

Yes, I was a draft resister in Heart Mountain Concentration camp. I believed that it was wrong for a democratic nation to evacuate and intern innocent citizens into a concentration camp without due process of law and then draft them into a segregated army unit and force them to fight for democratic principles that were denied them. I told the government that I would be willing to serve but I wanted the return of my Constitutional rights first. In my fight to repossess my constitutional rights I was called disloyal and a leader of the Japanese American Citizens League ^{said} that I should be tried for sedition. When we were ordered to answer the loyalty oath, I answered questions 27 and 28 with yeses. Question 27 was - if I am willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States Government. I answered yes but qualified my answer with a statement that I wanted the return of my constitutional rights first. Number 28 was - will I swear all allegiance to the emperor of Japan. When the young people ask today why more did not resist, they do not understand the pressures of that time. All protest leaders were sent to Tule Lake as ~~disloyals~~ ^{trouble makers} and that stifled ~~the~~ ^{the} thoughts of freedom of speech. Any Japanese-American ~~who~~ ^{trouble maker} who ~~protested~~ ^{trouble maker} protested against racial injustice was quickly picked up and without trial sent to maximum security prison camps. When the day for my physical examination came, I refused to report. I was quickly picked up and put into jail with a group of young draft resisters. Later I was sent to jail in Cheyenne, Wyoming to stand trial. The majority of draft age Nisei ^{in Ht. Mtn.} were against the unjust draft but changed their minds after we were put into jail. It seems to me that in most groups regardless of race, people wait to see ~~the~~ ^{the} the outcome of the early ~~protesters~~ ^{protesters} and proceed accordingly. We went to trial in front of a judge who I believe that was prejudiced against us. Our case was not only on the draft issue but also about the evacuation and incarceration of innocent

Japanese-Americans. We actually asked for redress and the return of our constitutional rights during the trial. This judge found us guilty and sentenced us to 3 years in a federal prison. Right after our trial, the so-called leaders of the Fair Play Committee were tried for conspiracy. The government had declared that these 7 leaders were ~~conspiring~~ ^{writing the young to fight for their rights} ~~ignoring the young men to resist the draft~~. These 7 were found guilty, but won their release from an appeal to a higher court. This circuit court of appeals agreed that these 7 had a right to counsel the resisters. During our trial, the Heart Mountain Sentinel, the camp news paper ~~stated~~ ^{and} that a SACL controlled organ, stated that the fallacy of the Fair Play Committee's argument is the contention that a restriction of our rights means a loss of these rights. We don't lose any rights unless the constitution itself is changed. If the Supreme Court rules evacuation was constitutional, then we will not have been deprived of our rights. The Japanese-American Citizens League ~~had~~ believed that good public image superseded good constitutional ^{values} and were against all court cases during the ever years. We took our case to the 10th court of appeals where we lost again. Judge Huxman declared that 2 wrongs do not make a right. One may not refuse to heed a call of his government because in another way it may have injured him. Neither the fact that he was of Japanese ancestry nor the fact that his constitutional rights may have been invaded by sending him to a relocation center cancel this debt. We took our case to the Supreme Court and here we were denied a hearing. I believe that the Supreme Court denial was because if we won our case, the whole evacuation and incarceration program would be found racial and unconstitutional. They took the easy way out. On Dec. 24, 1947, President Truman's Amnest^y ^{board} granted us a full pardon ~~but~~ ^{we were given}. In the years that followed, the United States apologized for their wartime actions and the Japanese-American ^{Citizens} League acknowledged their wrongdoings against the Heart Mountain resisters.