

## Japanese Internment Document Analysis

### Japanese Internment Timeline

1891 - Japanese immigrants arrived in the U.S. mainland for work primarily as agricultural laborers.

1906 - The San Francisco Board of Education passed a resolution to segregate white children from children of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean ancestry in schools.

1913 - California passed the Alien Land Law, forbidding "all aliens ineligible for citizenship" from owning land.

1924 - Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1924, effectively ending all Japanese immigration to the U.S.

November 1941 - Munson Report released (Document B).

December 7, 1941 - Japan bombed U.S. ships and planes at the Pearl Harbor military base in Hawaii.

February 19, 1942 - President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing military authorities to exclude civilians from any area without trial or hearing.

January 1943 - The War Department announced the formation of a segregated unit of Japanese American soldiers.

January 1944 - The War Department imposed the draft on Japanese American men, including those incarcerated in the camps.

December 1944 - The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of Executive Order 9066 in *Korematsu v. United States* (Document D).

March 20, 1946 –The last War Relocation Authority facility, the Tule Lake "Segregation Center," closed.

1980 - The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians was established.

1983 - The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians issued its report, *Personal Justice Denied* (Document E).

August 10, 1988 - President Ronald Reagan signed HR 442 into law. It acknowledged that the incarceration of more than 110,000 individuals of Japanese descent was unjust, and offered an apology and reparation payments of \$20,000 to each person incarcerated.

Executive Order No. 9066

The President

Executive Order

Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas

Now, therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of War, and the Military Commanders whom he may from time to time designate, whenever he or any designated Commander deems such action necessary or desirable, to prescribe military areas in such places and of

such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commander may determine, 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. The designation of military areas in any region or locality shall supersede designations of prohibited and restricted areas by the Attorney General under the Proclamations of December 7 and 8, 1941, and shall supersede the responsibility and authority of the Attorney General under the said Proclamations in respect of such prohibited and restricted areas.

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 applicable to each Military area hereinabove authorized to be designated, 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.

This order shall not be construed as modifying or limiting in any way the authority heretofore granted under Executive Order No. 8972, dated December 12, 1941, nor shall it be construed as limiting or modifying the duty and responsibility of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with respect to the investigation of alleged acts of sabotage or the duty and responsibility of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice under the Proclamations of December 7 and 8, 1941, prescribing regulations for the conduct and control of alien enemies, except as such duty and responsibility is superseded by the designation of military areas hereunder.

Franklin D. Roosevelt  
The White House,  
February 19, 1942.

**1. Explain how this executive order allows for the internment of Japanese-Americans. Cite evidence from the text. (2-3 sentences)**

Document B: The Munson Report

In 1941 President Roosevelt ordered the State Department to investigate the loyalty of Japanese Americans. Special Representative of the State Department Curtis B. Munson carried out the investigation in October and November of 1941 and presented what came to be known as the “Munson Report” to the President on November 7, 1941. The excerpt below is from the 25-page report.

There is no Japanese ‘problem’ on the Coast. There will be no armed uprising of Japanese. There will undoubtedly be some sabotage financed by Japan and executed largely by imported agents. . . . In each Naval District there are about 250 to 300 suspects under surveillance. It is easy to get on the suspect list, merely a speech in favor of Japan at some banquet being sufficient to land one there. The Intelligence Services are generous with the title of suspect and are taking no chances. Privately, they believe that

only 50 or 60 in each district can be classed as really dangerous. The Japanese are hampered as saboteurs because of their easily recognized physical appearance. It will be hard for them to get near anything to blow up if it is guarded. There is far more danger from Communists and people of the Bridges type on the Coast than there is from Japanese. The Japanese here is almost exclusively a farmer, a fisherman or a small businessman. He has no entrée to plants or intricate machinery.

Source: The Munson Report, delivered to President Roosevelt by Special Representative of the State Department Curtis B. Munson, November 7, 1941.

#### Vocabulary

- Saboteurs: a person who deliberately destroys something to gain a military advantage
- Bridges type: a reference to Harry Bridges, a leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union
- Entrée: permission to enter
- Intricate: complicated

#### Document C: The Crisis

The following excerpt is from an editorial published in *The Crisis* shortly after the establishment of internment camps for Japanese Americans. Founded in 1910, *The Crisis* is the official magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an organization dedicated to promoting civil rights.

Along the eastern coast of the United States, where the numbers of Americans of Japanese ancestry is comparatively small, no concentration camps have been established. From a military point of view, the only danger on this coast is from Germany and Italy. . . . But the American government has not taken any such high-handed action against Germans and Italians – and their American-born descendants – on the East Coast, as has been taken against Japanese and their American-born descendants on the West Coast. Germans and Italians are “white.” Color seems to be the only possible reason why thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry are in concentration camps. Anyway, there are no Italian-American, or German-American citizens in such camps.

Source: Harry Paxton Howard, “Americans in Concentration Camps,” *The Crisis*, September 1942.

#### Vocabulary

- High-handed: using authority without considering the feelings of others

#### Document D: The Korematsu Supreme Court Ruling

In 1944, Fred Korematsu, a Japanese American convicted of evading internment, brought his case to the Supreme Court. In a controversial ruling, the Court decided that national security outweighed Korematsu’s individual rights and upheld the constitutionality of Executive Order 9066. The excerpt below is from the Court’s majority opinion written by Chief Justice Hugo Black.

We uphold the exclusion order. . . . In doing so, we are not unmindful of the hardships imposed by it upon a large group of American citizens. . . . But hardships are part of war, and war is an aggregation of hardships. All citizens alike, both in and out of uniform, feel the impact of war in greater or lesser measure. Citizenship has its responsibilities, as well as its privileges, and, in time of war, the burden is always heavier. Compulsory exclusion of large groups of citizens from their homes, except under

circumstances of direct emergency and peril, is inconsistent with our basic governmental institutions. But when, under conditions of modern warfare, our shores are threatened by hostile forces, the power to protect must be commensurate with the threatened danger. . . .

To cast this case into outlines of racial prejudice, without reference to the real military dangers which were presented, merely confuses the issue. Korematsu was not excluded from the Military Area because of hostility to him or his race. He was excluded because we are at war with the Japanese Empire, because the . . . military authorities feared an invasion of our West Coast and . . . because they decided that the military urgency of the situation demanded that all citizens of Japanese ancestry be segregated from the West Coast temporarily, and, finally, because Congress . . . determined that our military leaders should have the power to do just this.

Source: Chief Justice Hugo Black, *Korematsu v. United States*, 1944.

#### Document E: Personal Justice Denied

In 1980, Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to investigate the detention program and the constitutionality of Executive Order 9066. The Commission released its report *Personal Justice Denied: The Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, on February 24, 1983. The passage below is an excerpt from this report.

The Commission held 20 days of hearings in cities across the country, particularly on the West Coast, hearing testimony from more than 750 witnesses: evacuees, former government officials, public figures, interested citizens, and historians and other professionals who have studied the subjects of Commission inquiry. An extensive effort was made to locate and to review the records of government action and to analyze other sources of information including contemporary writings, personal accounts and historical analyses. . . .

Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity, and the decisions which followed from it—detention, ending detention and ending exclusion—were not driven by analysis of military conditions. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. Widespread ignorance of Japanese Americans contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan. A grave injustice was done to American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review or any . . . evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II.

Source: *Personal Justice Denied: The Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, February 24, 1983.

What reason does the document for the Japanese being interned? Cite evidence from the text.	
Document B: Munson Report	Document C: The Crisis
Document D: Korematsu Ruling	Document E: Justice Denied

1. Why were Japanese Americans interned during World War II? Cite specific evidence to support your position. \*4-6 Sentences\*
2. How did the documented sources compare or contrast to the video watched earlier in class?