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STORY PRESERVATION INITIATIVE
KAREN EBEL (GERMAN-AMERICAN INTERNMENT)
TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO

Track 01 – Intro to Recording

Today is Wednesday, the 23rd of May 2012. This recording is of Karen Ebel, and is being made in Andover, New Hampshire.

Track 02 – From Germany to the United States

My father, Max Ebel, was born in Speyer, Germany in 1919. He was born right before the end of World War I. His father, whose name was also Max Ebel, who I'll refer to as Max Senior for these purposes, was in combat during World War I. He was a veteran. He was engaged in hand-to-hand combat. When he came back had very difficult time. He was a master craftsman. He was a sculptor. He was an incredible woodworker. When he came back from the war, he put together a life for himself as a sculptor. And then my father also came up through the trade. He did apprentice out, and he wasn't a sculptor, but he was a master craftsman. In 1929, at the end of an increasingly deteriorating situation in the family, my grandfather was asked if he wanted to come to the United States and work at the National Cathedral, in Washington on the stonework there. He pretty much up and left the family, and left them high and dry. He came over here [the United States] in December of 1929. There were three children. My father was the middle child. They were destitute, from what I can gather. My father spoke a lot about having to steal food here and there. He did have rickets and all that sort of thing. One of the things that he loved the most though, was he did belong to the Boy Scouts in Germany, and then he belonged to a group called the Red Cross. He spent a lot of time there. He got food there. He remembered that part. Eventually, especially in the mid-1930's, when Hitler was coming to power, the Boy Scouts and the Red Cross, and a lot of these youth organizations started to get rolled into the Hitler Youth. My father wanted absolutely nothing to do with the Hitler Youth. Needless to say, the relationship of my father with his friends became more and more difficult, and everything culminated in a knife fight. It was not a great situation, because at that point, he was marked because he wouldn't participate in any of these activities. At that point, there was some communication between my grandfather, Max Senior, and the family. Max Senior had remarried. He became a naturalized United States citizen, and it was arranged that my

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father would leave the country [Germany]. So, in May of 1937, very shortly before his 18th birthday, he got on a boat bound for New York City and, as he tells it, he had a new woolen suit, he had a German nickel in his pocket, and he had a suitcase filled with his woodworking tools. His father met him in New York harbor and brought him up to Boston. My father later said, "I always felt like I was American, from the time I came to this country. I felt like I was a fish that had been let out of a bowl." He embraced the experience. From the moment that he got here, he actually sought out the Boy Scouts in Boston. He immediately set about to pursue his citizenship. He took English lessons, and he even became a Junior Air Raid Warden in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury as the war continued to come closer to our doorstep.

Track 03 – Enemy Alien

In very late 1941 he was ready to file his declaration of an intention to become a citizen. Of course, we all know what happened on December 7, 1941. Pearl Harbor was bombed, and I actually have an envelope from the immigration folks at the government, acknowledging the receipt of my father's declaration to become a citizen. So, the minute Pearl Harbor occurred, the citizenship plans came to a screeching halt - not because my father wanted them to, but because he very quickly became the enemy.

During the 1930's, the FBI was beginning to watch the very large German communities and the Italian communities in Boston and in New York, and throughout the United States. Of course, they [father and grandfather] were unaware of that. My father certainly wasn't aware of that. He was an American and, you know, he was here, and he had enough food for the first time in a very long time and he was very happy.

One of the first things that FDR [President Roosevelt] did was he passed three presidential proclamations. These presidential proclamations were issued, pursuant to the Alien Enemies Act, which was originally the Alien Enemies and Sedition Act. In that case, if you are at war with a foreign nation, any alien or any national from that nation who is residing in your country can be deemed immediately an Enemy Alien or Alien Enemy, the term is used interchangeably. At the time that the presidential proclamations

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are issued, bringing the principles of the Act into place, the aliens basically lose their rights. Their travel is restricted. They have to carry certificates of identification wherever they go, and this is for all men and women age fourteen and up. They're just treated like the enemy. Right away, on December 7th and December 8th, these three presidential proclamations were issued, and it affected 300,000 German aliens, who were in the United States at that time; approximately 600,000 Italian aliens; and about 100,000 Japanese aliens. So, the enemy alien laws affected over a million people. Immediately, all these folks had to go and register with their local post offices. They were fingerprinted and they got these certificates of identification that they had to carry around. They couldn't have short-wave radios. They couldn't have cameras, and they couldn't have guns, all sorts of things like that. The other thing that happened was that the government immediately put into place prohibited zones along certain areas of the West Coast, in particular and very much so, around military establishments. If you were an Enemy Alien, and you lived within any of these areas, you had to get out, immediately. Of course, this created issues with families. Maybe the children were American citizens, the parents were aliens, and a lot of them had to be transported out immediately. So that created a crisis for quite a few families. The other thing that happened was that since the FBI had been watching many of these alien communities for quite some time, they had drawn up what they called a custodial detention list. A lot of names were already listed as people to be concerned about. So, as soon as the presidential proclamations were issued, they went out and they arrested thousands of people – Germans, Italians, and Japanese.

Procedurally, it's helpful to understand how it goes. If you are an Alien Enemy who comes under suspicion, you are arrested and brought in for questioning. You have no right to an attorney. You have none of the constitutional rights that we would be accustomed to. I will say, at the time, I'm not sure the constitutional rights had been established as firmly for immigrants as they have been since. The procedure is that you could be detained indefinitely in a temporary detention center that was overseen by the Department of Justice. Then, without notice, you were scheduled for a hearing. What the Department of Justice did was it established local, civilian hearing boards. They were

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generally composed of people from the general community, usually about three people. So you would have your hearing, an attorney would be there, usually a U.S. attorney, or one of the assistant U.S. attorneys, and a couple of the FBI agents that had been responsible for overseeing what was happening with you. An Alien Enemy board was tasked to decide whether they could make a recommendation to release you, to parole you, or to intern you. That recommendation, sometimes with a transcript, sometimes just with a summary document, would be sent on to the Alien Enemy Control Unit in the Department of Justice. After another period of time, they would review the documentation. The people there were not bound to follow the recommendation of the civilian hearing boards and, eventually, an order would be issued by them. It would be signed by the Attorney General, Francis Biddle. Then, within twenty-four hours, or however long it took to communicate, the individual would be advised that he was being interned, if that was the case, and then just transferred to some other more permanent facility. So it all went rather quickly and, certainly, the person who was the target of the investigation didn't get to participate or defend themselves very much at all. They didn't have the right to speak up in their own defense. They didn't have the right to question the proceedings. The only thing they really were able to do was have a couple of character witnesses. So that was the procedure.

Track 04 – Internment

My father wasn't part of the first wave of arrests. I don't think at the time he had any reason to believe that he was under suspicion in any particular way. In September of 1942, my grandfather, who was a United States citizen, was arrested and brought in for questioning. He was ultimately released. The way that the government was able to arrest him was, many people are aware of Executive Order 9066, which was the order that ultimately permitted the government to relocate all the Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the West Coast and transport them to relocation camps in the West. Well, Executive Order 9066 authorized the Army to also issue what they called individual exclusion orders. They could be issued against aliens, and they could be issued against United States citizens. So, in my grandfather's case, what the U.S. Army wanted to do was to exclude my grandfather from the entire East Coast, where he had his business, and

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basically move the family away. My grandfather ultimately contested that. Right around the time that they arrested my grandfather, my grandfather and my father had a furniture factory in Cambridge and the FBI came and arrested my father. During the summer preceding their arrest, the FBI came to my grandfather's house, where my father was living, on a couple of different occasions and basically did a search of the premises. It was an interesting situation because, of course, my grandfather was a citizen and my father was an alien. As I explained earlier, as an Enemy Alien, you weren't allowed to have a radio or various other things. There was a radio in the house. They also picked up various German books, they got a German calendar, things of that nature. Where do you decide within a house what was my father's and what wasn't? At that point, the family knew that something must have been afoot.

My father was arrested. He was put into a detention center in Boston. It was the East Boston Immigration Station. That facility really was set up for seamen, who came and were just here in the United States for a couple of days and then turned around again. It certainly wasn't ever set up for a group of people to remain in for months and months on end. There were Japanese folks there. There were Italians there.

He [my father] was really not allowed outside. They had sort of an exercise cage that they had set up. It was a big, flat-roofed building, and there were fences put up on the roof. As was the case throughout the internment camp system, all communication was censored. Newspapers, anything to do with the war, the folks were not allowed to see. Their visitation rights were very limited. My grandfather didn't know where Dad was but it took a couple of days. This actually wasn't the case for many other people that were arrested in other parts of the country. It was like they were just spirited away. Many times, they were fathers or mothers with families, or both, leaving the families alone.

He was in this facility in Boston about six weeks, when he learned that he was going to have a hearing. So he was taken before the hearing board. The U.S. attorney there

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basically yelled at and accused my father of various things. One of the things that came up at that point was that my father, like all aliens, was required to register for the Selective Service. As part of the Selective Service process, there was a question as to whether or not he would fight in foreign countries on behalf of the United States. He said that he didn't want to fight in Germany, because it would mean that he would be fighting against his relatives. He said that it [the hearing] lasted maybe fifteen or twenty minutes, and he never really got to say much of anything. He just sat there. If you can imagine a twenty-three-year-old boy really just sitting before this board and not having any idea what is going on. He was sent back to the East Boston Detention Facility and, finally, in January of 1943, he was advised that an internment order had been issued. Basically, these internment orders could be issued, pursuant to the Alien Enemies Act, if the government suspected the individual of being a threat to the peace and security of the United States. He was removed from the East Boston Facility. Of course, no opportunity to say goodbye, it just all went very quickly. The next thing he knew, he was transported to Ellis Island.

Track 05 – The Camps

Ellis Island was used as a detention facility longer than any place else in the United States during World War II. By the time he got there, there were hundreds and hundreds of people there. He said it was filthy. He said that there were double bunks set up like in the Great Room, where immigrants for years had been brought into this country and processed. He said the only privacy that you ever had was if you could hang blankets down from the top bunk, and he was always pleased that he was in a bottom bunk, because at least he could do that. There was very little opportunity for exercise. He said the food was terrible. My father was not one to complain. He never whined about anything but as I listened to the various stories that he told about his internment, I have to say that he found his experience at Ellis Island the most difficult.

From Ellis Island, where he was for about a month, he was then transferred to Fort Meade in Maryland. He remembered a few things about that. The first thing is that he got an extremely severe sore throat and he went for medical care at Ellis Island shortly before he

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was transferred - and they wouldn't give him any medication because he was being sent out anyway. He remembered that. The other thing that he remembered very clearly is he was with a group of men that were transferred from Ellis Island to Fort Meade, and they were transferred to the authority of the U.S Army. They were under armed guard, and he remembered one of the people in charge saying that they didn't care if they took them out head first or feet first. My father said there were people standing, watching them, as they got off of the ferry from Ellis Island and they were put on a train. My father is sure that people thought they were prisoners of war. At that time, the people who were in these camps were also considered spies, disloyal, any number of things. As a matter of fact, no one who was interned here in the United States was ever convicted of treason or any crime relating to being disloyal to the United States.

During the course of the war there were the Presidential Proclamations issued. The Department of Justice was responsible for the Enemy Aliens, but they were also responsible for having to put these people somewhere that they arrested, and there wasn't a system of camps established. Many of the people who were originally arrested did go into these slapdash detention centers, like the type that my dad was in. Women were actually sent, in many cases, to Homes of the Good Shepherd, which were basically homes for wayward women, administered by Catholic nuns. Some people were sent into jails. There are horror stories of people being just put in jail until the government could figure out what to do with them. It was just a really rapid reaction to the situation.

In the beginning, many of the internees were sent to United States Army posts. For a period of time, the U.S. Army was responsible for what was happening with the internees. This eventually, for the most part, changed as facilities were sort of brought up to speed to accommodate all these people, and then they were very definitely under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice and border patrol, that sort of thing. So the detention facility in Boston was a temporary facility that was administered by the Department of Justice. Ellis Island, although they thought of it as a temporary facility, many people were there for years. That was more of a Department of Justice facility.

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Fort Meade, where my father was sent, after he left Ellis Island, was a U.S. Army post. At Fort Meade, the internees lived in tents. But there were also U.S. soldiers there, and it was interesting. Some of the folks that were arrested – of course, there were many New York Germans there – many of them came from the restaurant industry, including some great cooks. My father said that the German cooks cooked for the internees, but they also cooked many times for the U.S. soldiers and the U.S. soldiers loved the food that they were getting. See now, this was a situation where my father's memory of Fort Meade is good, because he got medical treatment at that point. He said the food was good and, to a 23-year-old boy, he was very happy to get really good food. All in all, that part of it was all right. So he was in Fort Meade all of two or three weeks, and then they were all piled onto a train. All the guys were sent to Tullahoma, Tennessee. It was called Camp Forrest.

Track 06 - Fort Lincoln

That facility was a vast system of huts, and there were also a lot of Italians there, because there are many pictures now, where there were also the Italians, but my father remembers landing there. They were sent to the huts and there were spider webs everywhere, and it was known that there were black widows there, and it wasn't the greatest thing when he first got to his camp. But when he was there, they did have doctors – because there were soldiers there, as well, they did have doctors for the military and for the internees. My father, having participated in activities with the Red Cross in Germany, volunteered for duty to work with the doctors at Camp Forrest. He worked with them quite closely and really enjoyed that sort of work. Enough so that, apparently, the military doctors, when it was time to transfer from Tullahoma, Camp Forrest, wanted to bring my father with them, and my father would have gone. I mean, at that point, it might have meant going overseas but, apparently, they couldn't work things out. And so he didn't go.

In May of 1943, at this point, there were quite a few German prisoners of war that they didn't really know what to do with anymore over there [in Europe], so they started shipping them over here. One of the facilities that they wanted to put the German POWs in was this Camp Forrest, where my father and many other internees were. So, in May of

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1943, all the guys that were at Camp Forrest were then sent out to various other facilities around the United States. By that point also, the Department of Justice had finally gotten more permanent facilities set up.

My father and many of the guys who were at Camp Forrest were sent to Fort Lincoln, which was in North Dakota. My father just remembered being put on a train. They weren't able to look out the windows, except sometimes in the countryside. The windows were nailed shut, and they were under guard as they were being transported. And, of course, none of them were quite sure where they were going, and he had no idea what was going on. He arrived in Bismarck, North Dakota. They were transported from the railroad station in trucks to this Fort Lincoln, which was an old Army outpost, no longer run by the Army and it was a very barren area. I think at that point my father really was depressed because he had a little diary and he didn't write really much of anything descriptive except where he was being transferred from month to month. And when he arrived in North Dakota, it said, "This is hell." At that facility, there were hundreds of guys. At that point, there were Germans and Japanese aliens there.

At the time that he was sent to Fort Lincoln, some of the fellows that he [had been] with – as I mentioned, they were sent to other camps – and one of the things that the government came to understand was that when you take away a father, or you take away a mother, or you take away both parents, that leaves – say, in the case of taking the father away, many of the women had no place. They didn't work, and the other twist in all of this was that there was an alien property custodian that was established, as part of the edict that came down during World War II, and the aliens' property was frozen. So, the women weren't able to access any cash that they might have had. The women – you know, I think back – and as difficult as it was for someone like my father, who was a young man - I try to think of these families where, for the most part, it was the fathers that were taken away, the breadwinners. The women had never worked, they had children. They were many times ostracized by their communities and they had a very, very difficult time. The government established a family camp in Crystal City, Texas. The women or the families

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had to apply to go to this family camp so they could be reunited. I've now read old camp newspapers and many of the fellows who were in Camp Forrest with my father were sent to this family camp and reunited with their families.

Fort Lincoln was a brimming stew of people - butchers, bakers, candlestick makers- from all over the United States. There were mechanics among them, there were cooks among them, and they were all together in these big barracks. But they also built some smaller temporary facilities, so some of the guys were out there. It was brutally cold in the winter. It was very difficult circumstances all in all for them to live. As I said, there were also Japanese there, at the time. In fact, my father remembers a story of how the Japanese and the German internees would do Sumo wrestling together. There's a lot of disagreement, you know, or a lot of commentary that the two ethnic groups were kept separated at these camps but, from what my father says, although there wasn't a lot of crossover, there definitely was some, maybe less so at Fort Lincoln than some of the other camps. There was a system of approximately 50 detention centers and internment camps across the United States.

Track 07 – The Northern Pacific Railroad

My father really wasn't loving barbed wire at that point. There was barbed wire around these facilities, as there was at all of them, with guard dogs patrolling, double fence lines, armed guards in towers, klieg lights. It was a fairly hostile-feeling environment. In North Dakota, there is the Northern Pacific Railroad and many of the able-bodied men in North Dakota and out in the Midwest, in particular, were gone and they were fighting in the war. Believe it or not, the U.S. Government recognized that there was a group of men who were available. So an arrangement was made so that internees, who were interested in working on the railroad, could volunteer. I say volunteer – they were paid. They couldn't be forced to go out and work on the railroad. They had to say that they were interested in doing so. My father was very interested in getting the heck out of this camp. He wasn't very happy there. There were initially about 500 of the internees who volunteered to go out and work on the railroad and, over the course of time, about 100 of the most trustworthy and probably the most able-bodied were selected to go out. So, in

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September 1943, my father was among the fellows who left the camp and went to work on the Northern Pacific Railroad. The task was to replace rather light rails that were currently going across North Dakota with heavy-weight rails that could accommodate the wartime munitions that were being transported across the country, from coast to coast.

It was perceived by some within the camp to be assisting the U.S. war effort. The railroaders, as they were called, weren't exactly popular with some of them and it did cause some friction, which has also been written about. So my father and the railroaders were put on a work train and they were housed in boxcars on the train. There were six to eight guys per car. There was a coal stove in each car; of course, no bathroom facilities, or anything like that, and there were cots in the car. Basically what happened was the work trains would go from town to town, depending on where they were going to be working, and then they would go out onto the rails from the work trains to work. It wasn't an easy life. They were up very early. My father worked the spike puller, and they had to work in all elements. Of course, as it got into the winter, it got more and more difficult but my father said they were always out there doing what had to be done. He talks about how incredibly cold it was and that they wore layers and layers, and layers of clothing to do the work.

It was very unclear, exactly, how somebody, once they were interned, would be released, but there was a procedure of some sort in place if you could convince the Department of Justice to hold a rehearing on your behalf, then it was possible that maybe you could get out. The challenge was, to get a re-hearing, you had to come up with new evidence. The kind of thing you would really need a lawyer for, in my opinion. Re-hearings were fairly unusual. But, in the case of the railroaders, they did have a spokesman, who was also a railroader, and he was very educated, and he just kept writing letters saying, "Look, we're out here, we're helping the U.S. war effort. I think that we deserve to have a rehearing." So, in April of 1944, my father did have a re-hearing but, coincidentally, right around exactly the same time, my father also got a draft notice, because you'll recall he had registered with the Selective Service. So, here he is, sitting in an internment camp and

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he's drafted to fight for the U.S. Army. He is put on a train from Bismarck to Fort Snelling, in Minnesota. He's by himself. He goes all the way down there by himself. He has his induction physical. He comes back, all by himself, and then goes back out and works on the railroad again. He finds out, maybe two or three weeks later, that he had flunked his physical, and it says on the documentation, for a bad ankle. So he wasn't sent to fight. But if he hadn't flunked his physical, he would have been taken from the internment camp where he was too dangerous to be out amongst the public to fight on behalf of the United States. The Rehearing Board recommended that he be released, and they sent their recommendation to the Department of Justice Alien Enemies Unit, and they would not release him. They paroled him. So, in June of 1944, he was paroled and he went back to Boston. He was on parole in Boston until November 1945. He proceeded to work on getting his citizenship.

Track 08 – Government Recognition

In 1999, after I really had come to understand my father's story, and I also understood that the experience of internment was much more widespread in the United States than I realized, I decided to look into it further. In the early years of the Internet, there wasn't too much that one could find, but I decided to search for the term Fort Lincoln and, lo and behold, I discovered that there was another former internee in Arizona who had done quite a bit of research on the issue and he actually had old pictures of Fort Lincoln on his website. I remember sitting in my dining room in front of my computer, with the February light streaming in, thinking this has been so shrouded in secrecy and mystery and there is a picture of it. It really exists. When I showed it to my father, he just couldn't believe it. I'm not sure he even wanted to see what it looked like anymore. But through communication with this Arthur Jacobs, he sent me a list of internees that had my father's name on it, and he sent me some other documentation. Just to see the reality of it was – in that context – it just added a whole new aspect to it.

So around the time that I really started looking more into the overall broad experience, I discovered that there was a piece of legislation pending to study what happened to the Italians during World War II. I felt as though, if there was going to be a piece of

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legislation that focused on one aspect of the European experience, why not broaden it out. I started a letter-writing campaign. I wrote to various German-American newspapers and magazines, and one magazine in particular happened to be picked up by a fellow in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who had a very close relationship with Senator Russell Feingold, in Wisconsin. This man contacted me to get more background information about internment and basically put together a group of German-Americans in Wisconsin to work with Senator Feingold. Senator Feingold, who was very much a support of civil liberties, decided to take on the issue. The first thing we tried to do was amend the Italian bill to include all Europeans. I worked a lot on the drafting of that sort of documentation. Understandably, I guess, the Italian community had been working on this for a really long time, and they elected not to support the inclusion of the Germans in it. So the Italian bill did pass in 2000, but without the Germans.

So then, I continued to work with Senator Feingold's staff and, by then, it included other senators, people in the U.S. House of Representatives, to put together a piece of legislation to create an independent study commission to review the experience of Germans and Italians during World War II, as well as German and Italian, Latin Americans, because in addition to the approximately 11,000 Germans that were interned, and about 3,300 Italians, there were over 4,000 largely German-Latin Americans from nineteen different Latin American countries who were taken up here and put into the Department of Justice camps. Many of them were also used to exchange for Americans in Germany. There was a whole exchange program. In addition, approximately 80 German Jews were brought up here from Latin America. It's a very broad story.

Over the course of time, our bill was introduced several times. In 2007, the bill called the Wartime Treatment Study Act - and it was a very comprehensive piece of legislation - and it did establish an independent study commission on behalf of all the Europeans. It tracked very closely the original study commission that was created to look into the Japanese experience, which resulted in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Only a commission was to be established. No apology was sought. No reparations were sought

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or intended to be requested. It was merely something to get the history of these camps on the record books.

In 2007, the Senate passed the bill as an amendment to omnibus immigration legislation. What was very ironic about that was that the bill passed in the Senate approximately one month after my father passed away. Senator Feingold did get up and speak on behalf of my father, following his death – on the floor of the Senate. This whole time period, my dream for the legislation, of course, was to shine a brighter light on this history, but my dream was that someday my father would be able to tell his story before the commission that we would establish or, at the very least, speak at a hearing, discussing the bill.

As he got older, he was very sick with emphysema, he had diabetes, and towards the end I was almost in desperation for something to happen, and it was just breaking my heart. But you can't move the U.S. Congress just for your father. I've learned that.

During the course of the years, as I was pursuing the legislation, I also worked to establish a network of German internees, many of whom had never spoken before and never wanted to speak out, relying on a network that had been established in part by another individual. But I also had the opportunity to bring my father back to Fort Lincoln in 2003, to a reunion, where there were many other internees. And to walk the pathways with him, where he had been interned, and to walk into the buildings where he had been held, is an experience that is priceless.

Track 09 – Judiciary Committee

The end of the legislation story is that finally, in March of 2009, the U.S. House Judiciary Committee has a subcommittee, the Immigration Subcommittee, and they did finally hold hearings on the Wartime Treatment Study Act, as well as another act that was pending, on behalf of another group. I was able to tell my story at that hearing, along with another internee, and another expert on the matter. I would say that the experience was the culmination of a lot of work, but it was very bittersweet for me, because I didn't want to be the one to be sitting there. I wanted it to be my father. In the long run, even though the Subcommittee and the House Judiciary Committee did recommend that the bill pass,

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it never was able to get through the procedural hurdles in the House of Representatives, and then we were never able to get it through in the Senate. So it died in that Congress. Senator Feingold was not reelected, who had been our champion, and my father had died. After ten long years of battling, I finally decided that it was time to stop pursuing the legislation.

The other aspect of my work, of course, was unearthing what actually happened to my father. Because it's one thing to just listen to his story in a vacuum, but many, many mysteries remained. He never knew why he was interned. He never had any idea. I mean, he had theories. And he never knew why he was released. So, fortunately, I was able to acquire his documentation. I got his internment order. It was the first time he had ever seen it, but I would say the most interesting part of what I acquired was one or two pieces of paper, which was the re-hearing report, where the re-hearing board following his work on the railroad, basically recounted why he had been interned. And what it said in the re-hearing report was that he "apparently had been interned because when he was a junior air raid warden, it was reported that he had said Hitler built good roads," and it was because he didn't want to fight against his countrymen, during World War II. They didn't actually identify any other reasons why he was interned. What it said in the re-hearing report was that they found my father to be in no way disloyal, and they strongly recommend his release. They also said, in so many words, they didn't really understand why he had ever been interned. That was the only piece of paper that I saw where they really said what had happened. They recommended release and, of course, the documentation went back to the Department of Justice, and the Department of Justice elected not to release him, despite all this, and to parole him.