

Document Based Question

Japanese Internment during World War II

All Packed Up and Ready to Go

By Rodger



San Francisco News — March 6, 1942

The government of the United States issued Executive Order 9066 in February, 1942. With this order, over 100,000 Americans of Japanese descent were forced from their homes on the west coast of the United States and placed into internment camps for

the next three years. Was this a matter of national security or was it simply racial prejudice?

Timeline of Key Events surrounding the Japanese Internment

- September 13, 1931: Japan invades Manchuria**
- July 7, 1937: Start of Second Sino-Japanese War**
- September 1, 1939: Germany invades Poland – World War II begins**
- December 7, 1941: Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, Hawaii**
- December 8, 1941: United States enters World War II**
- February 19, 1942: Executive Order 9066 is signed**
- December 18, 1944: U.S. Supreme Court rules that the exclusion process was legal, but that loyal citizens, regardless of cultural descent, could not be detained without cause.**
- January 2, 1945: Executive Order 9066 is canceled**
- September 2, 1945: Japan surrenders, ending World War II**
- April 1946: The last internment camp officially closes**

Historical Background:

Even though Japan began fighting with China in 1937, World War II officially started on September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded neighboring Poland. For the first two years of the war the United States remained neutral, but had sold supplies to England, France, and Russia for most of that time.

On December 7, 1941, all of that changed when the Japanese attacked the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Over 2,300 U.S. servicemen were killed and another 1,100 were wounded. The following day the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. Almost immediately after the attack, the government began debating what to do with the people of Japanese descent that lived within the borders of the United States, especially those that lived on the west coast.

After weeks of discussion, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 into law on February 19, 1942, which gave the government the authority to remove people from 'military areas'. The government used that authority to remove Japanese-American citizens from their homes along the west coast and put them in internment camps further inland. Most of them were forced to remain in the camps until January 2, 1945 when the order was canceled. When they were released, many found that they had no home to return to.

Directions:

Document Based Question: Was the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II a matter of national security or racial prejudice?

three of the documents to answer the following question in five paragraph essay: Was the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II a matter of national security or racial prejudice?

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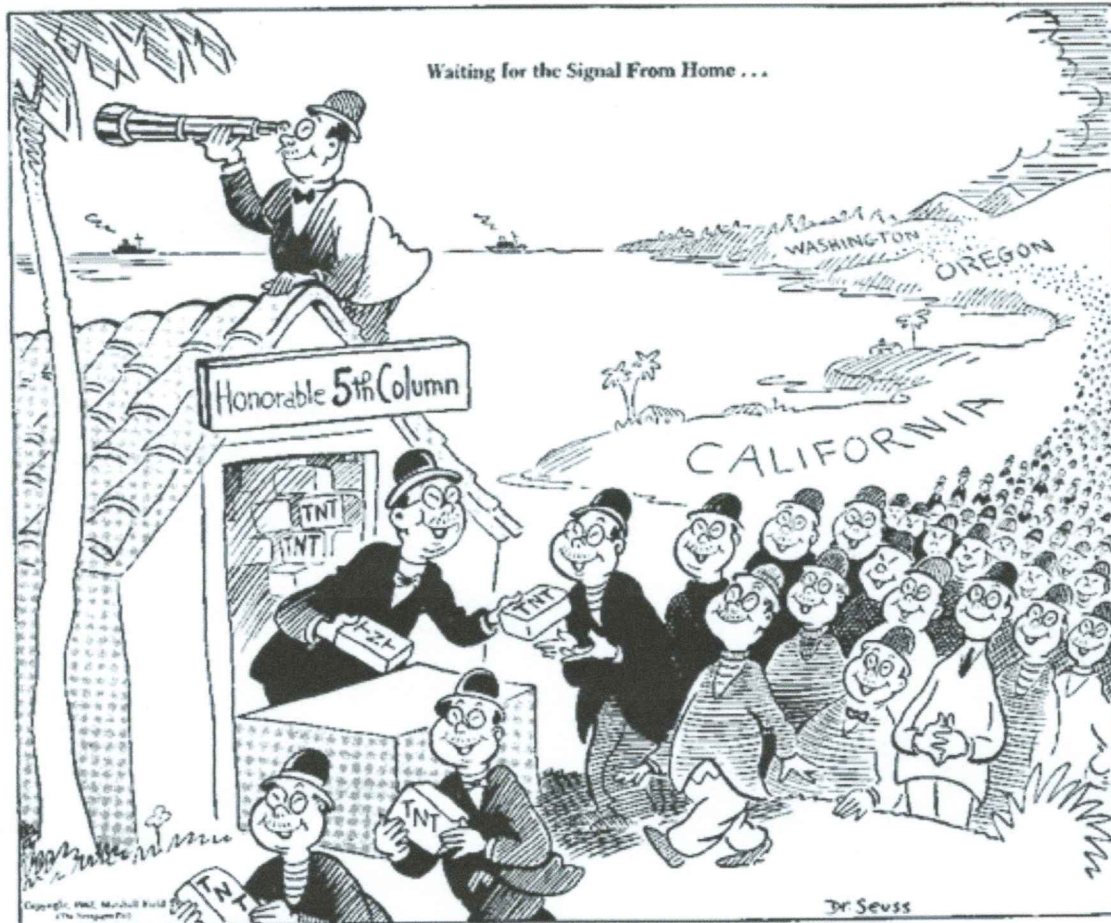
Source 1: Waiting for the Signal From Home...

Vocabulary:

Fifth column – a group of people who secretly try to destroy or damage a larger group from within.

TNT – dynamite.

Document Note: This political cartoon was created in 1942 by Dr. Seuss (Ted Geisel) and reflected the growing distrust of Japanese-Americans.



Source: <http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccol/dspolitic/pm/1942/20213cs.jpg>

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1. What group of people are portrayed in this cartoon?
2. Where is this cartoon taking place?
3. What is the man in the building handing out?
4. By looking at the title of the cartoon, what is the author saying that the people might end up doing with the TNT?
5. Name two ways that this cartoon shows racial prejudice towards Japanese-Americans.
6. What do you think the author of the cartoon is trying to say about Japanese-Americans?

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Source 2: Executive Order 9066

Vocabulary:

Espionage – the practice of spying or using spies to obtain information

Sabotage – destructive action carried out to hinder a nation's war effort

Prescribe – to specify with authority

Therefrom – from there

Executive Order No. 9066

The President

Executive Order

Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas

Whereas the successful prosecution of the war requires every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage...

I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of War, and the Military Commanders whom he may from time to time designate...to prescribe military areas...from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion. The Secretary of War is hereby authorized to provide for residents of any such area who are excluded therefrom, such transportation, food, shelter, and other accommodations as may be necessary, in the judgment of the Secretary of War or the said Military Commander, and until other arrangements are made, to accomplish the purpose of this order...

I hereby further authorize and direct the Secretary of War and the said Military Commanders to take such other steps as he or the appropriate Military Commander may deem advisable to enforce compliance with the restrictions...including the use of Federal troops and other Federal Agencies, with authority to accept assistance of state and local agencies.

I hereby further authorize and direct all Executive Departments, independent establishments and other Federal Agencies, to assist the Secretary of War or the said Military Commanders in carrying out this Executive Order, including the furnishing of medical aid, hospitalization, food, clothing, transportation, use of land, shelter, and other supplies, equipment, utilities, facilities, and services...

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The White House,

February 19, 1942.

Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=74&page=transcript>

(excerpted)

Document Based Question: Was the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II a matter of national security or racial prejudice?

1. Who issued Executive Order 9066, and when did he do it?
2. Who is being given the authorization to act on behalf of the government?
3. Why do you think there is no ending date to the order?
4. What group (or groups) of civilians is the order directed towards?
5. Why is this a matter of national security, and what words in the document help you to know this?
6. If 'medical aid, food, clothing, transportation, etc.' are being provided free of charge, is this necessarily a bad thing? Why or why not?

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Source 3: Japs Keep Moving

Vocabulary: none



Source: <http://www.bookmice.net/darkchilde/japan/camp.html>

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1. Although there is no date, do you think this was taken before or after December 7, 1941? Why?
2. According to the signs, why are the Japanese being asked to keep moving?
3. Is this an issue of racial prejudice or national security?
4. There is nothing that seems to indicate that this is a government-sponsored sign. Why would this be important?
5. Do you think there were similar signs for Germans and Italians (other countries that we were at war with)? Why or why not?

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Source 4: Representative Leland Ford's Statement to Congress

Vocabulary:

Fifth column – a group of people who secretly try to destroy or damage a larger group from within.

Document Note: This statement was made in Congress by California Representative Leland Ford during the debate over what the government should do with American citizens of Japanese heritage.

Representative Leland Ford, Republican of California

January 16, 1942: "To prevent any fifth column activity...all Japanese, whether citizens or not, should be placed in inland concentration camps. As justification for this, I submit that if an American born Japanese, who is a citizen, is really patriotic and wishes to make his contribution to the safety and welfare of this country, right here is the opportunity to do so, namely, that by permitting himself to be placed in a concentration camp, he would be making his sacrifice, and he should be willing to do it if he is patriotic and working for us. As against his sacrifice, millions of other native born citizens are willing to lay down their lives, which is a far greater sacrifice, of course, than being placed in a concentration camp. Therefore any loyal Japanese should not hesitate to do that which is absolutely the best for the country, and to operate in such a manner that his particular activity would be for the greatest benefit."

Source:

http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/ford_statements.cfm

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1. Who is making this statement to Congress?
2. When was the statement made?
3. Is Representative Ford in favor of or against relocating Japanese-Americans? Quote a piece of evidence to justify your answer.
4. What is he comparing the sacrifice of the Japanese to?
5. Is this a fair comparison? Why or why not?
6. Why do you think he is specifically mentioning Japanese-American, and not German or Italian-Americans?

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Source 5: Memo from the War Relocation Authority

Vocabulary: infiltration: the act of entering or becoming established gradually, usually for subversive purposes

Document Note:

Confidential War Office Memo

War Relocation Authority

Washington

August 12, 1942

RELOCATION AND THE CONSTITUTION

Prepared by the Office of the Solicitor and the Office of

Reports for use of the War Relocation Authority Staff

Confidential Confidential Confidential

...The Action taken with respect to Japanese in this country is justifiable on the grounds of military necessity for several reasons.

1. All Japanese look very much alike to a white person-it is hard for us to distinguish between them. It would be hard to tell a Japanese soldier in disguise from a resident Japanese. The danger of infiltration by Japanese parachutists, soldiers, etc. is, therefore, reduced and the chances of detecting any attempt at infiltration are increased.
2. The Japanese Government has always tried to maintain close ties with and control over Japanese people in this country with the result that many of them have never really been absorbed into American life and culture. Many Japanese-Americans have been educated in Japan. Many...worship the Emperor and regard his orders as superior to any loyalty they may owe the United States. Therefore, the action has reduced the danger of successful invasion by removing an element of the population which has never been assimilated and which might not successfully withstand the strong emotional impulse to change loyalties or give way to their true feelings in the event that Japanese troops should land on our shores.
3. Evacuation and limited detention of the Japanese is justified as a measure in the prevention of sabotage and fifth-column activities. We know that there is a Japanese fifth-column in this country but nobody knows who is in it or how large it is. Some members of it have been caught and, after a hearing, interned. Since it is impossible for us to distinguish between the loyal and the disloyal Japanese, we may avoid the danger of fifth-column activity, sabotage and espionage by removing all Japanese from the danger zones and detaining them in other places.
4. In time of war the judgment of the military authorities is entitled to great weight and should not be lightly pushed aside. Since they have decided that evacuation and detention of the Japanese is a necessary precaution in fighting this war their judgment should stand unless it is proved wrong.
5. The action taken was reasonable and necessary for the protection of the Japanese themselves. It minimized the dangers of mob violence and local disorders growing out of war hysteria and racial discrimination. Through lessening the possibility of harsh treatment of Japanese in this country (incidents which would have been exploited promptly by Axis propagandists who wish to make it appear to be a race war) it took away an excuse for even harsher retaliatory treatment of American prisoners by Japan...

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1. What is the date of this document?
2. Who are the intended readers of this document?
3. Which numbers deal with national security issues, and which ones seem to be racially motivated? Do any of them fit into both categories?
4. If you replaced 'Japanese' wherever it appears in this document and replaced it with 'German', what effect do you think it would have?
5. Considering the date of this document, why do you think it was written?

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Source 6: Statement to Francis Biddle from Henry L. Stimson

Vocabulary:

Apprehension – anticipation of misfortune; fear of future trouble or evil

Subsequent(ly) – following in time, order, or place

Stringent – marked by strictness or severity, especially in regard to rules or standards

Document Note:

The Secretary of War used to lead the War Department, but eventually only became concerned with issues dealing with the Army. This position now falls under the direction of the Secretary of Defense.

The Attorney General is the head of the Department of Justice, and is the top law enforcement officer and lawyer for the government.

From: Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson,

To: Attorney General Francis Biddle, January 25, 1942

In recent conferences with General De Witt, he has expressed great apprehension because of the presence on the Pacific Coast of many thousand alien enemies. As late as yesterday, 24 January, he stated over the telephone that shore-to-ship and ship-to-shore radio communications, undoubtedly coordinated by intelligent enemy control were continually operating. A few days ago it was reported by military observers on the Pacific coast that not a single ship had sailed from our Pacific ports without being subsequently attacked. General De Witt's apprehensions have been confirmed by recent visits of military observers from the War Department to the Pacific coast.

The alarming and dangerous situation just described, in my opinion, calls for immediate and stringent action.

Source:

http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/stimson_statements.cfm

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1. What are the names of the two men communicating with each other?
2. Which coast are they talking about?
3. What do you think General DeWitt's job was?
4. In what ways could 'alien enemies' on the coast help planes or submarines in the ocean attack U.S. ships?
5. Why would the Secretary of War be corresponding with the Attorney General?
6. Do you think the report that 'not a single ship had sailed from our Pacific ports without being subsequently attacked' is an accurate one? Why or why not?

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JAPANESE INTERNMENT DBQ

WRITING ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Project Component	Requirements	Points Possible	Points Earned	Comments/ Feedback
Thesis Statement		10	/10	
Organization : Introduction, Conclusion, Transitions		10	/10	
Content Accuracy		15	/15	
Use of Supporting Evidence		15	/15	
Neatness/ Readability		5	/5	
Grammar/ Conventions		5	/5	
TOTAL		60	/60	