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JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT: RECORDS OF THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY



In an atmosphere of hysteria following U.S. entry into the Second World War, and with the support of officials at all levels of the federal government, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the internment of tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry and resident aliens from Japan. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, dated February 19, 1942, gave the U.S. military broad powers to ban any citizen from a wide coastal area stretching from the state of Washington to California and extending inland into southern Arizona. The order also authorized transporting these citizens to assembly centers hastily set up and governed by the military in Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington. The same executive order, as well as other war-time orders and restrictions, were also applied to smaller numbers of residents of the United States of Italian or German descent. Yet while these individuals (and others from those groups) suffered grievous violations of their civil liberties, the war-time measures applied to Japanese Americans were harsher and more sweeping. Entire communities were uprooted by an executive order that targeted U.S. citizens and resident aliens.

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