

Internment

In times of crisis America historically limits constitutional rights. World War II is no exception. Those who had German, Italian and Japanese heritage could find themselves labeled as an enemy of the United States and placed in prison camps called **internment camps**.

Think about:

- Why were those of German, Italian and Japanese heritage targeted?
- What do the maps tell us about who was interned and the process of internment?
- How did Americans during World War II feel about the internment camps?

98 ITALIAN ALIENS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY BY FBI

1:30 P. M. DECEMBER 9, 1941



Map of Japanese Internment Sites

The U.S. government forced more than 100,000 Japanese Americans to leave their homes and businesses on the West Coast and report to one of fifteen assembly centers. At these centers they were first processed and then transported by train to one of ten permanent relocation centers, or camps, hundreds or even thousands of miles from their homes.

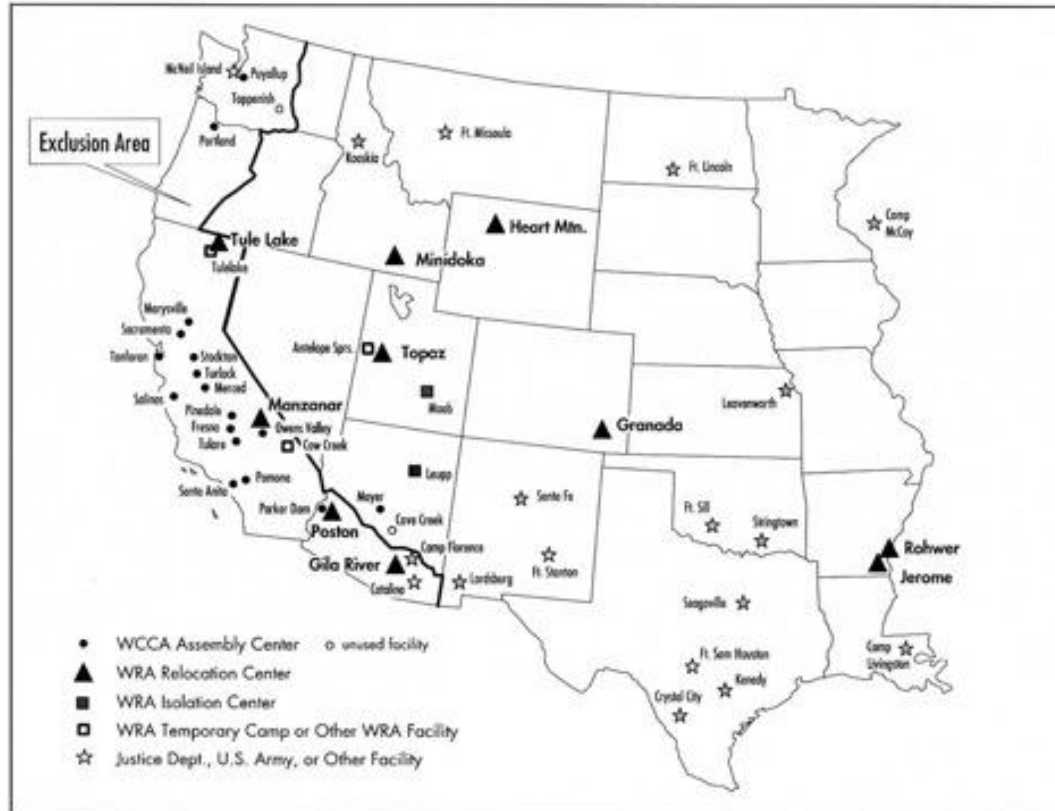


Figure 1.1. Sites in the western U.S. associated with the relocation of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Source | Jeffery F. Burton, Mary M. Farrell, Florence B. Lord, and Richard W. Lord, *Confinement and Ethnicity: An Overview of World War II Japanese American Relocation Sites*, Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior Publications in Anthropology 74 1999 (rev. July 2000). **Creator** | National Parks Service **Item Type** | Map **Cite This document** | National Parks Service, "Map of Japanese Internment Sites," *HERB: Resources for Teachers*, accessed November 29, 2012, <http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1521>.

Table of Japanese Internee Populations, 1942-1946

The U.S. government forced more than 100,000 Japanese Americans to leave their homes and businesses on the West Coast and report to one of fifteen assembly centers. At these centers they were first processed and then transported by train to one of ten permanent relocation centers, or camps, hundreds or even thousands of miles from their homes. The War Relocation Authority (WRA) was in charge of relocation and detention of the internees.

WRA Relocation Centers

Center	Date of first arrival	Peak population	Date of peak population	Date of last departure
Gila River	7-20-42	13,348	12-30-42	11-10-45
Granada	8-27-42	7,318	2-1-43	10-15-45
Heart Mountain	8-12-42	10,767	1-1-43	11-10-45
Jerome	10-6-42	8,497	2-11-43	6-30-44
Manzanar	3-21-42	10,046	9-22-42	11-21-45
Minidoka	8-10-42	9,397	3-1-43	10-28-45
Poston	5-8-42	17,814	9-2-42	11-28-45
Rohwer	9-18-42	8,475	3-11-43	11-30-45
Topaz	9-11-42	8,130	3-17-43	10-31-45
Tule Lake	5-27-42	18,789	12-25-44	3-20-46

Source | Adapted from Jeffery F. Burton, Mary M. Farrell, Florence B. Lord, and Richard W. Lord, *Confinement and Ethnicity: An Overview of World War II Japanese American Relocation Sites*, Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior Publications in Anthropology 74 1999 (rev. July 2000). **Creator** | American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning **Item Type** | Quantitative Data **Cite This document** | American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning, "Table of Japanese Internee Populations, 1942-1946," *HERB: Resources for Teachers*, accessed November 29, 2012, <http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1522>.

Executive Order 9066

Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, dated February 19, 1942, gave the military broad powers to ban any citizen from a fifty- to sixty-mile-wide coastal area stretching from Washington state to California and extending inland into southern Arizona. The order also authorized transporting these citizens to assembly centers hastily set up and governed by the military in California, Arizona, Washington state, and Oregon.

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 to national defense material, national-defense premises, and national-defense...

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.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The White House,

February 19, 1942.

[F.R. Doc. 42-1563; Filed, February 21, 1942; 12:51 p.m.]

Source: Executive Order No. 9066, February 19, 1942.

Alien Enemy Detention Facility, Crystal City, Texas
The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration
Sound | c. 1943

[http://www.texasarchive.org/library/index.php/Alien_Enemy_Detention_Facility, Crystal City, Texas](http://www.texasarchive.org/library/index.php/Alien_Enemy_Detention_Facility,_Crystal_City,_Texas)

“Evacuation Was a Mistake”: Anger at Being Interned

An interview conducted in the Manzanar, California, camp in July 1943 by a U.S. government employee with a man identified only as “an Older Nisei” (an American-born person whose parents were born in Japan) revealed the anger many internees felt toward the United States.

If this country doesn’t want me they can throw me out. What do they know about loyalty? I’m as loyal as anyone in this country. Maybe I’m as loyal as President Roosevelt. What business did they have asking me a question like that?

I was born in Hawaii. I worked most of my life on the West Coast. I have never been to Japan. We would have done anything to show our loyalty. All we wanted to do was to be left alone on the coast. . . . My wife and I lost \$10,000 in that evacuation. She had a beauty parlor and had to give that up. I had a good position worked up as a gardener, and was taken away from that. We had a little home and that’s gone now. . . .

What kind of Americanism do you call that? That’s not democracy. That’s not the American way, taking everything away from people. . .

. Where are the Germans? Where are the Italians? Do they ask them questions about loyalty? . . .

Either they let me go to the coast and prove my loyalty there or they can do what they want with me. If they don’t want me in this country, they can throw me out. . . .

Evacuation was a mistake, there was no need for it. The government knows this, Why don’t they have enough courage to come out and say so, so that these people won’t be pushed around? . . .

Source: Morris E. Opler, “Interview with . . . an Older Nisei,” Manzanar Community Analysis Report No. 36, July 26, 1943, RG 210, National Archives.