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# Japanese American Internment

The Look and Life  
(1942-1947)

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# Purpose of our Project

During our experiences learning about refugees, we were struck by the contrasting portrayals of refugees. Throughout history, refugees have been depicted as dangerous, threatening, and problematic. Too often do media portrayals of refugees fail to show the humanity of refugees. In reality, refugees are human beings who are seeking safety from daily terrors, acceptance in a new world, and stability for themselves and their families. We wanted to focus on the representations of Japanese-Americans in United States media during World War II. We have paired a variety of juxtaposed sources, including newspaper articles, photographs, political art, propaganda posters, and personal stories, to expose the ironic disparity between the portrayal of refugees and their lived reality.

## **Civilian Exclusion Order No. 5**

**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY**

**WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

**Presidio of San Francisco, California**

**April 1, 1942**

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY**

#### **LIVING IN THE FOLLOWING AREA:**

All that portion of the City and County of San Francisco, State of California, lying generally west of the north-south line established by Junipero Serra Boulevard, Worcester Avenue, and Nineteenth Avenue, and lying generally north of the east-west line established by California Street, to the intersection of Market Street, and thence on Market Street to San Francisco Bay.

All Japanese persons, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above designated area by 12:00 o'clock noon, Tuesday, April 7, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to enter or leave the above described area after 8:00 a. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the Provost Marshal at the Civil Control Station located at:

1701 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, California

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property including: real estate, business and professional equipment, buildings, household goods, boats, automobiles, livestock, etc.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residences, as specified below.

Revised by: Executive American Citizens League  
National Committee on Japanese American Evacuation Act  
c/o The Japanese  
2200 Park Street, Berkeley, Calif. 94704

(OVER)

“No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.”

-President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation*

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>

*“Close Watch on Japs in  
Internment Urged: California  
Congressmen Call on All  
Federal Agencies to Assist  
Army in Keeping Check”*

LA Times March 15, 1942

Russell Lee, *Tagged for evacuation*, Salinas, California, May  
1942





*“To the safety of  
our people and  
nation...rather  
than the  
convenience of  
any race or  
nation”*

LA Times  
March 15, 1942

**Courtesy of California State Library**

<http://lanternreview.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/internment-image.jpg>





*“Enemy aliens and  
those who might  
prove dangerous to  
the public”*

LA Times  
March 15, 1942

“Japanese Americans kids at school in internment camp reciting pledge of allegiance”

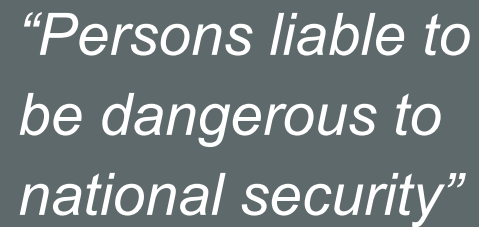
<https://japaneseamericaninternmentcamps.wikispaces.com/Life+in+Japanese+Internment+Camps>

*“...prevent Japanese,  
Nazis and other  
un-American  
activities...detrimental  
to our war effort”*

LA Times  
March 15, 1942



[http://amhistory.si.edu/ourstory/i/photos/internment\\_lg.jpg](http://amhistory.si.edu/ourstory/i/photos/internment_lg.jpg)



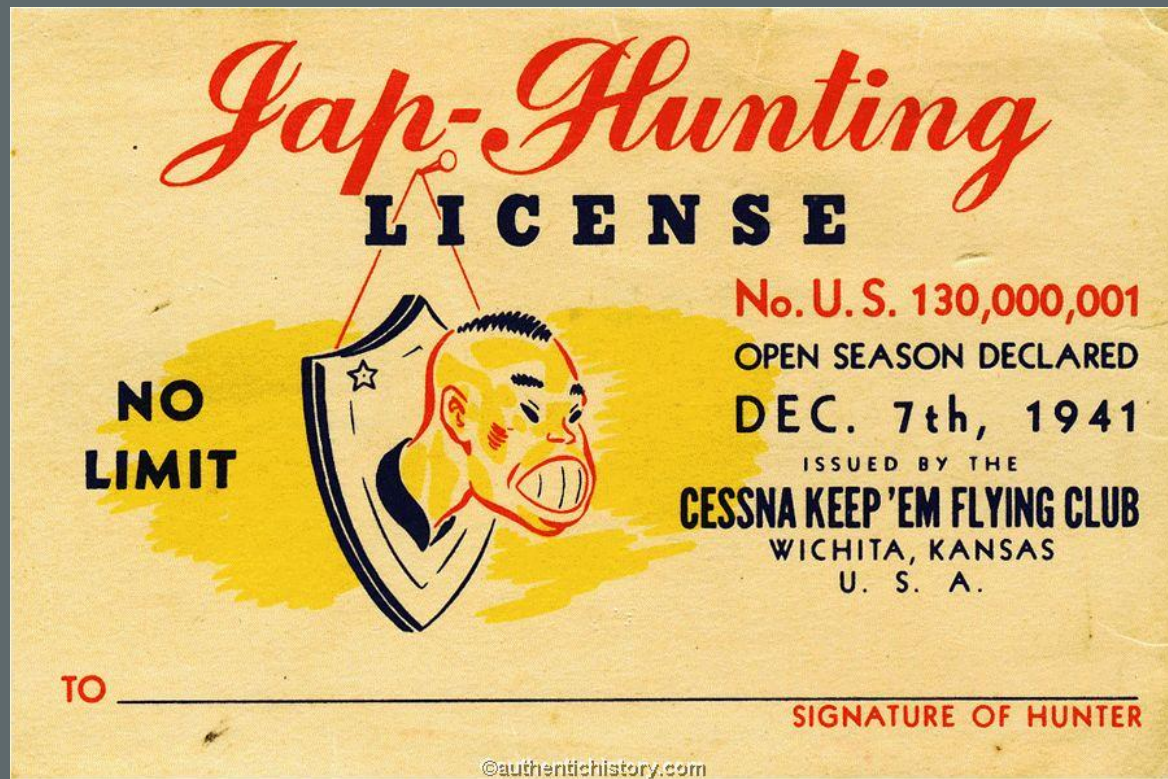
LA Times  
March 15, 1942





*“Evacuated individuals should realize the necessity of their segregation...for the public good and their own safety”*

LA Times  
March 15, 1942

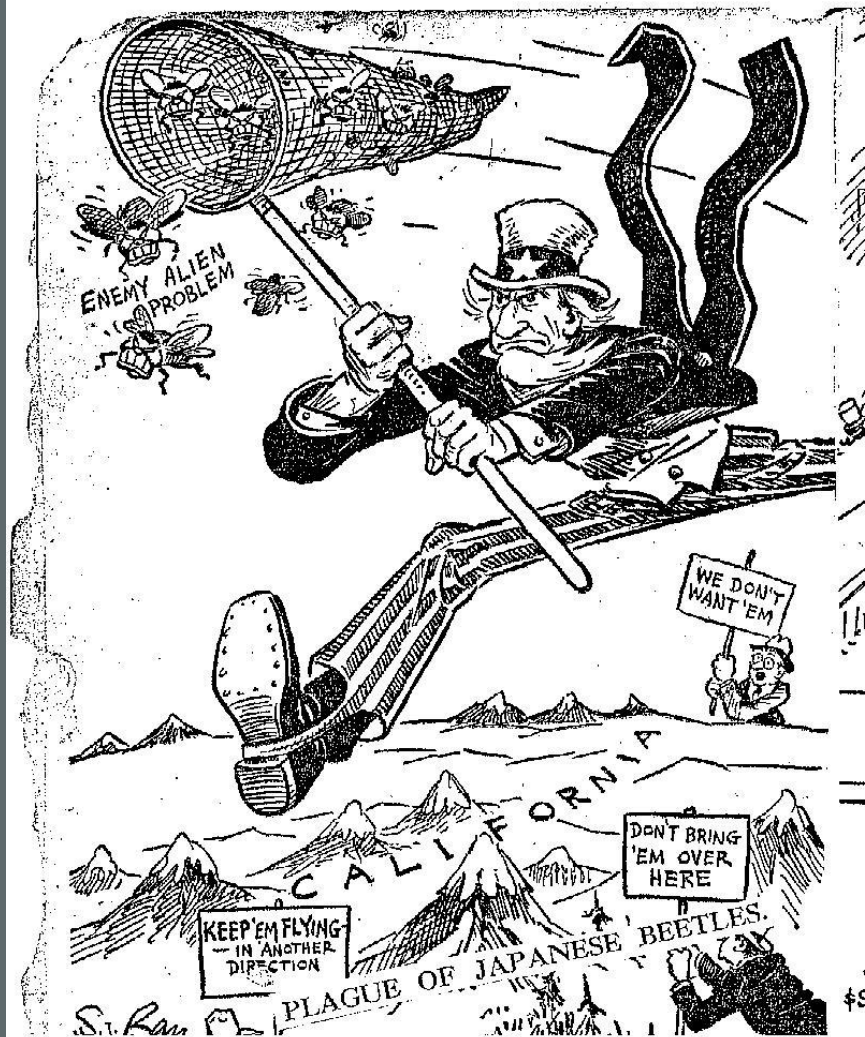


“As far as I’m concerned, I was born here, and according to the Constitution that I studied in school, that I had the Bill of Rights that should have backed me up. And until the very minute I got onto the evacuation train, I says, ‘It can’t be’. I says, ‘How can they do that to an American citizen?’”

– Robert Kashiwagi, internee in Camp Amache, CA

<http://textlab.io/doc/575662/japanese-internment-and-korematsu-v.-united-states>





*"Delighted to know you are well, keep jolly. Unless you keep up a strong heart you will fall ill. [...] No one would assert point of view on when this Crisis will be settled. Just I pray for the restoration of peace."*

Letter from Genji Mihara to his wife Katsuno, 4 August 1942, Lordsburg Internment Camp, NM

<http://ddr.densho.org/ddr/densho/140/122/>

<http://ww2cartoons.org/nov-1942-internment-of-japanese-americans/>

*We follow the news through the papers and the radio and fervently pray for the dawn of peace. Ignorant as ever to what its [sic] all about, we innocents [sic] only hope that from all the sacrifice and suffering, there must be some fair and just retribution in the tomorrow we anxiously await.*

*While I help at the camp canteen, Mitsuji manages to shorten the day by checking the sub-warehouse adjoining the Area D kitchen. We haven't as yet seen any signs of payment for our work. The younger boys who are assigned to the hard and dirty labor show signs of discouragement. The meager \$8.00 pay will mean so much to them now*

Letter from Ishi Morishita to Mrs. Charles Gates, 16 July 1942,  
Camp Harmony, Puyallup, WA  
<http://ddr.densho.org/ddr/densho/211/3/>

## Grapes of Wrath Reversed







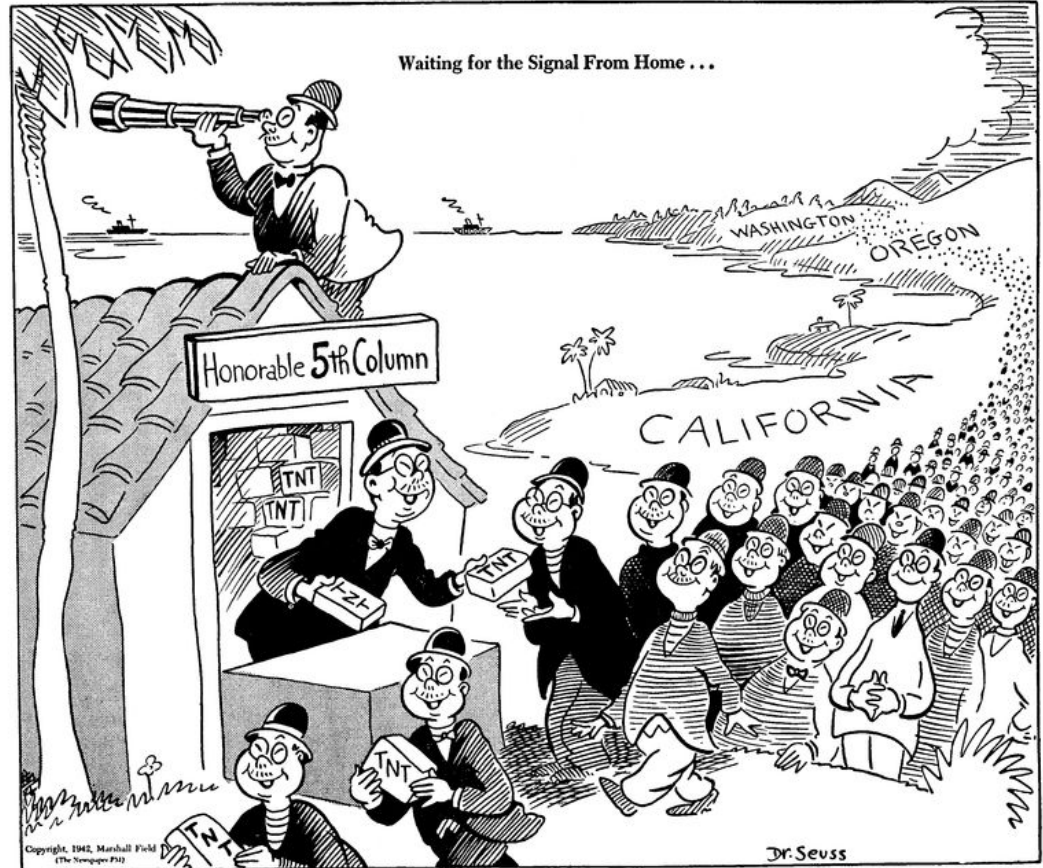
<http://www.bookmice.net/darkchilde/japan/japan/dis2.jpg>

Letter from Tsuyako "Sox" Kitashima to Katrina Shores, Special Assistant to the Chair of the Commission on Wartime Relocation (January 11, 1982). <http://ddr.densho.org/ddr/janm/4/5/>

"I could hear babies crying, family arguments, and sick coughing throughout the night. It was sometime before we had a toilet in our area, so I had to go approximately two blocks to a makeshift toilet, with a cloth hung for privacy. The surrounding area was always so muddy we used planks to get to it. I got sick with diarrhea during the night, and was too scared to be walking two blocks to the toilet for fear the military police would shoot me, thinking I was trying to escape. The only alternative was to use a gallon can. My brother got mad at me because the stench was so bad. I took the can and placed it outside the stall. I had to get up early in the next morning to dispose of it before people got up. Can you picture yourself in this predicament?"

“It, therefore, follows that along the vital Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential enemies, of Japanese extraction, are at large today. There are indications that these were organized and ready for concerted action at a favorable opportunity. ***The very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken.***”

-Recommendation for internment from Lt. General John L. Dewitt to Henry L. Stimpson, Secretary of War for President Roosevelt



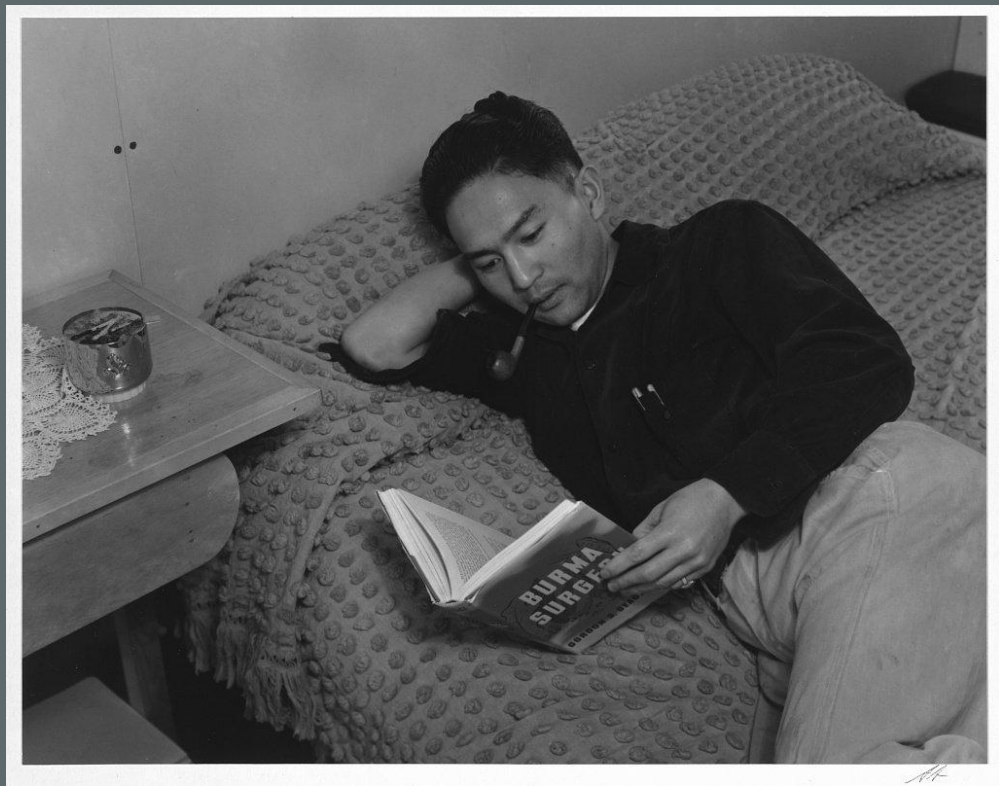
Dr. Seuss depiction of Japanese Americans on the West Coast <http://cdn8.openculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/waiting-for-signals.png>





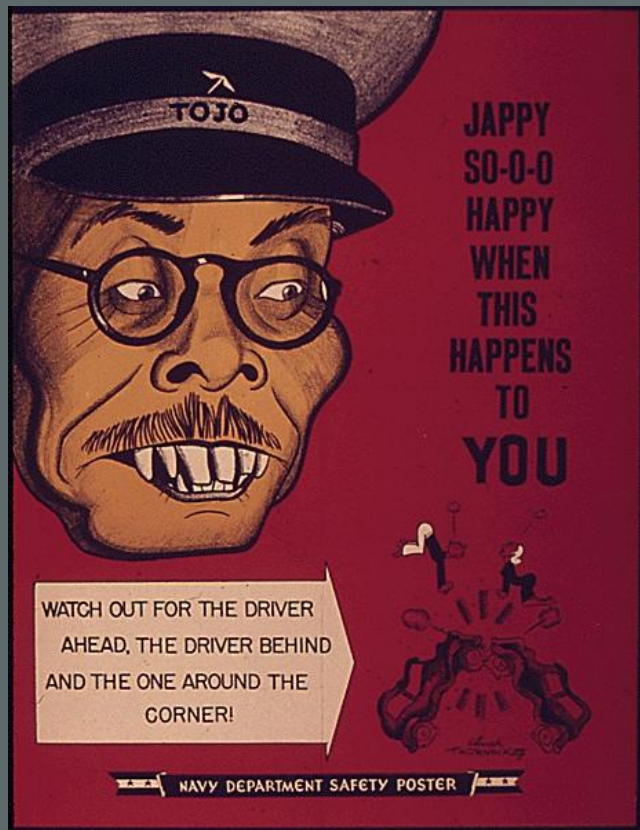
American Propaganda Poster

<http://www.dailystormer.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/This-is-the-Enemy-Japan.jpg>



One of Ansel Adams' photographs taken in 1943 at Manzanar War Relocation Camp

<http://www.businessinsider.com/ansel-adams-internment-camp-photos-2013-8>

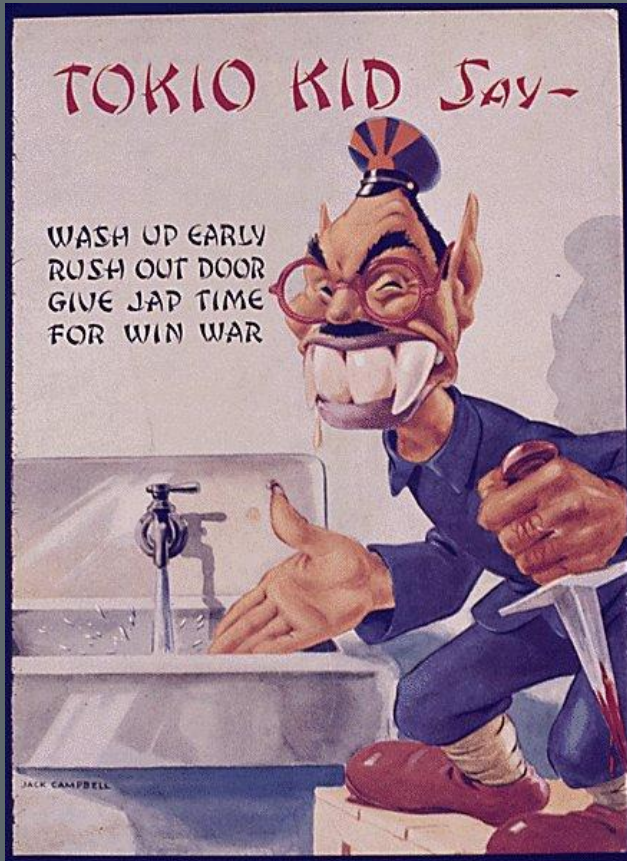


American Navy Department Safety Poster  
<http://media.brainz.org/uploads/2010/03/propaganda/Anti-Jap1.jpg>



One of Ansel Adams' photographs taken in 1943 at Manzanar War Relocation Camp  
<http://www.businessinsider.com/ansel-adams-internment-camp-photos-2013-8>





American Propaganda Poster

<http://media.brainz.org/uploads/2010/03/propaganda/Anti-Jap3.jpg>



One of Ansel Adams' portrait photographs taken in 1943 at  
Manzanar War Relocation Camp

<http://www.businessinsider.com/ansel-adams-internment-camp-photos-2013-8>

**'Did you sign the paper of petition for reunion family of we internees?...Mr. Edward J. Ennis Director of Alien Enemy Control Unit, U.S. Department of Justice Wash. D.C. says 'A final order of internment is not of itself an indication that the authorities believe the internee has been guilty of either disloyal or subversive activities. Our country must provide precautionary [precautionary] measure including [including] the internment of individuals who because of either their background or capabilities might be potentially dangerous to our internal security. The internment of itself carries no criminal stigma and that your detainment by the Army is partly in the nature of protection custody. When unite family plans mature you may make application at that time to us.'** You see I am right. Enclose my invisible kiss to my dear inviolable wife now.'



Dorthea Lang - 'Grandfather and Grandson at Manzanar, July 2, 1942'

Letter from Genji Mihara to his wife Katsuno, 6 November 1942, Lordsburg Internment Camp, NM

<http://ddr.densho.org/ddr/densho/140/146/>

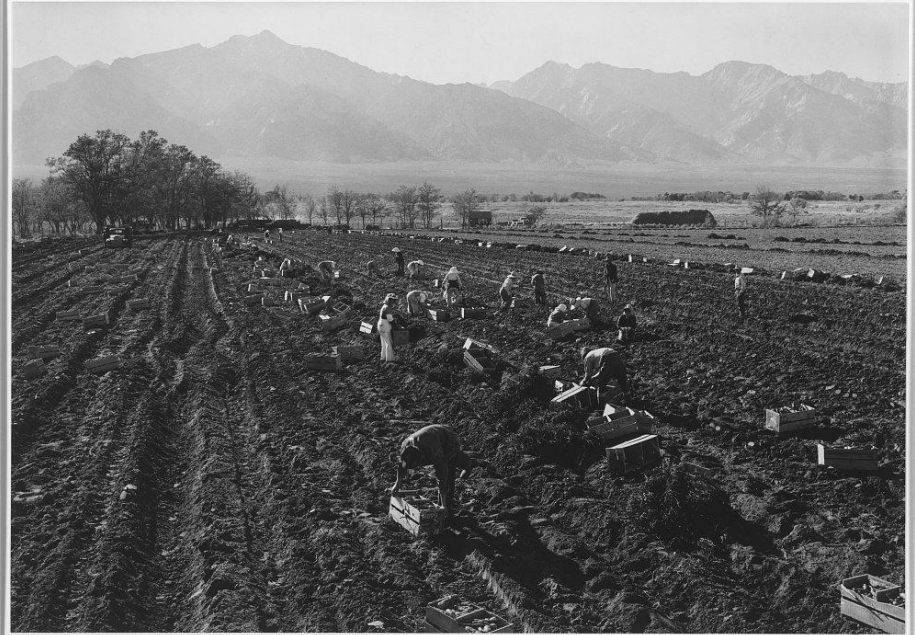




*Ever since I came to the Assembly Center (and also to this relocation center) I had a sort of a spell that I cannot get rid of—a sense of depression or feeling of unspeakable heaviness has crept all over me. [...] I try to conform the conduct of my life according to my philosophy and to make the best under any circumstances, be it harmonious or adverse. And yet there I am.*

Keikichi Imamura to Walter Millsap, 11 October 1942, Out of the Desert Project  
<http://www.outofthedesert.yale.edu/2015/02/04/letter-from-walter-millsap-to-imamuras-re-reading/>

Russel Lee 'Luggage'  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internment\\_of\\_Japanese\\_Americans#/media/File:Luggage\\_-\\_Japanese\\_American\\_internment.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internment_of_Japanese_Americans#/media/File:Luggage_-_Japanese_American_internment.jpg)



"The purpose of my work was to show how these people, suffering under a great injustice, and loss of property, businesses and professions, had overcome the sense of defeat and despair [sic] by building for themselves a vital community in an arid (but magnificent) environment"

- Ansel Adams on his photographs taken in Manzanar War Relocation Center

<http://www.businessinsider.com/ansel-adams-internment-camp-photos-2013-8>