

Japanese Internment: An overlooked Topic

Did you know, 5,766 Nisea prisoners (Japanese for the second generation) renounced their American citizenship because they were interned in the Japanese internment camps. This information was explained on the document called, http://www.softschools.com/facts/history/japanese_internment_camps_facts/888/ This fact proceeds me to explain my beliefs about this overlooked topic. Japanese Americans should not have been interned during WWII, because the American government was racist and did not treat all threats equally, Franklin D. Roosevelt made Executive Order 9066 too quickly, and the American government knew that most of the Japanese were just there to live their lives peacefully and most of them were not a threat.

The Japanese Americans were interned during 1942, because of Executive Order 9066. Executive Order 9066 stated that all Japanese Americans, and 'aliens' as they called them, needed to be moved to a place where they could not cause any harm to the United States military, and government. These places were called internment camps. They were spread all across America. Including California, Arizona, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Arkansas.

Now I will state what I think about Japanese internment. My first reason for why interning so many Japanese people is wrong is that the American government was racist. Here is a little snippet of Personal Justice Denied, 1944, "The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were racial prejudice," This states that the American government was being racist and that the decisions they made were because the Japanese looked different (such as having darker skin than 'whites'). Here is another piece of evidence to support this reason, from a document, called, The Crisis Article which was established in 1942 in the month September, "But the American Government has not taken such high handed actions against the Germans and Italians and their American born descendants on the East Coast, as has been taken against Japanese and their American born descendants." This states that the American government is not doing the same things to the German and the Italian, and that is because the German and Italian are 'white'. Those pieces of evidence support my first reason why the Japanese Americans were interned, the American government was being racist.

The second reason I must state is that the American government made Executive Order 9066 too quickly and because they were in a rush to intern the Japanese Americans because the American government was mad at Japan and did not trust them. Here is a little part of, Personal Justice Denied which was written in 1944, which confirms, "Widespread ignorance of Japanese Americans contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan." This presents that Executive Order 9066 was made because Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor and that the American government was scared of Japan, that is why

they made Executive Order 9066 the unfair, unjust way it is. Another piece of evidence I found to support this reason is from, yet again, Personal Justice Denied in 1944, which supports, "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 WWII." This confirms that the American government made Executive Order 9066 without any reason to intern the Japanese Americans, so the only reason could be "out of fear and anger at Japan".

My third reason I found for why interning hundreds of thousands of innocent people is wrong, was that the American government knew that not all of the Japanese were really dangerous and that most of the Japanese Americans were there to do their work and live there peacefully. The Munson Report in 1941 on November 7, expands, "Japanese here is almost exclusively a farmer, a fisherman, or a small businessman." This states that the Japanese were just there to do their work and that they are not here to do anything faulty. The Munson Report in 1941 on November 7, supports, "Privately, they believe that only 50 or 60 in each district can be classed as really dangerous." This proves again that only 50 or 60 out of 300 of the Japanese Americans were really dangerous and the American government knew that. I have one final piece of evidence to support this reason and it is that on August 10, 1988 president Ronald Reagan signed HR 442 into law. It acknowledged that the incarceration of more than 110,000 of Japanese descents was unjust, and offered an apology and reparation payments of \$20,000 to each person incarcerated. I think this proves that all along the US government knew that what they were doing was not right and that they knew that the person they interned deserved an apology, and much more than that.

A common view on this topic is that the reason Executive Order 9066 was made because they were at war with the Japanese and that made is more important than one's individual rights. Here is some evidence to support that view. Korematsu v. the United States 1944, "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." This expands that when you are at war, you have to take drastic measures and that you must be able to protect just as well as the danger can attack. Here is another piece of evidence to support that. Korematsu v. the United States 1944, concludes, "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 a part of war, and war is an aggregation of hardships." This states that war is going to be hard but this is just a sacrifice that they just have to make.

That is true when you are at war, sacrifices have to be made, but it just seems so unreasonable to intern, take away their freedom, take away their houses, and their cars. And all of this happened to over 120,000 people! I mean, let's say you are born in America, but your parents were Japanese, and you just are in America to live your life, earn a living, and have a upbeat life. But then one day, you are forced to leave your family, your house, your home, even though they

have no real evidence that you are doing anything dreadful! This happened to almost every single person in the internment camps!

I hope you now see why I think that the American government should not have interned Japanese Americans during WWII, to restate my reasons... The American government was racist and did not do the same thing to the Germans and Italians, because the American government made Executive Order 9066 quickly and because they were mad at Japan, and that the American government knew that not all of the Japanese were really dangerous and that most of the Japanese Americans were there to do their work and live there peacefully. Now that I have stated my reasons, I hope you can see why I say that it was not right to intern such a large amount of innocent people.