ONE-PAGE SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY OF KIKU HORI FUNABIKI

Parts of the attached testimony are from my original testimony read at the Commission hearing in San Francisco on August 11, 1981.

Much of the content is an overview of racism in America before, during, and after the War and how it affected my father, Sojiro Hori, and all Japanese immigrants and their families in the United States. Specifically, it is about my father's life prior to the War; his FBI seizure as Prisoner of War; the rebuilding of his life after the War.

I have also written about our detention camp life and its effects on internees.

This concludes with my argument supporting individual monetary redress.

STATEMENT OF KIKU HORI FUNABIKI

To the House Subcommittee on
Administrative Law and Governmental Relations

Washington, D.C.

September 12, 1984

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee:

I am Kiku Hori Funabiki, a native of San Francisco, California. I do not represent an organization. This is a personal testimony.

A few weeks before the Commission hearings were to be held in San Francisco in August of 1981, I had no intention of testifying. I am a private person. It is not my style to speak before a group, especially to divulge publicly deep personal feelings I have not shared with my closest associates. It is also intimidating for me to appear before a group who wields so much power over my life.

Since the Commission hearing first held in Washington, D.C. in June of that year, however, I began to reconsider. Public officials were excusing away the incarceration with phrases such as "honest mass hysteria" and "war brings on unconscionable acts." I could not allow these remarks to go unrefuted. I decided that I had to testify.

In reviewing the history of racism against the Japanese in America, my testimony has become a tribute to my deceased father, Sojiro Hori. The memory of his courage ultimately gave me the strength to face the challenge and come forward.

This is the story of one man, a fighter. It is also a story of the Japanese in America and their struggle against racism since their arrival at the turn of the century. Unconstitutional acts committed against them and me, denial of basic freedoms, abrogation of our rights, did not erupt suddenly as a result of "honest hysteria" following Pearl Harbor. Succeeding generations also were not spared the ravages of racism, but that is another story.

My father, Sojiro Hori, was a gentle man, a man of incredible fortitude, and a man of peace. He arrived in the United States in 1901 and lived here until his death fifty years later. His first jobs were menial ones, domestic services, the only type of work available in a city. In 1906, he started an employment agency which he still operated forty-five years later when he was stricken with a fatal stroke. Unlike most Japantown businesses, his agency depended on white clients. He faced harrassment daily.

He saved enough to send for a picture bride in 1908. Their first child, a son, died at infancy after a hospital refused him admittance. My parents were told that no Japanese were served there. Devastated by this crushing experience, my mother, pregnant with her third child, took her second son to Japan for my grandmother to raise, for a few years only, it was understood. She gave birth to a third boy while there and returned alone to America. Circumstances beyond my parents' control prevented the

two boys from ever joining us, their family, which consisted of our parents, two brothers and me.

My father early on sensed the consequences of being identified as the Yellow Peril. He constantly so informed the Japanese community. He felt harmonious relations through understanding between his native Japan and his adopted country were necessary if there was to be peace in the Pacific. He even spoke of his concern in his limited English before the Commonwealth Club of Northern California in the 1920's.

With Pearl Harbor, my father's world came crashing down. Soon after, the FBI in one of their ruthless pre-dawn sweeps, routed our family out of bed, searched our house recklessly, then handcuffed my father and led him away. He was an alien, yes, but only because the country in which he lived for forty years, raised a family and whose community he served well, forbade him by law from becoming a citizen. His only crime was being Japanese.

At the moment I helplessly watched my father being led away in shackles by three Federal agents, I received so deep a wound, it has never healed. Were we so undesirable? Were we so expendable? Was I Japanese? Was I American or wasn't I? My confused teenage mind reeled.

Left behind besides myself were my invalid mother, two brothers and a ruined business. Since our assets were frozen after Pearl Harbor, we barely managed to survive the next few months until our evacuation. I recall the pathetic moment when

we assembled to go to our first camp. My bedridden mother was carried onto the camp-bound bus from her bed, which had to be left in the house. This was her first outing in two years. Her condition worsened with the constant anxiety especially for the uncertain future of her husband. She spent most of her internment in the camp hospital. I have a copy of a letter written by a camp doctor in 1943, addressed to Mr. Edward Ennis, then of the Enemy Alien Control Unit, appealing for my father's release because of the gravity of my mother's physical condition.

We were not to learn for almost a year, that my father had been moved from prison camp to prison camp along with German and Italian prisoners of war. After his fifth move in two years, he was finally released to join us in yet another barbed wire-enclosed compound in a desolate, wind-swept corner of a Wyoming desert, Heart Mountain.

In December of 1944, three years after our evacuation, we learned our exclusion from the West Coast was rescinded, and camps were to close within a year. My brothers were released after about 2 years in the camps and I after 3 years. We all went to the East Coast, the eldest to seek a position as a mechanical engineer, we younger ones to attend college. After their three and a half year imprisonment, my father, now 66 years old, and my mother, still in delicate health, returned to the West Coast with trepidation.

Mr. Chairman, you are probably aware by now, of the deplorable conditions in these detention camps which were

practically built overnight - barbed wire-enclosed compounds with watch towers and armed guards; sloppily constructed barracks which allowed dust to blow readily through cracks in the scorching summers and icy winds in the 40-below winters (I can remember how I, a Californian, bundled myself in a G.I. pea coat, and fought those winds, racing from laundry room to laundry room for shelter, in order to visit my mother daily at the camp hospital a mile away); fuel shortages; families crowded into horse stalls, heavy with the stench of manure; food poisoning (I can also remember queing up at the latrines, some of us doubled over with stomach cramps, others retching); epidemics of communicable diseases; and even some deaths of internees gunned down by overzealous guards.

However, I would like you to know that the hardships and sufferings extended beyond the period of incarceration. When the war ended, it seemed our problems had just begun.

War hysteria had not abated, there was a climate of greater and open hostility especially on the West Coast. We were completely on our own now, and we were vulnerable. Our return was the signal to unleash the racial hatred that had intensified in our absence. After three years of investigations, re-investigations, clearance after clearance, my father faced the harshest test of all, that imposed by the American public. He, and in fact, all of us including uniformed, highly-decorated Japanese American war heroes, were blatantly called Japs to our faces at some time. Physical attacks upon us were not uncommon.

My parents went to the only shelter available to them, in buildings belonging to the Japanese churches. They lived in a room a fraction of the size of our camp quarters. They did not complain, because the less fortunate ones slept on the bare floors of church and social halls. With single-minded perseverance and fortitude, my father challenged a hostile society and encroaching old age and once again began to build his life, his home and the employment agency business.

I returned to San Francisco shortly after and matriculated at the University of California in Berkeley. My father and I first worked in domestic service. We had no choice. My father was back where he had begun when he first disembarked in 1901, forty-three years before. The three of us slept on two army cots at the church hostel. We lived this way for almost a year until my father's house was vacated.

Just as his business was beginning to show profit after three years of working at a Herculean pace, my father suffered a massive stroke. Within a year, he was up again, dragging his half-paralyzed body to work every day. He continued for two more years until a second stroke claimed his life. He was 72 years old. For a man who had everything wrenched from him - his home, his business, his health, his basic human rights, his dignity, even the life of his first child, my father never became cynical. Even his frequent letters from the bleak life in prison camps always conveyed positive thoughts. I still ache deeply for him when I read a passage from one of them, dated May 1943, after a

year of separation from us. It is on the original prison stationery of specially treated paper. "Try to laugh every day and think the bright side. Do your best to your mom as you are. I am your love, Papa." I was not blessed with his gifts.

My father's story is not unique, nor is it extraordinary. Each of the tens of thousands of Japanese immigrants suffered. Collectively, their story is a heroic one of an invincible human spirit that survived cruel indignities, injustice and the final humiliation of mass exile behind barbed wire for the crime of being Japanese. Still they persevered to find a niche in a country they tried to adopt.

As I was writing this testimony, enormous pride welled up in me that I am Japanese American. There is a Japanese word, gambaru, for which there is no English equivalent. It means to fight, not to give up hope, to persevere. Gambaru is what enabled my parents' generation to survive the hardships in a land that did not want them. Gambaru is our heritage which is rooted in America, not Japan. Gambaru is a legacy which my father and his peers, courageous men and women, left to me and you - to all of us. This spirit is their contribution to America.

To validate my father's story, I have brought with me the prison uniform worn by him bearing his serial number. He brought this home as a souvenir for his children. For history's sake he said. It is obviously several sizes too large for a slight man. He told me that the trousers were of the same denim and that on

the seat were stenciled in white paint, two large letters, "P W", Prisoner of War.

And now, just a short piece I wrote in 1981 after attending Commission hearings at three sites. I would like to quickly share with you experiences of people other than my family whose heart-wrenching stories moved me to write my first poem. This is my first public reading.

The Japanese terms used: issei and nisei refer to first and second generation Japanese. Kibei are nisei who returned to the United States after being brought up in Japan. These were the incarcerants. Enryo, giri, and gaman refer to some of our cultural values. Enryo is reticence; giri in this context refers to a blind loyalty; gaman means to endure, usually in silence. Hakujin refers to a caucasian American. Each tragedy here happened to a real person.

SILENCE . . . . . no more

Silence
Forty years of silence
Forty years of anger, grief, pain
Shackled in the hearts of
Issei, nisei, kibei.

Many died in silence
Some by their own hands
Some by others.

Today
The survivors
Stood tall, strong, proud
Issei, nisei, kibei all vowed
No more enryo, giri, gaman
Shattering the silence.

Today
The survivors
Cried redress, restitution, reparations

for
a father detained in five
prisoner of war camps
for the crime of being Japanese
and joined his loved ones
in yet another barbed wire compound
then returned home to die at seventy-two
rebuilding his life in San Francisco

for
a mother whose demons drove her
to hammer her infant to death
now skipping merrily after
butterflies in the snow

for
a brother, honor student,
star athlete, Purple Heart veteran
now alone, in a sleazy Seattle hotel room
sitting on the edge of a cot
rocking, rocking

for
a fourteen year old girl
mother to the children of Petersburg
orphaned by the FBI seizure of
all Japanese adults
now agonizing in guilt
of having detoured the jailhouse
too ashamed at the sight of her father
waving desperately to her

for
a baby whose whimpers
were silenced forever in a
camp hospital
the hakujin doctor who never came
was a father of a son killed
in the Pacific

Silence
Silence, no more

. . . . . no more

To these people and the other 120,000 internees who were as loyal, if I might say, as the distinguished members of this subcommittee, how can a mere apology suffice? How can a mere $20,000 or $120,000 suffice? The $20,000 recommended by the Commission is only a symbolic amount. But there must be individual monetary compensation. The American system of justice compensated each of the 1,318 Vietnam war protestors the sum of $10,000 for their unlawful detention over a weekend here in Washington, D.C.

To refuse us monetary redress for the flagrant breach of our Constitutional rights, <u>that</u> would set a dangerous precedent by eliminating safeguards to future generations of Americans. Selective justice is no justice.

Mr. Chairman, you and I are fellow Americans and fellow travelers striving to keep our America the country of liberty and justice <u>for all</u>.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Kiku Hori Funabiki

Kiku Hori Funabiki

24 - 24 - F
Heart Mountain, Wyoming
July 19, 1943

Mr. Edward J. Ennis
Enemy Alien Control Unit
Washington, D.C.

Subject: Mr. Sojiro Hori
Case Hearing

Dear sir:

Several months ago, I wrote an affidavit in behalf of Mr. Sojiro Hori, asking that he be allowed to join his family in this center, since the mental and physical state of his wife, mother of three children, was at stake.

News that her husband was hospitalized at Santa Fe has again endangered Mrs. Hori's Health. Suspecting that the altitude would affect her husband, she has been in a constant state of mental anguish.

Mrs. Hori's physical condition is poor. The constant anxiety for her husband is my single obstacle in getting her well. May this appleal be heard in fairness to two people who have but to look forward only to what their children are able to place before them.

Heart Mountain relocation center is almost 2300feet lower in altitude than is Santa Fe. It is well guarded by Military Police and 12 miles to the nearest town. There have been no violent uprisings or demonstrations, and it is one of the better handled of the ten centers. It is cosmopolitan in nature, and is composed of evacuees from Washington, Oregon and Northern and Southern California.

It is my request that Mr. Hori be allowed to join his wife in this center. Both parties will benefit by this action. I beg that you reconsider this case in favor of Mr. Hori and his wife, for their health, and for the sake of their children.

Wilfred Y. Hanaoka, M.D.
Heart Mountain Relocation Center

Mr. Kei & Kiku Hori
24-6-D
Heart Mountain
Wyoming

DO NOT WRITE HERE! Hori, Sojiro
NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN! INS-234-J-552-C1
NON SCRIVETE QUI!

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May 12th 1943

My Dear Kei Kiku-Chan: It made me a great pleasure to know that you two are so nice to mom and to me Sacrifying your own amusement and study. But as you know even a College education (except) only give you an Complete material to built you as a man, woman like you doing now. So don't be too anxious of education and follow what God (Creator) wanted you have to do. Paying a careful attention of your health, then you will become very Lucky all through your life.

Last week here they have played a Japanese style theatre - So Called Ichintani-Gunki by Panama Curty they made Yoroi, Kabuto, uchikake, even shamisen and Tuike by themselves and played it for 3 hours. You imagine how smart they are. Besides it we have all kind of Amusement as usual for we have no definit routine daily except few times 2 or 3 hours work with K.P. yard police etc. and plenty rich food. if Kei was in here would be very pleased with it. If you wanted me to send you Something write me as I will try to make it. I wrote to Dr Hunaoka and Tatsu N.Y. often. Try to laugh every day and think only bright side. Write me more detail of Sho-Sho no Dai and Canyono where you traveled weeks ago. Deliver my best regard to all friends of mine there. Do your best to your mom as you are. I am Your Love Pa. Sojiro Hori.

DO NOT WRITE HERE! NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN! NON SCRIVETE QUI! 書勿レ

MY ADDRESS IS: Sojiro Hori ISN-234-J-552-C1
MEINE ADRESSE IST WIE FOLGT: 1st Internment Co - 1903.
IL MIO INDIRIZZO È: Camp Livingston Internment Camp
私の住所: Box 20 General Post office New York City New York.

W. D., P. M. G. Form No. 6-1
November 1, 1942