Topic: Japanese Internment: Fears, Justifications, Endurance, Reaction, & Apology
Grade Level: 8th and 11th

NY State Learning Standard(s)/ Core Curricular Connections:
Standard 1: History of the United States and New York-“Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.” This module addresses the standard by: enhancing students’ skills of historical analysis; empathizing with the unequal treatment of an ethnic group; weighing competing values; and gaining an in-depth understanding of a significant historic event. New York State Core Curricular guides for both 8th and 11th grade U.S. History and Government are addressed in this module:
8th Grade: Unit Ten: The United States Assumes Worldwide Responsibilities; Topic 1: World War II; Subtopic F: The Home Front; Item 5: Internment to incarceration of Japanese-Americans.
11th Grade: Unit Six: The United States In An Age Of Global Crises; Topic 1: Peace and Peril, 1933-1950; Subtopic C: The United States in World War II; Item 5: Incarceration of West Coast Japanese-Americans.

Learning Objectives:
• Compare and contrast the experiences of different groups in the United States through analysis and interpretation of primary source documents.
• Understand wartime prejudice faced by a minority.
• Weigh values of national security against individual liberty.
• Understand how government responds to a crisis.

Essential Questions:
• Did the motivations behind the decision to relocate the Japanese-Americans during World War II justify denying them their civil rights?
• What generalizations can be made about human nature and the reactions of governments in time of crises in view of United States treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II?

Overview of the Learning Experience Module:
After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941), steps were taken by the United States Government to ensure that people of Japanese ancestry residing in the United States would not be a threat to national security. President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for the creation of internment camps in the western U.S. in which Japanese-Americans would be placed for the duration of the war. Some Americans perceived this as a violation of civil liberties, while other groups of Americans saw this as a necessary step to preserve national security.
Our goals are for students to get a glimpse of how the government and the public responded to the shock of Japanese attack; evaluate the propriety of internment; understand the experience of those being relocated; and understand the backpedaling the government undertook after reflection upon the internment decision which eventually led to an apology and compensation.

**Time Allotment (classroom time):** Two – Three Days

**Vocabulary (key terms):**
- Internment
- Relocation
- Executive Order
- Exclusion
- National Security
- Empathy
- Justice
- Prejudice
- Nisei; Issei

**Materials/Resources:**
- Primary source documents surrounding internment.
- Teacher-made questions surrounding each internment document.
- Rubric for culminating assignment.

**Procedure:**
- Teacher will provide historical background of events that led to suspicion of Japanese-Americans (i.e.- attack on Pearl Harbor).
- Students will be divided into groups, and given a set of documents surrounding a particular subtopic of internment history.
- On Day 1 students will analyze primary source documents.
- On Day 2 students will present their analysis to the class.
- On Day 3 teacher-led discussion of the essential questions. Use, as a spring-board, the political cartoon making an analogy between Japanese internment, and the suspicion and imprisonment of people of Middle Eastern or Central/South Asian descent.

**Assessment:**
- Student responses to writing assignment on essential questions (75%).
- Teacher evaluation of participation (25%).

**Categories of Documents**

**American Reaction to Japanese and Japanese Americans After the Attack on Pearl Harbor**
1. Front page of newspaper with several articles surrounding the Japanese declaration of war on the US and Great Britain.
2. “Jap hunting license”.
3. Letter advising use of gas weapons against Japanese civilians and military personnel.
Home Front Fears of Japanese Americans
1. Balloon bombs.
2. Walter Lippmann article, “Fifth Column on the West Coast”.

Decision to Inter
1. Civilian Exclusion Order No. 27.
2. Photo of poster on wall ordering Japanese Americans to evacuate.

Initial Effects of Evacuation of Japanese Americans From the West Coast.
1. Newspaper article of early graduation of Nisei.
2. Advertisement of evacuation sale of businesses and of household belongings.
3. Photo of Japanese American farmer selling his tractor to white farmers.
4. Photo of evacuation sale

The Internment Process
1. Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry. This is the Loyalty Oath Japanese Americans were asked to sign.
2. Photo of police search of luggage.
4. Photo of family having their luggage searched outside relocation center.
5. Photo of Japanese Americans and people of Japanese ancestry awaiting registration at Santa Anita relocation center.
6. Photo of family dinner in a relocation camp.

Rethinking Internment during and after the War.
2. Roosevelt’s decision to create Japanese American combat teams (02/02/43).
3. Ike’s letter saying scene is bad in the relocation camps.
1. The United States declared war on Japan the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. According to these articles, where else had Japan attacked?

2. What is the tone of these articles?

3. What do you think Americans’ first reaction would be upon hearing this news?
1. What is being permitted by this so-called license?

2. State three things that let us know how the author of this document felt about the Japanese?

3. What evidence in the document suggests why the person who made this license is so angry?

4. What American ideals is the author of this document overlooking?
April 2, 1946
Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator,

I am writing to offer a suggestion, which if possible for you to work out, would in my opinion result in a tremendous reduction in our combat casualties in the coming fighting with the Japanese, and much personal credit to you.

If it could be possible for you to arrange at the coming United Nations San Francisco meeting, for some joint resolution by all the United Nations to approve and recommend the use by our armed forces of military means against the Japanese, it would be a very great reduction in our casualty figures in the severe fighting to be expected around Japan.

Please note the copy of my letter to Mr. Jonathan Daniels, with two letters of endorsement from both the Army and Marine Corps. I know that every combat Marine who has been in the Pacific, is greatly in favor of using gas.

I have showed copies of my letter to Mr. Daniels to many civilians, and without exception all have been greatly in favor of our use of gas.

I was a combat soldier in World War I (Captain Tank Corps, USF France, 1918-19), and believe I have after nearly 60 years as a reporter-editor-publisher, some rather accurate knowledge of the American people. Our people know this is a "tough war"—their sons are fighting it. The Japs are semi-medieval savages who have violated every rule or semblance of decency. They must be destroyed—completely. It's silly to say that a modern nation can't be destroyed. Remember what we did to the Indian nations in North America.

It is my considered opinion that a young married Japanese woman, capable of bearing several greater sons, is an even greater enemy of "our American way," than a single Jap soldier with guns in his hands. The Japs with their patriotic sentiment, their chino pants, and hate for the white man are vicious "gangster" leaders are a permanent menace to any world peace plan,—let's recognize them as much and destroy the nation. If we are too "heartened" to kill Jap civilians, our good Chinese allies will probably be most happy to do it for us.

Yours long experience in public life and sound good "horns-sense" particularly qualify you to "sell" the coming United Nations conference on the obvious sound idea of using gas to quickly defeat and destroy the Japanese, and I hope you can do it.

With cordial best wishes. Sincerely yours,

Jerry 2. Holbrow
"The Tri-State Oil Reporter"

OFFICE ADDRESS
703 COURT BLVD
EVANSVILLE, IN 47701
Tel: 41290 or 4377

1. Who is the author and to whom is he writing?
2. What resolution does he propose the United Nations approve?
3. Why does he believe this is an appropriate action?
4. What precedent does he site for annihilating a people? Evaluate this argument?
1. This is a schematic drawing of a balloon bomb. This weapon was sporadically used by the Japanese to attack the West coast of the United States. How might these attacks have made Americans living on the West Coast feel about Japan and Japanese Americans?
Today And Tomorrow

By Walter Lippmann

The Fifth Column on the Coast

SAN FRANCISCO.—The enemy alien problem on the Pacific Coast or much more accurately the Fifth Column problem, is very serious and it is very special. What makes it so serious and so special is that the Pacific Coast is in imminent danger of a combined attack from within and from without.

The danger is not, as it would be in the inland centers or perhaps even for the present on the Atlantic Coast, from sabotage alone. The peculiar danger of the Pacific Coast is in a Japanese raid accompanied by enemy action inside American territory.

This combination can be very formidable indeed. For while the striking power of Japan from the sea and air might not in itself be overwhelming at any one point it might well be that Japan could strike a blow which might do irreparable damage if it were accompanied by the kind of organized sabotage to which this part of the country is specially vulnerable.

This is a sober statement of the situation, in fact a report, based not on speculation but on what is known to have taken place and to be taking place in this area of the war. It is a fact that the Japanese navy has been reconnoitering the Pacific Coast more or less continually and for a considerable period of time testing and feinting out the American defenses. It is a fact that communication takes place between the enemy at sea and enemy agents on land.

These are facts which we shall ignore or minimize at our peril. It is also a fact that since the outbreak of the Japanese war there has been no important sabotage on the Pacific Coast.

From what we know about Hawaii and about the Fifth Column in Europe this is not, as some have liked to think, a sign that there is nothing to be feared. It is a sign that the blow is well-organized and that it is held back until it can be struck with maximum effect.

moment all about enemy aliens, dual citizenship, naturalized citizens, native citizens of enemy alien parentage, and consider a warship in San Francisco harbor, an airplane plant in Los Angeles, a general’s headquarters at Oshkosh, and an admiral’s at Podunk.

Then think of the linear descendant, if there happened to be such a person, of George Washington, the father of his country, and consider what happens to Mr. Washington if he decides he would like to visit the warship, or take a walk in the airplane plant, or to drop in and photograph the general and the admiral in their quarters.

He is stopped by the siren. He has to prove who he is. He has to prove that he has a good reason for doing what he wants to do. He has to register, sign papers, and wear an identification button.

Then perhaps, if he proves his case, he is escorted by an armed guard while he does his errand, and until he has been checked out of the place and his papers and his button have been returned. Have Mr. Washington’s constitutional rights been abridged?

Has he been denied the dignity of the human person? Has his loyalty been impugned?

Now it seems to me that this is in principle and in general the procedure which ought to be used for all persons in a zone which the military authorities regard as open to enemy attack.

In that zone, as in the corridors of the general’s headquarters, in the deck of the warship or within the gates of the airplane plant, everyone should be compelled to prove that he has a good reason for being there, and no one should be allowed to come and go until he has proved that his business is necessary and consistent with the national defense.

In the vital and vulnerable areas it should be the rule that residence, employment, communication by telephone, telegraph, automobile and railroad are confined to licensed persons who are fully identified and whose activities are fully known to the authorities and to their neighbors.

The Pacific Coast is officially a combat zone. Some part of it may at any moment be a battlefield. Nobody’s constitutional rights
enemy at sea and enemy agents on land.

These are facts which we shall ignore or minimize at our peril. It is also a fact that since the outbreak of the Japanese war there has been no important sabotage on the Pacific Coast.

From what we know about Hawaii and about the Fifth Column in Europe this is not, as one has liked to think, a sign that there is nothing to be feared. It is a sign that the blow is well-organized and that it has been held back until it can be struck with maximum effect.

IN PREPARING TO REPEL the attack the Army and Navy have all the responsibility but they are facing it with one hand tied down in Washington. I am sure I understand fully and appreciate thoroughly the unwillingness of Washington to adopt a policy of mass evacuation and mass internment of all those who are technically enemy aliens. But I submit that Washington is not defining the problem on the Pacific Coast correctly and that therefore it is raising insoluble issues unnecessarily and failing to deal with the practical issues promptly. No one can hope to get the right answer unless he first asks the right questions.

The official approach to the danger is through a series of untruths. There is the assumption that it is a problem of “enemy aliens.” As a matter of fact it is certainly a problem of nativite American citizens. There is the assumption that a citizen may not be interfered with unless he has committed an overt act, or at least unless there is strong evidence that he is about to commit an overt act.

There is the assumption that if the rights of a citizen are abridged anywhere, they have been abridged everywhere. The effect of these assumptions has been to precipitate legalistic and ideological arguments between the military authorities out here and the civil authorities in Washington, and between the aroused citizenry of the coast and their fellow-countrymen in the interior.

A MUCH SIMPLER approach will, I believe, yield much more practical results. Forget for a moment the right to reside and do business on a battlefield. And nobody ought to be on a battlefield who has no good reason for being there. There is plenty of room elsewhere for him to exercise his rights.

THIS IS IN SUBSTANCE the system of policing which necessarily prevails in a war zone. By this system the constitutional and international questions about aliens and citizens do not arise at the very place where they confuse the issues and prevent the taking of thorough measures of security. Under this system all persons are in principle treated alike. As a matter of national policy there is no discrimination. But at the same time the authorities on the spot in the threatened region are able to act decisively, and let the explanations and the reparations come later.

This approach to the question by-passes the problem which, as I see it, has caused the trouble in Washington. For what Washington has been trying to find is a policy for dealing with all enemy aliens everywhere and all potential Fifth Columnists everywhere. Yet a policy which may be wise in most parts of the country may be extremely fool-hardy in a combat zone.

Therefore, much the best thing to do is to recognize the Western combat zone as territory quite different from the rest of the country, and then to set up in that zone a special regime. This has been done on the Bataan Peninsula, in Hawaii, in Alaska, in the Canal Zone. Why not also on the threatened West Coast of the United States?

1. Walter Lippmann was a respected columnist in the 1930s and 1940s. Who is the “fifth column” he refers to?

2. What is Lippmann especially concerned about?

3. Under what circumstances does Lippmann argue it is necessary to deny aliens and citizens their rights?
Major General Edwin M. Watson  
Secretary to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear General Watson:

I thought it might be of interest to you and the President to have the enclosed charts before you, which show the number of Japanese, German and Italian aliens taken into custody by the FBI as of December 9th. This gives the exact location of the numbers apprehended and places at which they were apprehended.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

Inclosures

1. Who is writing to whom in this letter?

2. What is significant about the date?

3. What is the purpose of the letter?

4. Over 1200 people of Japanese ancestry and much smaller numbers of Italians and Germans were arrested within two days of the attack on Pearl Harbor. What crime did these people commit?
1. This document is a poster/flyer advertising a movie shown in theaters during World War II. Using three pieces of evidence from the poster, describe how Americans are being asked to view the Japanese.
Headquarters
Western Defense Command
and Fourth Army
Presidio of San Francisco, California
April 30, 1942

Civilian Exclusion Order No. 27

1. Pursuant to the provisions of Public Proclamations Nos. 1 and 2, this Headquarters, dated March 2, 1942, and March 16, 1942, respectively, it is hereby ordered that from and after 12 o’clock noon, P.W.T., of Thursday, May 7, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, be excluded from that portion of Military Area No. 1 described as follows:
All of that portion of the County of Alameda, State of California, within that boundary beginning at the point at which the southerly limits of the City of Berkeley meet San Francisco Bay; thence easterly and following the southerly limits of said city to College Avenue; thence southerly on College Avenue to Broadway; thence southerly on Broadway to the southerly limits of the City of Oakland; thence following the limits of said city westerly and northerly, and following the shoreline of San Francisco Bay to the point of beginning.

2. A responsible member of each family, and each individual living alone, in the above described area will report between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Friday, May 1, 1942, or during the same hours on Saturday, May 2, 1942, to the Civil Control Station located at:
530 Eighteenth Street
Oakland, California.

3. Any person subject to this order who fails to comply with any of its provisions or with the provisions of published instructions pertaining hereto or who is found in the above area after 12 o’clock noon, P.W.T., of Thursday, May 7, 1942, will be liable to the criminal penalties provided by Public Law No. 503, 77th Congress, approved March 21, 1942 entitled “An Act to Provide a Penalty for Violation of Restrictions or Orders with Respect to Persons Entering, Remaining in, Leaving, or Committing any Act in Military Areas or Zones,” and alien Japanese will be subject to immediate apprehension and internment.

4. All persons within the bounds of an established Assembly Center pursuant to instructions from this Headquarters are excepted from the provisions of this order while those persons are in such Assembly Center.

J. L. DeWitt
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding
THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE OBSERVED:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Friday, May 1, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Saturday, May 2, 1942.

2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:
   (a) Bedding and linens (no mattress) for each member of the family;
   (b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;
   (c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;
   (d) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family;
   (e) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.

   All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.

3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.

4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.

5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage at the sole risk of the owner of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.

6. Each family, and individual living alone will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center or will be authorized to travel by private automobile in a supervised group. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Friday, May 1, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Saturday, May 2, 1942, to receive further instructions.

J. L. DeWitt
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding

April 30, 1942

1. What in general is being ordered here?

2. How much notice were the people given to comply with the order?

3. What do you think became of their pets?

4. How do you think the people who this notice is directed to felt upon reading it?

1. What is the person doing in the photo?

2. What was the effect of this order?

3. List two adjectives describing how a Japanese American might feel upon walking by and reading this? Explain why you chose those two adjectives?
Diplomas for Nisei At Special Ceremonies

Jap Pupils in Valley Schools, Soon to Enter Assembly Center, Get Best Wishes of Classmates

Valley high schools are holding special exercises this week to give diplomas and send-offs to their Japanese students who are leaving Thursday.

At Sumner it had been planned to have a program Friday, but this has been moved up and the 12 seniors will be given their diplomas at a special assembly Wednesday. There are 30 Japanese pupils in the high school and about 40 in the grades.

At Puyallup an assembly will be held Wednesday when the students and teachers will wish the departing pupils well. There are 20 in the high school out of between 1,100 and 1,200 pupils, five of them seniors. The school has requested that the five seniors be allowed to return to Puyallup for graduation exercises, according to Paul Hana-walt, principal.

There is but one Japanese graduate at Eatonville high this year and he has already left the school. He will receive his diploma by mail.

Drop in Birth Rate

There is a marked drop in the birth rate among the valley Japanese, according to Wade Calavan, principal of the Sumner schools. At one time the Japanese numbered

(Continued on Page Five)

1. Nisei are the second generation of Japanese Americans. They were United States and are thus naturalized American citizens. Why are they having special graduation ceremonies?

2. How are the pupils referred to in the headline?

3. What language in this article and the title deflate or dilute the fact that students are being forcibly removed?
1. Why does the ad say that businesses here may be bought at a “sacrifice”?

2. What seems to be the main type business for sale?

3. What happens to prices when there is a surplus of a product on the market?
Los Angeles County, California. The evacuation of Japanese Americans from West coast areas under then United States Army war emergency order. A Japanese farmer talking with a white farmer who is considering the purchase of some of the Japanese man’s equipment.


1. Describe what is happening in the photograph.

2. The Japanese American does not know when or whether he will ever be able return. The white farmer is aware of this as well. How might this affect their negotiations?
1. After all people of Japanese ancestry, including American citizens, were ordered to evacuate, they had to sell their businesses quickly. Who would be buying this store’s contents? Do you think the owners got a fair price for their store? Explain.
People of Japanese ancestry, including American citizens, had to fill out this statement prior to being relocated.

### Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry

1. **Surname** (English given name) (Japanese given name)
2. **Local selective service board**
3. **Date of birth** (City) (State)
4. **Present address** (City) (State)
5. **Last two addresses at which you lived 6 months or more (exclude residence at relocation center and at assembly center):**
   - From __________ To __________
   - From __________ To __________
6. **Sex** __________ Height __________ Weight __________
7. **Are you registered voter?** __________ Year first registered __________
8. **Status** __________ Citizenship of wife __________ Race of wife __________
9. **(Father’s Name)** (Type of Home) (Birthplace) (State or Country) (Occupation)
10. **(Mother’s Name)** (Type of Home) (Birthplace) (State or Country) (Occupation)

In items 11 and 12, you need not list relatives other than your parents, your children, your brothers and sisters. For each person give name; relationship to you (such as father); citizenship; complete address; occupation.

11. **Relatives in the United States (if in military service, indicate whether a selective or volunteer):**
   - (Name) (Relationship to you) (Citizenship)
   - (Complete address) (Occupation) (Volunteer or selective)
   - (Name) (Relationship to you) (Citizenship)
   - (Complete address) (Occupation) (Volunteer or selective)
   - (Name) (Relationship to you) (Citizenship)
   - (Complete address) (Occupation) (Volunteer or selective)

   (If additional space is necessary, attach sheets)

APPENDIX A-2
1. Question #27 asks "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, whenever ordered?" How would you answer this question? Explain.

2. Question #28 asks the respondent to swear allegiance to the United States and forswear any allegiance to the Japanese Emperor.

Issei (Japanese immigrants) found it very difficult to deny any allegiance to the Japanese Emperor even though they were loyal Americans.

If you answered "no" to both questions, you were sent to a high security relocation center. Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) knew their parents would not answer "yes" to both questions, so they would answer "no" also. Why do you think they did this?
1. Why is the man of Japanese ancestry in this photo allowing his luggage to be searched?

2. What amendment to the United States Constitution might be set aside here?

1. Briefly describe what you see in this photo.

2. These individuals of Japanese ancestry have no idea where they are going or for how long. How do you think they felt?
Santa Anita reception center, Los Angeles County, California. The evacuation of Japanese and Japanese-Americans from West coast areas under United States Army war emergency order. Japanese baggage is inspected on arrival.

Photo by Lee, Russell (1942) Source: Library of Congress,

1. Why is their luggage being inspected?

(Note: Not even one Japanese American or person of Japanese descent living in the United States was ever found guilty of sabotage during World War II.)

1. What evidence does this photo show that the United States considered Japanese Americans and people of Japanese ancestry to be a threat to the United States?

2. How might a person of Japanese descent prove that he or she does not pose a threat to the United States?
1. Japanese families at this time were very traditional and ate together usually. They tried to eat dinner together even while interned. As the months went by in the relocation centers, younger people would often sit with other young people. How might this affect the closeness of the family?

2. How else might meal arrangements at the camps have affected family traditions?
1. State 5 reasons from Paragraph (1) that Alexander gives for opposing Japanese evacuation.

2. The Nisei are US citizens of Japanese ancestry. They are second generation, meaning they are the sons and daughters of Japanese immigrants. What is his concern about them?

3. How might the Japanese (in Japan) exploit our evacuation of Japanese Americans? (See paragraph (4).) Is their any current application of this viewpoint in recent American foreign policy actions?
The proposal of the War Department to organize a combat team consisting of loyal American citizens of Japanese descent has my full approval. The new combat team will add to the nearly 5,000 loyal Americans of Japanese ancestry who are already serving in the armed forces of our country.

This is a natural and logical step toward the reinstatement of the Selective Service procedures which were temporarily disrupted by the evacuation from the West Coast.

No loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship, regardless of his ancestry. The principle on which this country was founded and by which it has always been governed is that Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry. A good American is one who is loyal to this country and to our creed of liberty and democracy. Every loyal American citizen should be given the opportunity to serve this country wherever his skills will make the greatest contribution—whether it be in the ranks of our armed forces, war production, agriculture, government service, or other work essential to the war effort.

I am glad to observe that the War Department, the Navy Department, the War Manpower Commission, the Department of Justice, and the War Relocation Authority are collaborating in a program which will assure the opportunity for all loyal Americans, including Americans of Japanese ancestry, to serve their country at a time when the fullest and wisest use of our manpower is all-important to the war effort.

Proposed letter for the President to send to the Secretary of War who will announce on Thurs., Jan. 18, formation of combat organizations of Japs of who are of American citizenship, etc.

Letter dated 02/02/43
Source: FDR Presidential Library

1. Who did the President intend to send this letter to?
2. What action is the President approving in this letter?
3. What are the President’s reasons for approving this action?
My dear Mr. President:

Information that has come to me from several sources is to the effect that the situation in at least some of the Japanese internment camps is bad and is becoming worse rapidly. Native-born Japanese who first accepted with philosophical understanding the decision of their Government to round up and take far inland all of the Japanese along the Pacific Coast, regardless of their degree of loyalty, have pretty generally been disappointed with the treatment that they have been accorded. Even the minimum plans that had been formulated and announced with respect to them have been disregarded in large measure, or, at least, have not been carried out. The result has been the gradual turning of thousands of well-meaning and loyal Japanese into angry prisoners. I do not think that we can disregard, as of no official concern, the unnecessary creating of a hostile group right in our own territory consisting of people who are engendering a bitterness and hostility that bodes no good for the future.

I am particularly concerned about these Japanese because, in very large measure, they have been set down upon lands within the jurisdiction of this Department -- Indian Reservations, Reclamation Projects and Public Lands. I am unwilling to believe that a better job in general could not have been done than has been done. Neither do I believe that we can't do better from here out, especially if we tackle the job in a different spirit and with real determination without further delay.

Sincerely yours,

Hersell L. Pelham
Secretary of the Interior.

The President,
The White House.

1. Who is the author of this letter and to whom is he writing?

2. What does the author believe has been the result of interning Japanese Americans?

3. Why do you think the author is worried about the future consequences of having interned Japanese American citizens?
Public Law 100-383
100th Congress

An Act

To implement recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation andInternment of Civilians.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of theUnited States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are to—
(1) acknowledge the fundamental injustice of the evacuation, relocation, and internment of United States citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II;
(2) apologize on behalf of the people of the United States for the evacuation, relocation, and internment of such citizens and permanent resident aliens;
(3) provide for a public education fund to finance efforts to inform the public about the internment of such individuals so as to prevent the recurrence of any similar event;
(4) make restitution to those individuals of Japanese ancestry who were interned;
(5) make restitution to Aleut residents of the Pribilof Islands and the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak Island, in settlement of United States obligations in equity and at law, for—
   (A) injustices suffered and unreasonable hardships endured while those Aleut residents were under United States control during World War II;
   (B) personal property taken or destroyed by United States forces during World War II;
   (C) community property, including community church property, taken or destroyed by United States forces during World War II; and
   (D) traditional village lands on Attu Island not rehabilitated after World War II for Aleut occupation or other productive use;
(6) discourage the occurrence of similar injustices and violations of civil liberties in the future; and
(7) make more credible and sincere any declaration of concern by the United States over violations of human rights committed by other nations.

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF THE CONGRESS.

(a) With regard to individuals of Japanese ancestry.—The Congress recognizes that, as described by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II. As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.
1. When was this law passed?

2. What in general is the purpose of this law?

3. What were three reasons given for the harsh treatment of US citizens of Japanese ancestry during World War II?

4. What compensation was offered?

5. The United States Congress apologized and attempted to compensate those of Japanese ancestry harmed by its wartime denial of their civil rights. Does the apology justify US actions? That is, as a matter of policy, should countries be able to abridge citizens’ rights temporarily and “make it all good” later on with an apology and compensation? Provide arguments for and against this issue.
1. According to the cartoonist, what does Attorney General Ashcroft propose to do?

2. What historical pattern does this cartoon suggest?
Culminating Activity for Lesson on Japanese Internment and Accompanying Rubric

Assignment: Write two mini-essays (three paragraphs) on our essential questions surrounding Japanese internment during World War II.

Essential Question #1

- Did the motivations behind the decision to relocate the Japanese-Americans during World War II justify denying them their civil rights?

*********

Make sure you identify the ways in which people of Japanese ancestry were denied their civil rights and have an opinion as to whether this was justified. Your opinion needs to be backed up with reasons/arguments.

*********

Your essay will be evaluated according to the following criteria

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|                                | Essay has thesis statement.                                | No thesis presented.                                          |
|                                | 1                                                         | 0                                                              |

|                                | Essay has conclusion that refers back to thesis.           | No conclusion/ conclusion not supported by body.             |
|                                | 1                                                         | 0 - .5                                                         |

| Content                        | Clear point of view relevant to topic.                    | Ranges from vague point of view to irrelevant.               |
|                                | 2                                                         | 0 - 1                                                          |

|                                | Supports thesis with solid points/arguments               | Weak support of thesis/ weak points made.                    |
|                                | 2                                                         | 0 - 1                                                          |

|                                | Essays demonstrates strong understanding of relevant issues | Essay demonstrates mild to weak understanding of relevant issues |
|                                | 2                                                         | 0 - 1                                                          |

Total_________
Essential Question #2

- What generalizations can be made about human nature and how governments react to crises in view of United States treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II?

*********

Make sure you relate how people of Japanese ancestry were treated during World War II to how other groups have been treated at other times in history. Describe how conditions were similar and how those in power reacted similarly. You might also mention how citizens reacted similarly.

*********

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Total_______

Average of Both Essays/Final Grade _______________