

Japanese-american internment camps

WWII Unit



"We saw all these people behind the fence, looking out, hanging onto the wire, and looking out because they were anxious to know who was coming in. But I will never forget the shocking feeling that human beings were behind this fence like animals [crying]. And we were going to also lose our freedom and walk inside of that gate and find ourselves...cooped up there...when the gates were shut, we knew that we had lost something that was very precious; that we were no longer free."

-Mary Tsukamoto

Think about it...

Imagine what it would be like if you and your family had to leave your home and live in a camp behind a barbed wire fence. How would you feel?

Make a list of all the activities you enjoy now that you would have to give up.



after pearl harbor

- Fear & Paranoia
 - Were Japanese-Americans spying for Japan?
 - Roosevelt responded to the pressure
- Executive Order 9066
 - FDR signed this order: Feb 12, 1942
 - In the name of national defense
 - Law permitted the military to go above the constitution
 - Led to Evacuation and incarceration of people with Japanese ancestry (legal residents/citizens)
 - Also thousands of German and Italian Americans



The Loss

- Families were given one week to prepare for the move.
 - Farmers asked neighbors to take care of crops
 - Business owners were financially ruined
 - Had to sell homes, shops, furniture, clothes, etc.”
- Process
 - Assigned numbers
 - Herded into stockyards and racetracks
 - Then sent to 1 of 10 camps



Who had to go?

- Japanese-Americans within 200 miles of the Pacific Coast (About 110,000 people)
- Camp Destinations:
 - Colorado
 - California
 - Utah
 - Arkansas
 - Arizona
 - Wyoming
 - Arkansas
 - Idaho

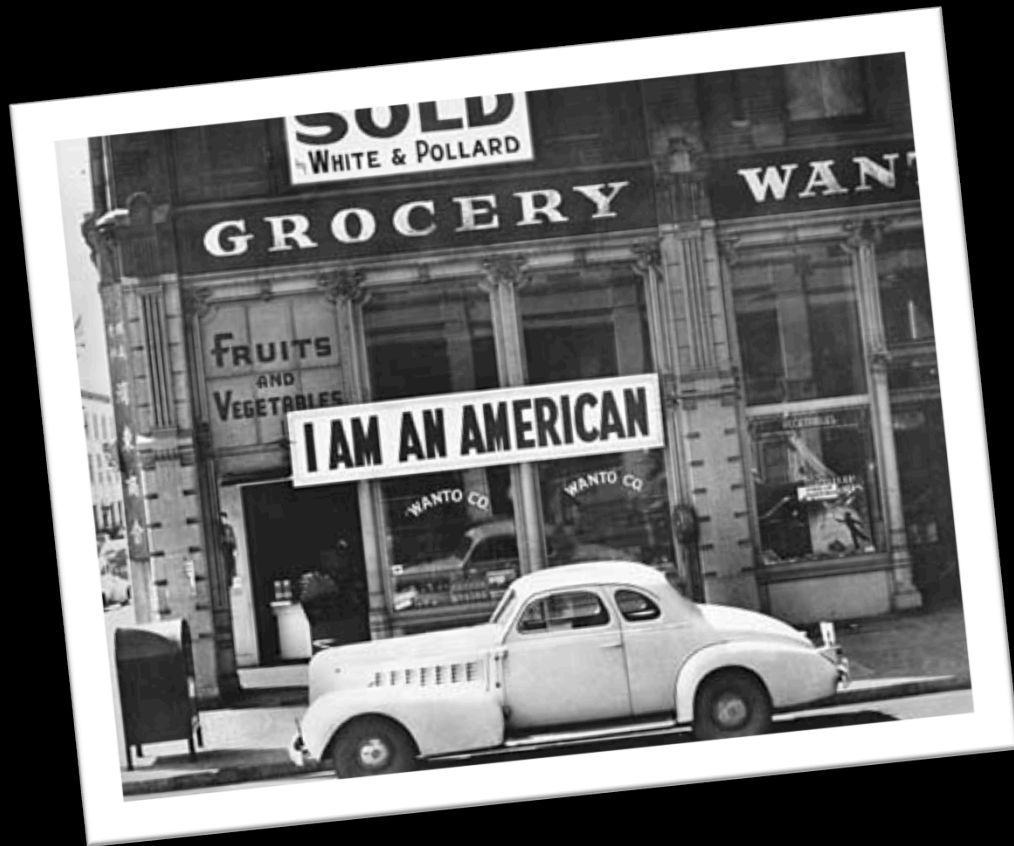


The camps

- Remote, desert areas
- Surrounded by barbed wire
- Guards kept watch in towers
- Overcrowded/Poor living conditions
 - Some died in the camps because of inadequate medical care
 - Some were killed by military guards for resisting orders
- Adapting to Life
 - Organized newspapers, fire departments, baseball leagues, planted gardens, and school.
 - Constructed tracks for exercise, opened shops, and staged dances.



Lawsuits



- Advocates for civil liberty brought lawsuits to the Supreme Court.
 - Against the constitution
 - Supreme Court was nervous to overturn
 - By mid-1944, the govt. began to release some internees that proved to be loyal Americans
 - All were released in January 1945.

aftermath

- Many internees found their home became occupied and had to start over with no money.
- 5,766 Japanese-Americans renounced their American citizenship.
- In 1968, the government began to pay the families for property they had lost.
- In 1988, Congress passed a law that awarded \$20,000 to each surviving internee.
 - Formal apology was issued

