



## Gordon Hirabayashi, 93, dies; fought Japanese internments

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LOS ANGELES - Gordon Hirabayashi, who was convicted for defying the evacuation and internment of Japanese Americans on the West Coast during World War II and, four decades later, not only cleared his name but helped prove that the government had falsified the reasons for the mass incarceration, has died. He was 93.

Hirabayashi, who had Alzheimer's disease and other ailments, died Monday in Edmonton, Alberta.

Hirabayashi was one of only three Japanese Americans who refused to comply with Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in February 1942. The order gave military authorities the power to restrict the freedom of thousands of people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast in the wake of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

Opposing his family's wishes and incurring criticism from other Japanese Americans for "rocking the boat," Hirabayashi resisted the order and was arrested and convicted in 1942 for violating a curfew and refusing to enter a relocation camp. He spent more than two years in several prisons and took his case to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1943 ruled against him and upheld the government's argument that the restrictions were a military necessity. It took more than 40 years to reopen his case, but Hirabayashi eventually savored victory.

Hirabayashi was the last surviving member of the trio of men who were convicted of violating the federal order.

Hirabayashi was a senior at the University of Washington in 1942 when the curfew and evacuation orders were imposed. He opposed the evacuation on the grounds that it violated the Fifth Amendment, which prohibits the seizure of property and rights without due process of law.

Did you know?

After Gordon Hirabayashi's conviction in 1942 for violating a curfew and refusing to enter a relocation camp, he hitchhiked to one of the prisons, in Arizona, when the government said it could not afford to transport him there. In 1999, the area once occupied by the prison in Arizona's Catalina Mountains was named the Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site.

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