

CP US History

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Japanese Internment Camps

Japanese internment camps started after the unexpected attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Many Americans became angry with the Japanese causing President Roosevelt to take action. On February 19, 1942 President Roosevelt issued the Executive Order 9066 (Benson 812). Many Japanese Americans were forced out of their homes even though they had no connection to the attacks on Pearl Harbor. Japanese Americans would try and prove their loyalty to the United States but their efforts were ignored. They were sent into camps even though the majority of them have never even committed a crime, the sole reason they were put into these camps was because of their race. The order of the evacuation also violated the Japanese Americans fifth amendment right because they were put into the camp based solely on their race and not that they had committed a crime (Dunham). The Japanese Americans were forced out of their homes and they had to leave behind most of their belongings in their houses. They were really only allowed to take small belongings and clothes. The Japanese internment camps made by the United States were not necessary because it violated their fifth amendment right and the United States could have controlled the Japanese without putting them into camps.

Japanese internment camps started after the Japanese made an attack on Pearl Harbor killing U.S soldiers causing Americans to become angry with anyone who was Japanese even if they were an American citizen. In order to ease some of the Americans anger president Franklin

Roosevelt created the Executive Order 9066. “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 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.” The Executive Order forced Japanese Americans to leave their homes and sell their belongings if they couldn’t find anywhere else to put them. Even if they did find a church or storage place to put their belongings those places were often robbed so they would end up with nothing. Sometimes they were only given two days to find a place to put their things or sell them (Benson 812). This order mostly affected Japanese Americans along the west coast. More than 120,000 Japanese Americans were put into internment camps. To make sure the Japanese Americans followed the rules they made it a federal crime to disobey the military's order (Gordon). Citizenship meant nothing when it came to putting the Japanese into the internment camps. They didn’t care if you were an American as long as you were Japanese you were being sent to an internment camp. Most of the Japanese internment camps were located on the West Coast. The Japanese internment camps opened in 1942 when the Executive Order was passed and shutdown in 1945. There were ten internment camps located along the West Coast, each internment camp had around ten to eleven thousand Japanese Americans living in them (Benson). The Americans on the West Coast saw the Japanese Americans as threats, that is why most of the internment camps were located on the West Coast and not the East Coast.

The Japanese internment camps made by the United States were necessary because the United States had just been attacked by the Japanese and didn't have enough time to figure out which Japanese were loyal or not. The Japanese had just made a major attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 putting all Americans on edge. Americans started to question Japanese Americans loyalty not knowing if they would turn on the United States. Pearl Harbor was located on the West Coast and provided protection for them. Because of the attack on Pearl Harbor it left the whole West Coast defenseless making it easier for the Japanese to attack. Americans on the West Coast felt threatened that the Japanese would attack them causing them to retaliate and put them into camps. The biggest scare for the Americans was that the Japanese Americans would turn on them and help the Japanese invade the West Coast. It was known that the Japanese Americans would keep to themselves and not really interact with other Americans. After Pearl Harbor people saw them keeping to themselves as a threat because they thought that they were helping aid Japan in attack on the United States. Not only were Japanese Americans seen as threats to Americans, the United States had just been attacked so there was little time to investigate each Japanese American family (Dunham). The internment camps were a quick and easy way to resolve the problem and help keep the Americans safe from an attack by Japan.

The United States had no real evidence that all Japanese Americans were threats to the United States causing the internment camps to be unnecessary. The United States could have easily controlled the Japanese Americans without putting them into the internment camps. The Japanese Americans would even try and prove their loyalty but their efforts were ignored and they were forced to go to the internment camps or be sent to jail and charged with a federal crime. The internment camps were not justified and violated their fifth amendment right. The

Japanese Americans had not committed a crime and were put into these camps based solely on their ethnicity. The Americans had no real reason to put them into the internment camps. The United States automatically thought that the Japanese Americans were not loyal to them because they were Japanese. The fifth amendment states “no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law”(Dunham). Even though the United States government claims they didn't have time to sort out the bad Japanese Americans from the good the attacks on Pearl Harbor happened in 1941, the Executive Order 9066 went into action in 1942. The United States could have spent a whole year figuring out the good from the bad but instead they spent their time creating the internment camps. The internment camps made the Japanese Americans disloyal to the United States because they put them into the internment camps. Riots would even break out in camps because they were so angry with the United States government. The United States even broke the Japanese Americans into two groups into the internment camps, loyal and unloyal. The United States could have easily just let the loyal Japanese Americans go but instead they kept them in the camps (Benson 814).

The Japanese internment camps made by the United States were not necessary because it violated their fifth amendment right and the United States could have controlled the Japanese without putting them into camps. The Japanese Americans were put into these camps based on their race and not crimes they had committed thus violating their fifth amendment right. They were put into the camps based off of Americans fear and nothing they did wrong. They could have easily been contained had the United States taken the time. The United States putting them into the internment camps only made the Japanese Americans hate the United States government

and make them unloyal. The internment camps were unnecessary because they didn't help the United States it only pinned people against them.

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