

0. LESSONS and LEGACY - Story Preface

1. EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066

2. THE EVACUEES

3. LEAVING HOME

4. CLOSING BUSINESSES

5. INTERNMENT CAMPS

6. CAMP MANZANAR

7. CAMP POSTON

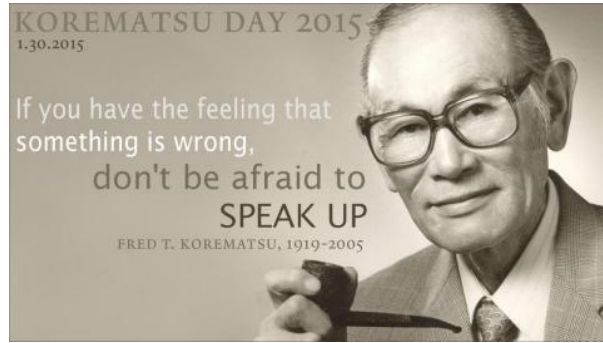
8. MINIDOKA

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Fred Korematsu's message, to his fellow Americans, still rings true: "If you have the feeling that something is wrong, don't be afraid to speak up."

Judge Patel, in deciding to overturn an unjust conviction, observed that the Korematsu case is a reminder of what can happen when thinking people lose their objectivity and, using the guise of national security, trample over the rights of individuals:

As historical precedent it [the case] stands as a constant caution that in times of war or declared military necessity our institutions must be vigilant in protecting constitutional guarantees.

It stands as a caution that in times of distress the shield of military necessity and national security must not be used to protect governmental actions from close scrutiny and accountability.

It stands as a caution that in times of international hostility and antagonisms our institutions, legislative, executive and judicial, must be prepared to exercise their authority to protect all citizens from the petty fears and prejudices that are so easily aroused.

Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui, convicted of failing to report to a relocation center and of ignoring a government-imposed curfew on Japanese people, joined with Korematsu in requesting an overturn of their convictions. The court favorably responded to Yasui in 1985, and to Hirabayashi in 1986.

Two years later, Fred Korematsu, together with Rosa Parks, was awarded the country's highest civilian award, the Congressional Medal of Freedom. At the ceremony marking the event, the now-elderly Korematsu said:

All of them turned their backs on me at that time because they thought I was a troublemaker. I thought what the military was doing was unconstitutional. I was really upset because I was branded as an enemy alien when I'm an American.

Fred Korematsu's story was instrumental to the American Congress as its members debated whether to award Japanese-Americans compensation for their internment. As the 20th century drew to a close, each surviving internee received \$20,000 from the United States government.

Milton Eisenhower (younger brother of the soon-to-be Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and future President, Dwight Eisenhower) was appointed the first head of the War Relocation Authority. He reported that the temperature in some of the Arizona camps (which were in the desert) was "as high as 130 degrees in the summertime."

Sickened by the whole evacuation process, Eisenhower could no longer manage the strain of the job and resigned as director within months. We close this story with two of his personal observations (which are quite different from the narration he provided for a federal-government-produced film on "Japanese Relocation"):

I feel most deeply that when the war is over ... we as Americans are going to regret the avoidable injustices that may have been done. (Letter to Claude Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture. April 1, 1942.)

*How could such a tragedy have occurred in a democratic society that prides itself on individual rights and freedoms?... I have brooded about this whole episode on and off for the past three decades... (Milton Stover Eisenhower, *The President is Calling*, 1974.)*

IN MEMORY of Fred Korematsu who died March 31, 2005.

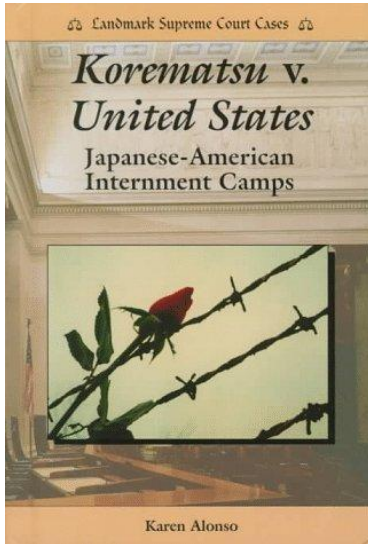
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LESSONS-and-LEGACY-Japanese-American-Internment>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LESSONS-and-LEGACY-Japanese-American-Internment>

Media Stream



Korematsu v. United States

Image online, courtesy Amazon.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Korematsu-v.-United-States>



Yasuri, Korematsu and Hirabayashi - Later Years

Image, described above, published by the Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Publications in Anthropology 74. 1999 (rev. July 2000).

Online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service.

View this asset at:

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Korematsu - Congressional Metal of Freedom

Image online, courtesy White House.

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Milton Eisenhower - War Relocation Authority

Image online, courtesy Kansas Historical Society.

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Milton and Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower

Image of the Eisenhower brothers online, courtesy [Kansas State University](#).

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Japanese Relocation - U.S. Government Film

U.S. government-produced film, "Japanese Relocation" (1942), online courtesy [U.S. National Archives](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Japanese-Relocation-U.S.-Government-Film>