction to the west coast states for the
20 duration of the present war with Japan.

Oregon House Joint Memorial Number 9 requesting that Nikkei be lawfully prevented from returning to the west coast during the war with Japan. February 28, 1945. Oregon Historical Society.

goods left behind; and witnesses say the area resembled a ghost town with scrawny packs of dogs and starving cats (Kleinkopf 1942-1946). German prisoners of war (POW) from a nearby POW camp at Rupert assisted in the decommissioning of the camp. The WRA provided \$25 per person, train fare, and meals en route for those with less than \$500 in cash. Some elderly Issei felt the government owed them a place to stay, given their circumstances of forced removal and loss of freedom in the camp. They also feared the West Coast was still too hostile and refused to leave the camp. Finally, the last few remaining internees were forcibly removed from the camp and put on trains to Seattle in October 1945; the Minidoka Relocation Center officially closed on October 28, 1945. Generally, Nikkei were then barred from staying in the area and were not allowed to participate in the future land drawings of former camp lands.



Vandalism on Nikkei home in Seattle. 1945. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

The WRA announced that all the barracks would be put in a “standby” condition. All unnecessary items were hauled to a dump located on the northern edge of the camp. The entire camp was inventoried in November and December. The work was done by the WRA staff, who continued to live in the staff housing area, as well as the German POWs from the Rupert POW camp. In December, WRA lumber, supplies, and equipment and the many thousands of items left by internees were sold. The post office remained open and was run by a Nikkei couple. On February 9, 1946, the camp property officially reverted back to the BOR.

Internees returning home, rebuilding their lives, or settling in new areas of the nation encountered continued prejudice as well as new adversities. Many families returned to find their homes and businesses looted or their possessions stolen. Many families lost their businesses and properties, since their wartime salaries were insufficient to make payments on their mortgages and debts. A post-war housing shortage made housing extremely hard to find, so families often stayed at churches and community centers until they could secure new homes. Employment was also limited, particularly for Issei who were still viewed as the enemy. Yet, rebuilding their lives was a necessity, and most were determined to overcome the stigma of their wartime experiences through perseverance.

While the vast majority of Nikkei returned to their pre-war regions or settled in major cities in the East, some 8,000 Nikkei repatriated or expatriated



Vandalism at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple. Tacoma Nikkei stored their possessions at the temple while they were incarcerated during World War II. 1944. National Archives.



Vandalism in the Japanese section of the Rose City Cemetery in Portland. 1944. National Archives.

to Japan after World War II ended (TenBroek 1954). Of those, 65% were born in the U.S., composed of Nisei, Kibei (a Nisei who spent a portion of his or her pre-World War II childhood in Japan), and Nisei minors accompanying their parents (Daniels 1981: 116). By 1951, all but 357 applied for return to the U.S. (Smith 1995: 444).



Japanese repatriates embarking for Japan at Pier 37 in Seattle. November 24, 1945. National Archives.



Japanese repatriates embarking for Japan at Pier 37 in Seattle. November 24, 1945. National Archives.



The Terumatsu Yabuki family was reunited after World War II on their Bellevue farm. The Yabukis were incarcerated at Minidoka during World War II. May 17, 1945. Photographer: Hikaru Iwasaki. National Archives.

In 1948, the government established the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act, which attempted to reimburse property damages and losses. Over time, \$38 million was settled in 23,000 claims for damages totaling \$131 million; and the final claim was adjudicated in 1965. The best estimates of financial losses range from \$77 million to \$400 million. The Commission Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians determined that immeasurable “economic hardships and suffering” resulted from the internment and incarceration (U.S. CWRIC 1997).

For the Nikkei community, the wartime incarceration was the defining event in the community’s history. The incarceration damaged the dignity and identity of the Nikkei community and generated divisive rifts between generations, community organizations, and individuals over issues of patriotism and loyalty. Many Nikkei suffered severe economic losses, were forcibly incarcerated at remote camps, and were obliged to rebuild their lives after the war. The experience of injustice and racism at the hands of the federal government and American public created a stigma of shame that prevented most former internees from discussing their experiences for decades. This shame often resulted in the denial of Nikkei cultural heritage, high numbers of marriage outside their culture, as well as the need to prove themselves by succeeding in American society. The incarceration has had deep and lasting impacts that have affected not only the Issei and Nisei but also subsequent generations.

1946-Present: Homesteading and the Establishment of a Farming Community

During 1946, the BOR improved the canals and irrigation ditches and officially subdivided the agricultural lands into small farmsteads. Most buildings would be allotted to future homesteaders on the former Minidoka WRA Center site.

On June 14, 1947, the first land drawing was held in Jerome, Idaho, for 43 farms ranging in size from 80-190 acres along Lateral 21.5, encompassing 3,500 acres of the former Minidoka Relocation Center (BOR *Minidoka Annual Project History* 1947: 44-46). Most drawing applicants were Caucasian World War II veterans, as they had been given a 90-day preference. The second land drawing was held on April 17, 1949, for nine farmsteads, averaging 80 acres in size, within the central area of the former Minidoka Relocation



WRA Staff Housing. Circa 1943. National Archives.



These World War II veterans won land lotteries at the former Minidoka Relocation Center site. With the land, they also received surplus materials from the camp. Circa 1947. Photograph taken by Bureau of Reclamation staff. NPS Photo. (Top and Bottom)

Center. Another land drawing was held in 1950 (Idaho Statesman, February 18, 1950). Each homesteader would receive two barracks (20'x120') and one smaller building plus many personal items.

The transformation of the WRA Center to an emergent agricultural community was hasty and efficient, as most of the lands had already been cleared during construction of the camp in 1942 and then by internees for agricultural production. Homesteaders lived in converted barracks, and a state vocational agricultural school was established to assist these new homesteaders. During the first few years, the homesteaders cleared the land where barracks and gardens once stood. All the old building foundations and construction rubble was hauled to the camp dump-site. The homesteaders established their ranchets, and



Moving a staff housing building to its new site in the warehouse area. Circa 1946. Photograph taken by Bureau of Reclamation staff. NPS Photo.

many homesteaders lived in the barrack buildings until as late as the 1970s (Shrontz 1994). Farming has continued as the primary occupation and land use of the area up to the present day.

Within the site of the former camp, a veteran named John Herrmann acquired 128 acres on the former location of Minidoka's fire station, water tower, sewage treatment facility, blocks 21, 22, and portions of other blocks. In 1950, he was recalled for active duty at Fort Lewis in Washington (Shrontz1994: 219-220), and Herrmann's military service caused a delay in the development of his homestead and farm. In the spring of 1952 the development of the Herrmann farm benefited from a demonstration project that was sponsored by the North Side Conservation District of the US Soil Conservation Service and an association of Jerome County Farm Equipment Dealers. The event was called "A-Farm-In-A-Day" and took place on April 17, 1952. It mobilized over 1,500 workers and made use of 200 state-of-the-art machines to prepare the land for farming. In the course of the day, a house was built, a well was dug, two barracks and outbuildings were moved to the farm, fences were put up, and windbreaks and crops were planted (Shrontz 1994: 223, Beal and Wells 1959: 300).

Roads were built to accommodate the new settlers and the agricultural economy. The new West Hunt Road and spur roads were aligned and constructed in the 1950s by Jerome County Roads, and Hunt Bridge was updated with concrete and steel supports.

The BOR retained approximately 50 acres of the original camp along the North Side Canal, including the former entrance, staff housing area, and swimming hole. This property was the former site of the ornamental garden at the entrance, administration area, and portions of the warehouse area and root cellar. Another 20 acres were under public domain and managed by the BLM. These areas were not altered in any significant way after the buildings were cleared in the late 1940s.

1978-Present: Commemoration, Redress, and Recognition

On February 19, 1978, 2,000 people gathered at the Puyallup Fairgrounds for the first “Day of Remembrance” event in order to remember the historic events of the internment and incarceration of Nikkei during World War II. Since 1978, “Day of Remembrance” events are held on February 19 in major cities throughout the nation; these events honor former internees and educate the public about the internment and incarceration.

EVERYONE OUT!

FOR THE BIG

A FARM-IN-A-DAY

THURSDAY

APRIL 17

WATCH THE MODERN
MIRACLE OF MAKING
A COMPLETE
FARM IN ONE
SINGLE
DAY

A Farm-in-a-Day project advertisement for the Herrmann family farm which ran in the North Side News. The Herrmann farm is located on the site of the former water tower #1, fire station, sewage treatment plant, Blocks 21 and 22, and portions of adjacent blocks. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), April 17, 1952.

In 1978, the Japanese American Citizens League unanimously adopted redress as its priority issue at its convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. Convention delegates also adopted the recommended redress guidelines. The guidelines consisted of a proposal asking for \$25,000 for each individual or heir who suffered from mass incarceration plus the creation of a foundation to serve as a trust for funds to be used to benefit Japanese American communities throughout the country. After the convention, the Japanese American Citizens League launched a media campaign to educate the American public about the WWII incarceration and sought legislation in the U.S. Congress.

On August 18, 1979, the Minidoka WRA Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing its national significance. The historic site consisted of 6.06 acres in the entrance area, including the military police building, visitor reception building, garden, and the original visitor parking lot located between Hunt Bridge and the entrance buildings. On October 13, 1979 a dedication ceremony was held at the site, a national register plaque was placed near the military police building, and a large interpretive sign was erected.

In 1979, six U.S. senators introduced a bill to create the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. On July 31, 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed Public Law 96-317, establishing the Commission and initiating the investigation of these wartime events. The Commission held hearings nationwide with over 750 witnesses, the

majority of whom were Nikkei who experienced incarceration. On February 22, 1983 the Commission made public its report, *Personal Justice Denied*. Their conclusion after 18 months of research was that “the exclusion and detentions of Nikkei was not determined by military conditions but were the result of race prejudice, war hysteria, and failure of political leadership” (U.S. CWRIC 1997: 194). In June 1983 the Commission issued five recommendations for redress to Congress. Among the five recommendations was a proposal that each surviving victim be compensated \$20,000 as redress or reparations for the injustice.



President Reagan signs HR 442 (Civil Liberties Act) into law in White House ceremony, August 10, 1988. From left to right: Sen. Masayuki "Spark" Matsunaga (D-HI), Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA), Rep. Pat Saiki (R-HI), Sen. Pete Wilson (R-CA), Rep. Don Young (R-AK), Rep. Robert T. Matsui (D-CA), Rep. Bill Lowery (R-CA) and Harry Kajiura, President of the Japanese American Citizens League. Smithsonian Museum.

On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which wrote into law all five of the U.S. CWRIC's recommendations. It was not until President Bush signed the appropriation bill on November 21, 1989, that payments were set to begin on October 9, 1990. The oldest survivors received their redress checks of \$20,000 (tax-free) first, along with a letter of apology signed by President Bush. The Civil Liberties Act also established a fund for educational programs, called the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund.

Meanwhile, at Minidoka, the site became an Idaho Centennial Landmark on May 26, 1990. A ceremony dedicated the new commemorative plaques, sidewalks, and parking lot.

On January 17, 2001, President William Clinton signed a proclamation declaring 72.75 acres of the original camp the Minidoka Internment National Monument. Lands owned by the BOR and lands under public domain managed by the BLM were transferred to the NPS. Two parcels of land adjacent and within the national monument were retained by the BOR for operational use by the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District #2.

Throughout the process of attaining redress and continuing today, former Minidoka internees and their descendants have worked in coalition with civil rights organizations to affirm civil and Constitutional rights for all people.

Establishment of Minidoka Internment National Monument

Minidoka Internment National Monument was established on January 17, 2001, by presidential proclamation as "a unique and irreplaceable historical resource which protects historic structures and objects that provide opportunities for public education and interpretation of an important chapter in American history - the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II." The transfer of 72.75 acres from the BOR to the NPS formally established the national monument as the 385th unit of the national park system.

Minidoka WRA Center – National Register of Historic Places

In 1979, 6.06 acres of the entrance area at the former site of Minidoka WRA Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The listed



*National Register
plaque in the
entrance area.
2001. NPS Photo.*

Quotes from Past Presidents regarding Commemoration, Redress, and Recognition

"I call upon the American people to affirm with me this American promise — that we have learned from the tragedy of that long-ago experience forever to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American, and resolve that this kind of action shall never again be repeated."

-President Gerald R. Ford, February 19, 1976 in Proclamation 4417, titled "An American Promise," on the 34th anniversary of the issuance of Executive Order 9066.

"The Members of Congress and distinguished guests, my fellow Americans, we gather here today to right a grave wrong... The legislation that I am about to sign provides for a restitution payment to each of the 60,000 surviving Japanese-Americans of the 120,000 who were relocated or detained. Yet no payment can make up for those lost years. So, what is most important in this bill has less to do with property than with honor. For here we admit a wrong; here we reaffirm our commitment as a nation to equal justice under the law... Thank you, and God bless you. And now let me sign H.R. 442, so fittingly named in honor of the 442nd."

-President Ronald Reagan, August 10, 1988 during the signing ceremony of H.R. 442

"A monetary sum and words alone cannot restore lost years or erase painful memories; neither can they fully convey our Nation's resolve to rectify injustice and to uphold the rights of individuals. We can never fully right the wrongs of the past. But we can take a clear stand for justice and recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II. In enacting a law calling for restitution and offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have, in a very real sense, renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. You and your family have our best wishes for the future."

- President George H. W. Bush, October 1990 in letters that accompanied the reparations checks to survivors of the World War II internment and incarceration of Japanese Americans

"In passing the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, we acknowledge the wrongs of the past and offered redress to those who endured such grave injustice. In retrospect, we understand that the nation's actions were rooted deeply in racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a lack of political leadership. We must learn from the past and dedicated ourselves as a nation to renewing the spirit of equality and our love of freedom. Together, we can guarantee a future with liberty and justice for all."

- President William J. Clinton, October 1993 in letters that accompanied the reparations checks to survivors of the World War II internment and incarceration of Japanese Americans

CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT of 1988

*Enacted by the United States Congress
August 10, 1988*

“The Congress recognizes that, as described in the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II.

As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.

The excluded individuals of Japanese ancestry suffered enormous damages, both material and intangible, and there were incalculable losses in education and job training, all of which resulted in significant human suffering for which appropriate compensation has not been made.

For these fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry, the Congress apologizes on behalf of the Nation.”

Based on the findings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), the purposes of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 with respect to persons of Japanese ancestry included the following:

- 1) To acknowledge the fundamental injustice of the evacuation, relocation and internment of citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II;
- 2) To apologize on behalf of the people of the United States for the evacuation, internment, and relocations of such citizens and permanent residing aliens;
- 3) To provide for a public education fund to finance efforts to inform the public about the internment so as to prevent the recurrence of any similar event;
- 4) To make restitution to those individuals of Japanese ancestry who were interned;
- 5) To make more credible and sincere any declaration of concern by the United States over violations of human rights committed by other nations.”

area included the stone military police building, reception building, and remnants of the entrance garden. The features were described as “altered ruins” on their “original site,” significant for “politics/government” and “social/humanitarian” as “tangible reminders of one of the most serious and painful contradictions of our country’s philosophy of freedom...Despite being less than 50-years old, this site represents an exceptional chapter in the history of the United States that should always be remembered.” The national register site is within the national monument’s boundaries.



Remnants of the Entrance Garden. 2001. NPS Photo.

Actions Affecting Minidoka Internment National Monument after Its Establishment

Bureau of Reclamation 3-acre and 9-acre Parcels

Upon establishment of the national monument, the BOR retained administration of two parcels of land that were part of the historic camp. The 3-acre parcel is located in the historic warehouse area within the national monument. It contains three buildings from the historic period as well as numerous warehouse foundations. The area is used by the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District #2 as its operational facilities for administration, maintenance, and staff housing. The 9-acre parcel on the east end of the national monument is considered undeveloped land. Since establishment of the national monument, the NPS and BOR have entered into an agreement to move the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District operations to a site outside the national monument’s boundary. The NPS has obligated \$250,000 to the BOR for relocation costs.

North Side Canal

The presidential proclamation defined the national monument’s southern boundary as the North Side Canal. The proclamation stated, “The establishment of this Monument is subject to valid existing

rights, provided that nothing in this proclamation shall interfere with the operation and maintenance of the Northside [sic] Canal to the extent that any such activities, that are not valid existing rights, are consistent with the purpose of the proclamation.” The North Side Canal Company and the NPS

have agreed on a legally surveyed boundary line, whereby the North Side Canal retains a dirt roadway along the northern edge of the canal for its operations and maintenance.



The North Side Canal forms the southern boundary of the national monument. 2003. NPS Photo.

Purpose of Minidoka Internment National Monument

The purpose of the Minidoka Internment National Monument is to provide opportunities for public education and interpretation of the internment and incarceration of Nikkei (Japanese American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry) during WWII. The national monument protects and manages resources related to the Minidoka Relocation Center.



“Barracks and Recreational Hall.” Painting by Kenjiro Nomura. 1942-1945. Courtesy of George and Betty Nomura.

Significance of Minidoka Internment National Monument

Through public scoping and planning team workshops the significance of the national monument has been determined to be the following:

Civil and Constitutional Rights

- The national monument is a compelling venue for engaging in a dialogue concerning the violation of civil and constitutional rights, the injustice of forced removal and incarceration, the history of racism and discrimination in the United States, and the fragility of democracy in times of crisis.



Mothers of boys killed during World War II are honored on Mother's Day in Twin Falls. Circa 1944. National Archives.



Sgt. Kay (Keisaaburo) Niguma. ca. 1945. Courtesy of Rose Niguma and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

- The national monument offers a unique setting to reflect on the internment and incarceration experience and the relationship of this experience to contemporary and future political and social events.
- The national monument provides a forum for understanding how internees expressed citizenship and patriotism through individual choices. Choices reflected a range of responses, including serving valiantly in the military and draft resistance. Both choices affected families and communities, as well as the individuals who made them.

People

- Minidoka Relocation Center dramatically changed the lives of those incarcerated and had a dramatic and lasting impact on the Nikkei community.
- The establishment of the Minidoka Relocation Center during WWII had a profound effect on the social and economic fabric of neighboring southern Idaho communities.

Place

- The setting and location of Minidoka, with its isolation, openness, and distance from the Pacific Coast, are characteristic of the WRA's site selection criteria. The camp was a hastily constructed, large-scale temporary



Chikano Niguma. ca. 1945. Courtesy of Rose Niguma and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

facility that became densely populated with over 9,000 people at one time. It was typical of WRA camps constructed during World War II.

- The national monument contains unique historic and archeological resources, many of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

WWII

- The Minidoka Relocation Center represents a significant part of World War II and American history.

Door of a barbershop in Parker, Arizona, located 15 miles from Poston Relocation Center. November 11, 1944. National Archives.



Interpretive Themes for Minidoka Internment National Monument

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas or concepts that every visitor should understand. They are the key ideas that reflect the importance of a park's nationally significant resources. Interpretive themes are developed to guide the interpretive program over the next 20 years. Therefore, they are intentionally broad to encompass a diversity of stories, facts, interpretations, and related events. The themes do not include everything the NPS may wish to interpret but rather the ideas that are critical to a visitor's understanding of a park's significance.

A long-range interpretive plan will be developed to outline the many stories that will be told at the national monument and off-site. The plan will also present how education and interpretation will be accomplished at the national monument and off-site. Many of the public's concerns about interpretation will be incorporated into this more detailed long-range interpretive plan.

The following interpretive themes for the GMP will be used to guide more detailed and specific interpretive and educational plans, materials, and activities in the future, as the national monument becomes operational.

Civil and Constitutional Rights

- The internment and incarceration of American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry was the product of a long history of race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.
- The loyalty questionnaire designed by the U.S. government was administered only to internees and required that every internee over the age of 17 declare their loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America. Minidoka internees overwhelmingly affirmed their loyalty (97%) and helped to refute the government's assumption that the Nikkei population on the West Coast was a threat to national security.
- Nikkei contributions to national defense and draft resistance both add to an understanding of patriotism, heroism, and



Painting by Fumio Hanaguchi, Minidoka internee. Circa 1943. National Archives.



Nisei veterans assisting in the commemorative ceremony at Minidoka during the Pilgrimage. June 2004. NPS Photo.

civil rights during World War II.

- Minidoka provides a forum for discussing the violation of U.S. constitutional rights and the redress movement, which resulted in an apology from the United States government. It also provides an opportunity for understanding the need to protect civil rights and liberties for all Americans, regardless of gender, race, religion, or national origin.

People

- Internees at Minidoka were confronted with injustice, the loss of freedom, and profound emotional, psychological, physical, and economic hardships, and they responded in various ways with distinctive combinations of Japanese and American cultural practices, values, and perseverance.

- Minidoka is a complex mosaic that pieces together the experience of thousands of internees and their extensive social, cultural, and economic interactions with communities and organizations throughout the U.S. before, during, and after the internment and incarceration.
- Minidoka provides an opportunity for understanding how the Nikkei rebuilt their lives and communities on the West Coast and elsewhere throughout the United States after World War II.

Place

- The setting and location of Minidoka, with its isolation, openness, and distance from the Pacific Coast, are characteristic of the War Relocation Authority's site selection criteria. The camp was a hastily constructed, large-scale temporary facility that became densely populated with over 9,000 people at one time. It was typical of War Relocation Authority camps constructed during World War II.
- Internees were forcibly removed from their homes, businesses, and communities in the lush environment of the Pacific Coast and created a community in a desert environment characterized by extreme temperatures and harsh living conditions.
- Internees transformed undeveloped arid land into irrigated agricultural fields in and

around the Minidoka Relocation Center. The present-day agricultural character of the Hunt area is the legacy of internees' labor during World War II.

- Post war settlement and agricultural development of the site by World War II veterans and others is reflected in present-day land use patterns in and around the national monument.

World War II

- Minidoka Relocation Center was set within a world at war, characterized by national and personal sacrifice and hardship experienced by all Americans.

Desired Future Conditions

Management of the national monument would strive to achieve the following desired future conditions and goals:

Resource Management

- Cultural and natural resources are preserved, protected, and maintained at the national monument for present and future generations.

Education and Interpretation

- The national monument provides the public with the opportunity to understand the profound injustice, hardship, upheaval, sacrifice, and uncertainty that were an integral part of the internment experience.
- The national monument accurately represents the personal stories, culture, values, and strength of the Nikkei, which enabled them to persevere despite the unpredictable hardships of incarceration.
- The national monument successfully depicts the internees' transformation of parts of the camp from a sterile inhospitable place into a struggling community.
- The national monument provides and facilitates quality educational, interpretive, and outreach programs, both on-site and at

appropriate off-site locations.

- For the education community, the national monument is a valuable source of information and materials about the internment and incarceration experience of the Nikkei and the local community, as well as civil and constitutional rights, racism, and discrimination in the United States, and the fragility of democracy in times of crisis.
- The legacy of the national monument will be oriented toward future generations; it should focus not only on history but also interpret its relevance to current events.
- The public is aware that there exists a body of controversial thought and information that is in conflict with much of what recognized scholars agree as historically accurate in the depiction of the internment and incarceration story.

Visitor Use and Facilities

- The national monument can be located easily by the traveling public.
- The national monument provides a compelling interpretive and educational experience that attracts public visitation.
- The national monument provides a variety of educational experiences for visitors of all ages and backgrounds.
- The national monument offers opportunities for individuals to contemplate

and reflect upon the internment experience and civil and constitutional rights in the United States.

- The national monument provides research opportunities for the public to locate relatives and friends who were incarcerated at Minidoka.
- Facilities at the national monument should be appropriate for the site, and not intrude on or negatively impact the existing historic resources of the camp.

Operations and Management

- The national monument provides sufficient administrative, interpretive, curatorial, and maintenance space to serve programs and operations.

Boundary and Adjacent Land

- The physical configuration of the national monument provides adequate capabilities for operations, public access, visitor facilities, interpretation, and protection of significant cultural and natural resources.
- The vastness, isolation, and open character of the site's desert environment that existed during the historic period are maintained through collaborative partnerships and cooperative efforts with surrounding land owners and others.

Partnerships and Outreach

- Diverse partnership opportunities are actively pursued and developed in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the national monument.



*Idaho Centennial
Project dedication
on May 26, 1990.
Photo courtesy of
the Twin Falls Times
News.*