
WHEREAS, The struggle for civil liberties has often been inspired by ordinary Americans who have had the courage to stand up and fight for their Constitutional rights; and,

WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942 President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive order 9066, which, through orders issued by Secretary of War and the U.S. Army, authorized and implemented the forced removal from the West Coast of over 120,000 persons of Japanese descent from their homes to American concentration camps for the duration of World War II; and,

WHEREAS, Fred T. Korematsu refused to comply with the military orders issued under Executive Order 9066, and was convicted in San Francisco federal court for violating military orders. With the help of Ernest Besig of the ACLU, Mr. Korematsu challenged the constitutionality of his conviction. However, in December 1944, the U.S. Supreme court rejected Mr. Korematsu's challenge, upholding the constitutionality of the internment of an ethnic population without any criminal charges or disloyal acts; and,

WHEREAS, In the early 1980's, researchers discovered evidence that the government had engaged in knowing and deliberate fraud on the courts in securing Mr. Korematsu's conviction. This included fabrication of evidence designed to show that the military commander's internment decision had been based on military considerations rather than race prejudice; and,

WHEREAS, On November 10, 1983 at the federal court hearing of his coram nobis petition, Mr. Korematsu addressed the Court on the importance of his case, "As an American citizen being put through this shame and embarrassment...we can never forget this incident
as long as we live. The horse stalls that we stayed in were made for horses, not human beings. According to the Supreme Court decision regarding my case, being an American citizen was not enough. They say you have to look like one, otherwise they say you can't tell a difference between a loyal and a disloyal American... Therefore, I would like to see the government admit that they were wrong and do something so this will never happen again to any American citizen of any race, creed, or color." The Hon. Marilyn Hall Patel granted Mr. Korematsu's petition and set aside his conviction based on the government's corruption of the judicial process through its misconduct; and,

WHEREAS, On January 15, 1998, President Clinton awarded Mr. Korematsu the Presidential Medal of Freedom in recognition of his advocacy on behalf of all Americans for our constitutional rights and liberties, saying, "...In the long history of our country's constant search for justice, some names of ordinary citizens stand for millions of souls: Plessy, Brown, Parks. To that distinguished list, today we add the name of Fred Korematsu."; and,

WHEREAS, For the rest of his life, until his passing on March 30, 2005, Mr. Korematsu devoted himself to educating the American public, particularly children and youth, about the history of internment and the need to stand up for rights and liberties of all people; and,

WHEREAS, the California Assembly and State Senate both unanimously passed AB 1775, the Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed this bill into law on September 23, 2010: now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors declares January 30 Fred T. Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, to commemorate the spirit and meaning of Fred Korematsu's life, and the importance of preserving and protecting our civil rights and liberties, even in times of real or perceived crisis.

Supervisor Mar, Avalos, Campos, Chiu, Chu, Kim, Mirkarimi
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

January 25, 2011 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Campos, Chiu, Chu, Cohen, Elsbernd, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Mirkarimi and Wiener

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 1/25/2011 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved

Mayor Edwin Lee
2/1/11