



LETTERS & CORRESPONDENCE

Milestones

To the Editor:

This morning as usual I picked up the two newspapers on my doorstep. I opened one of them with a sense of dread—knowing that it was the final edition of the Rocky Mountain News. I don't know what year I began reading the News, but it was in the early 40s. I know this because I gauge past time, not so much by calendar years, but by the name of the street I was living on when something happened. I remember the house and I remember reading the News when I was a youngster there, some sixty years ago. I don't miss the house, but I'll certainly miss the News.

Also today, I found the new Colorado Central in my mailbox. That's the good news for the day. Years from now, I'll remember today's walk from the mail kiosk to my house, my hands itching to open the new CC. I found a beautiful cover for starters, and inside a good mix of the old and the new. Thanks to the Quillens for the first 180 editions, and best wishes to you for the next 180.

Cordially,

Francisco A. Ríos, Denver

Misdirected Powers

Dear Editor,

I was pleased to read Kenneth Jessen's article, *Executive Order 9066: Misdirected Exercise of War Powers*, in your March 2009 issue.

The mass incarceration of over 110,000 people (two-thirds of them U.S. citizens) during WWII, remains one of America's greatest violations of civil liberties. And although I am happy to learn this lesson is taught at Grenada (Colorado) High School (and required in all California high schools), elsewhere the sad chapter of American history has been mostly forgotten.

By granting Army General DeWitt broad powers after Pearl Harbor, FDR's Executive Order 9066 wrote a blank check to uproot families, businesses and entire communities. In a stunning suspension of the U.S. Constitution, Japanese Americans were removed from California, Oregon, Washington and parts of Arizona, and locked into 10 federal internment camps, including Amache in Colorado.

As noted in Jessen's article, Ralph L. Carr was the only governor to offer his state as a new home to displaced West Coast Japanese Americans. Colorado voters "rewarded" him by voting him out of office.

In an effort to prove their loyalty, thousands of young men left their interned families and volunteered for the

Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team. They fought in France and Italy and became the most decorated unit in U.S. military history. Six thousand additional Japanese Americans formed the Military Intelligence Service, fighting in secret in the Pacific Theater and working to establish a civilian government in post-WWII Japan.

President Reagan and the U.S. Congress issued a formal apology in 1988, but the stigma of incarceration dogs many former internees who won't even discuss it with their children. Though no particular fan of Reagan, I still admire what may have been his finest speech, delivered as a young Army captain in 1944 at a ceremony honoring a fallen 442nd soldier:

"Blood that has soaked into the sands of a beach is all of one color. America stands unique in the world: the only country not founded on race but on a way, an ideal. Not in spite of but because of our polyglot background, we have had all the strength in the world. That is the American way."

Your readers can learn more about the human cost of the Internment by reading the outstanding new book, *Kiyo's Story: A Japanese American Family's Quest for the American Dream*, by Kiyo Sato, Soho Press, New York, 2009. And I've recently completed *An American Story*, a DVD presentation on the Japanese American Experience before, during and after WWII.

Tom Graves

San Francisco, Calif.

Is our children learning?

To the Editor:

When I landed in Central Colorado at age 30, I hadn't learned much of anything useful. Oh, I had excelled in high school, but I didn't want to spend my life in a classroom or an office, employed by a corporation or an institution. I needed to learn to work with my hands, beyond kneading bread and repairing a lamp cord. I started at the bottom, with a pick and a shovel and a membership in the Leadville local of the Laborer's union.

So, I'd like to talk about education. George Sibley, regular contributor to these pages, recently suggested a new approach to education. I imagine he was the sort of teacher who might have given eye-opening assignments, like comparative oatmeal (no, the little plastic packet isn't much faster than a handful of regular old oats, once you factor in the time spent finding scissors to cut open the envelope...)

With maybe 80% of our population now living in cities, we need teachers who know how to work with their hands, and think for themselves, particularly in