

thereafter lie about “like a loaded weapon ready for the hand of any authority that can bring forward a plausible claim of an urgent need.” (Shortly before his death in 2005, when the issue of racial profiling was reignited during a time of heightened national insecurity, Fred Korematsu expressed the hope that his case “would be remembered for the dangers of racial and ethnic scapegoating.”)

Most of the evacuees were held in the relocation camps for more than 2 years until after the War Department revoked the west coast exclusion orders in December 1944. About half of them returned to the west coast during 1945 and 1946. In many cases their return was greeted with threats and acts of terrorism, but strong voices were also raised in their behalf. General Joseph W. Stilwell, in particular, denounced the terrorists as “barfly commandos.” Mary Masuda, a young woman who had spent 2½ years at the Gila River relocation center, received threats of violence from a group of vigilantes when she returned to her home near Santa Ana. Her brother, a war hero who had been killed in Italy, was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. On December 8, 1945, General Stilwell presented Sergeant Masuda’s medal to his sister in her home, and this sobering incident received wide publicity.

In the postwar years, many Californians gradually came to realize the enormity of the mistake that had been made. Many could accept the view of the War Relocation Authority in its final report (1946): “Since we are continually striving, with the better part of our minds, to be a united people, it becomes important for us to understand and evaluate what we did, both officially and unofficially, to this particular racial segment of our population in time of global war.”

Selected Bibliography

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Charles Wollenberg’s *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito* (1990) is a penetrating analysis. Dorothea Lange’s wartime photos of the East Bay are available in Wollenberg (ed.), *Photographing the Second Gold Rush* (1995). See also Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, *To Place Our Deeds: The African American Community in Richmond, California* (2000), and Sally M. Miller and Daniel A. Cornford (eds.), *American Labor in the Era of World War II* (1995).

John B. Rae’s *Climb to Greatness: The American Aircraft Industry* (1968) is the standard short account. Others are William A. Schoneberger and Paul Sonnenburg, *California Wings*

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