

Japanese-American Internment

■ “America’s Concentration Camps”

How could such a tragedy have occurred in a democratic society that prides itself on individual rights and freedoms?...

I have brooded about this whole episode on and off for the past three decades...

- Miltoon S. Eisenhower, in *The President Is Calling*

In the entire course of the war, 10 people were convicted of spying for Japan, all of whom were Caucasian.

Pre-Pearl Harbor

■ Anti-Asian agitation

- ❑ 1922 US began monitoring those at Bainbridge
- ❑ 1924 Immigration Act
- ❑ 1936 Lists of “dangerous” Japanese Americans

■ Munson Report

❑ Pre-Internment Camp

- No threat from West Coast Japanese
 - ❑ Japan will import spies
 - ❑ 250-300 were on a dangerous list
 - Only 50-60 could really be considered dangerous
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The Japanese Generations

■ The Issei: First Generation

- Cultural background all Japanese

- 55-65 years old

- 90-98 percent are loyal to the United States

- Are foreigners in Japan and eager to show it

■ The Nisei: Second Generation

- Full education in United States

- The Kibei

- Received part of education in Japan

- “Most dangerous”



The Order

- Pearl Harbor
- Executive Order 9066
 - February 19, 1942
 - 6 weeks later
 - Excluded all persons
- Newspapers and Politicians
 - “Once a Jap, always a Jap, and that’s all there is to it.”



The Politics



- President Theodore Roosevelt
 - Finalized Executive Order 9066
 - Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt
 - Head of the defense of the Pacific Coast
 - Cautious, indecisive, and panic stricken.
 - Certain that a Japanese invasion was very possible.
 - “The Japanese is an enemy race...the racial strains are undiluted.”
 - Declared the West coast a restricted military area.
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Lead-up to the Camps

■ Registration

□ All Japanese Americans

- Wanted to move all from the Exclusion Areas.

■ Assembly facilities

□ Stadiums and fair grounds

- Communal bathrooms and dining areas
- Poor conditions-shacks or horse stalls



The Bainbridge Island Evacuation

■ First Evacuation

- 1942
- Organized by the Emergency Defense Council
- 250 farmers and fishermen

■ Civilian Exclusion Order No. 1

- March 24
- Model for evacuations to come.



The Roundup

- Six Days

 - Homes

 - Provisions

- March 30

 - 11:00 a.m.

 - Put under armed guard

 - Ferry to Seattle

 - Train to central California

- 4 years in camp



Evacuation Instructions

■ Head of family report

□ Stuff they took:

- Bedding and linens (no mattresses) for each member
- Toilet articles
- Extra clothing
- Eating utensils
- No pets.

□ Heavy furniture could be stored at the owner's risk

- Could only take what each individual could carry.
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Invasion of Civil Liberties

■ 70% of internees were civilians

□ Basic rights denied

- Right to assemble
- Religious freedom
- Freedom of speech
- Right to privacy

□ Censored reading material

- Japanese to English dictionaries
- Hymnals and religious books



"In the detention centers, families lived in substandard housing, had inadequate nutrition and health care, and had their livelihoods destroyed: many continued to suffer psychologically long after their release"

- "Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians"

Rules of the Camp

■ Twice a day roll calls

☐ Curfews

- Must be in living quarters from 10:30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

☐ Lights out by 10:30 p.m.

- Permitted in cases of sickness, fire, pregnant mothers

☐ Mail was censored

☐ Phonographs banned

☐ Visitors allowed from 1-4:30

- Could not stand within 10 feet of the fence.

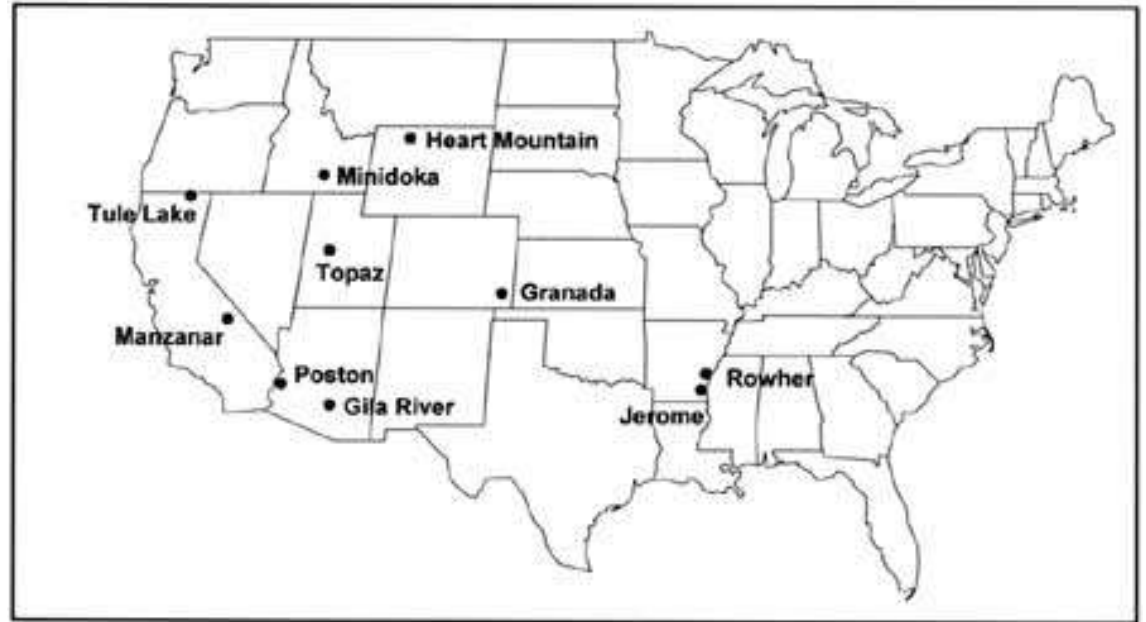
☐ Labor and school life

- Earned \$18.00 a month

- ☐ \$0.45/day for food rations
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Internment Camp Locations

- Poston, AZ
- Gila River, AR
- Tula Lake, CA
- Manzanar, CA
- Minidoka, ID
- Topaz, UT
- Heart Mountain, WY

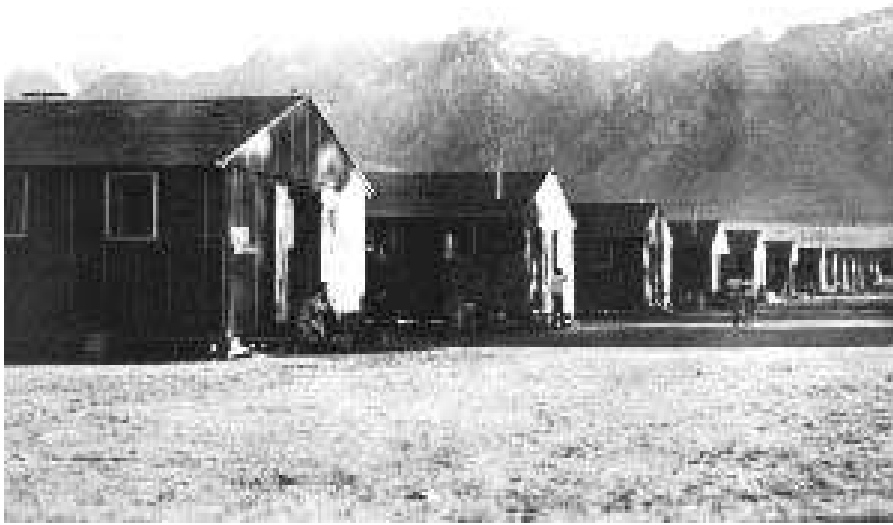


The Prisoners

- 120,000 prisoners of Japanese ancestry
 - Most were U.S citizens or legal permanent aliens
 - Over ½ not yet of voting age.
 - Originally only 85,000 men were going to be imprisoned.
- Public against excluding Germans and Italians.



Buildings



■ Flimsy buildings

- ❑ Personalized by the internees
- ❑ All identical



Bad Treatment

- Mistreatment of prisoners by soldiers was not too uncommon.

- James Hatsuki Wakasa

- Shot and killed on April 11, 1943 at Topaz.
 - Trying to escape by crawling through the fence.
 - Body moved 45 min. after he was killed.
- Evidence
 - Blood pool 5 feet inside the fence.
 - Wakasa was facing the soldier when he was shot.

- Soldier who shot him was found “not guilty.”
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Japanese in the Military

■ WWII: 1941

- 5000 in U.S. forces

- Many discharged

- 4-C, “enemy aliens”

- 100th Infantry Battalion

- May 1942

- Nisei volunteers

- Sent to North Africa in June 1943

- Very high casualty rate
 - Most decorated unit in U.S. history for its size
 - 18,000 individual decorations for bravery
 - 9,500 Purple Hearts



Hawaiian Japanese Americans

- Did not suffer from the racism on the mainland.
 - Were not sent to camps because Hawaii could not lose that much of their work force.
 - 1/3 of population was Japanese.
 - May have been more accepted because there were other “brown skins” in Hawaii.
 - Chinese, Filipino, Japanese and Hawaiian.
 - Only 1,500 were removed to the mainland.
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Reparations and Aftermath

■ 1976 (34 years later)

- President Gerald Ford declared a “national mistake.”

■ 1988 (46 years later)

- Japanese American Redress Bill

- Acknowledged “a grave injustice was done”
- Signed by President Ronald Reagan
- Provided reparations of \$20,000 for surviving internees.

- Families lost 4-5 billion dollars in property

■ Health Impacts

- Internees have a 2 times greater incidence of heart disease and premature death compared to non-interned.
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The Holocaust Concentration Camps vs. Japanese American Internment Camps

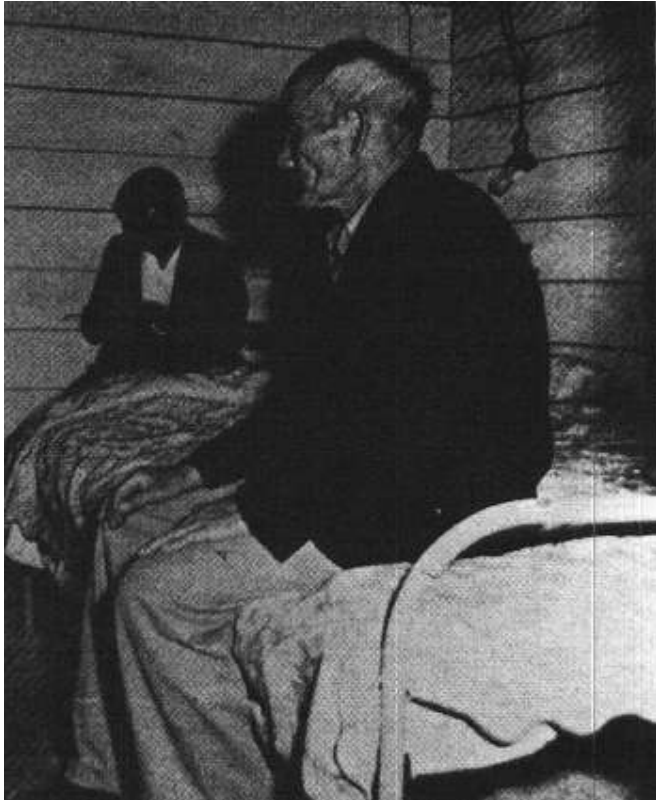
Japanese Internment

- 70% were citizens
- Adopted American culture (considered foreigners in Japan)
- Were farmers or small businesspeople.
- Had to register if you were 1/16 Japanese.
- Forced to close businesses.
- U.S passed anti-Japanese legislation.
- Sent to “relocation centers”
 - Surrounded by barbed wire fences and had guards at posts. Machine guns were on the roofs of some buildings
 - Had curfew hours.
- Considered inferior

Holocaust

- 80% of Jews were citizens
 - Adopted non-Jewish culture (dress, language)
 - Were farmers, tailors, factory hands.
 - Any Jewish history in family.
 - Businesses shut down by Nazis or bought out.
 - Germany passed anti-Jewish legislation.
 - Sent to “ghettos” and later concentration camps.
 - Surrounded by barbed wire fences and guarded by SS men.
 - Had curfew hours.
 - Considered inferior.
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■ Japanese Camp



■ Jewish Camp

