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Mrs. Tomi Koriyama
[REDACTED]

Seattle, Wa.

I am writing this testimony on behalf of my late mother, Mrs. Tomi Koriyama.

Prior to the war, my parents had well established grocery business in a predominately Scandinavian neighborhood. My mother was widowed several years earlier, at age forty two, and left with four children. She had been a school teacher in Japan and was fairly fluent in English. My father was scholarly man and mother had good head for business.

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor was devastating. We told her not to worry about the store and that we would carry on. At the same time we worried about what would happen to her. I'm glad my father was not alive for he was thoroughly Americanized and he wanted to become a citizen. He died still hoping that things might change.

With Executive Order 9066, and the limited time to evacuate, my mother started the process of selling the merchandise. Many, Many boxes of canned goods stored in the basement, plus display cases and refrigerators, freezers, meat slicers and etc., were sold at a great loss. The store was barely sold in time to leave at one thousand dollars. Home furniture, clothing and china were practically given away. Some good chinaware were stored at a neighbor's house. Even the brand new Chevrolet car was sold for less than half price.

The trauma and strain aged her physically and she developed hypertension. When her only son volunteered for the army (the famed 442 combat unit) I could see the anguish and pain in her eyes. I know there were many discussions and tears, but she didn't stop him.

She was now alone in her barrack room. I had left camp shortly after my husband, who also volunteered, for Minneapolis. As soon as I found a place to live, I returned to camp for her.

We returned to Seattle after the war. Her condition worsened and even with medication, her hypertension could not be controlled. I eventually quit my job to take care of her. The trauma of losing home, business and an uncertain future, poor diet in camp hastened her demise.

Mrs. Tomi Koriyama

by Hana Masuda