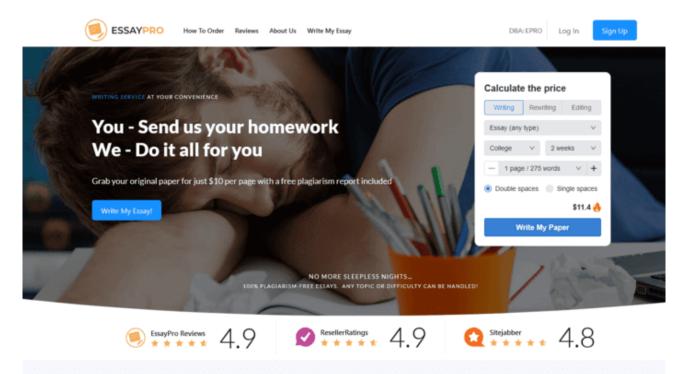
Japanese Internment



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Japanese Internment

The Virtual Museum Of The City Of San Francisco has established a great source for those interested in studying the internment of Japanese during World War II. This topic is reflected very accurately and fairly in the archives of the museum because the archives consist of primary documents. Their <u>archives</u> of original newspaper articles are the basis of this research document. The content listed on the museum's web site is very relevant to the topic of <u>Japanese internment</u> because it provides a wealth of primary documents including opinions of ordinary people writing to their newspaper to express a wide variety of viewpoints on the subject of Japanese internment during the Second World War. One question stands above all others and the virtual museum gives a good first-hand account of events to answer it - what happened to the Japanese and why were they forced to move? To answer this question, the archives of the Virtual Museum Of The City Of San Francisco should be consulted.

On February 14, 1942 Lt. General J. L. DeWitt, "commanding general of the Fourth Army and the Western Defense Command[i]" recommended to the War Department, the "evacuation[ii]" of Japanese living along the Pacific coast, deemed a Military Zone. About

120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, many of those people American citizens, living on the West Coast and Southern Arizona were removed from their homes to locations of the government's choosing. The very term "evacuation" is misleading to say the least because it suggests that the Japanese were being relocated to protect their safety. The excuses cited by the military were to establish "broad civil control, anti-sabotage, and counter-espionage measures.[iii]" The reasons given to justify "evacuation" suggested that the Japanese were a threat to the nation and not the nation a threat to the Japanese.

Drawing a dichotomy, the United States Government tried to put a human face on the forced evacuations by claiming America was protecting the Japanese by moving them out of a war zone. The government would claim it was helping the Japanese by relocating the Japanese to a zone of safety outside the military zone. Statements from the government would contradict each other throughout this period of time. For instance, Japanese-Americans were termed "enemy aliens," while at the same time, they were encouraged to be good citizens and loyal Americans by enlisting in the war effort, relocating voluntarily, offering no resistance and no questioning of the relocation efforts and activities.

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