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# Japanese American Internment During the Second World War Through the Preconditioning of Anti-Japanese Rhetoric Emphasizing Military Threat Between 1898 and 1941 and Examination of Military Necessity

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THROUGH THE PRECONDITIONING OF ANTI-JAPANESE RHETORIC  
EMPHASIZING MILITARY THREAT BETWEEN 1898 AND 1941 AND  
EXAMINATION OF MILITARY NECESSITY**

A Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of

Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts, History

By

Charlie DeWitt

May 2020

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History

Missouri State University, May 2020

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**ABSTRACT**

During the Second World War, over 120,000 Japanese American citizens were held in internment for much of the conflict. The United States government supported this action by claiming military necessity required removal of all West Coast Japanese Americans as a national security threat. However, this process had little to do with military necessity and was set in motion decades before by the rhetoric of the anti-Japanese movement, which through numerous works outlined Japanese Americans as a military threat. This thesis, through review of significant published documents, argues that a multitude of writers representing a wide array of Americans supported this concept and actively presented Japanese Americans to be a military threat. Together, this movement set the needed preconditions for eventual mass military internment.

**KEYWORDS:** Anti-Japanese Movement, 'Yellow Peril,' 'Japanese Problem,' Military Necessity, Japanese American Internment

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In the interest of academic freedom and the principle of free speech, approval of this thesis indicates the format is acceptable and meets the academic criteria for the discipline as determined by the faculty that constitute the thesis committee. The content and views expressed in this thesis are those of the student-scholar and are not endorsed by Missouri State University, its Graduate College, or its employees.

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## INTRODUCTION

In early 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, requiring thousands of American citizens of Japanese descent to evacuate the western seaboard of the United States and into eventual mass internment. Today, this act is generally described as a blot on the history of the United States, a clear assault on the civil liberties of citizens based primarily on race. The official United States Congressional report on the affair, compiled between 1982 and 1983, *Personal Justice Denied*, noted the events were a result of “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.”<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that racism played a substantial role in acceptance of Japanese American internment; hostility towards Japanese Americans in the United States was widespread before the Second World War. Yet, this anti-Japanese racism encompassed something more than just prejudice of cultural and physical differences; it reflected an underlying fear of losing social and political hierarchy. Further, the way in which this prejudice was defined during the period before the Second World War sought to classify Japanese Americans as a legitimate military threat separate from other Asian races prominent in the United States, such as Chinese or Filipino. The anti-Japanese movement argued that the Japanese race’s connection internationally to Imperial Japan equated to their disloyalty domestically. Various writers, columnists, politicians and generals alike identified this threat in Japanese immigrants and their children and demonstrated a desire to impede its believed menace through military intervention. Together, this wide reaching assortment of commentators became the anti-Japanese movement. Through their presentation of Japanese Americans as national security threats,

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<sup>1</sup> *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), 18.

the anti-Japanese movement was able to encourage a militaristic response to their concerns by popularizing their view of Japanese Americans.

When Executive Order 9066 was signed in February of 1942, the extraordinary actions it allowed for were described as necessary for national defense and backed by a litany of important individuals who, over the course of many years, had invented a sinister Japanese American plot against the United States. This movement capitalized on publications that intentionally associated Japanese Americans with military action creating a consensus view within the anti-Japanese community. It also attempted to establish an idea within American society as a whole which identified Japanese Americans as a threat. By the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, the idea of a ‘peaceful’ Japanese ‘invasion’ had long since slipped into the national subconscious, while the concept of the Japanese fifth column highlighted the concerns regarding Japanese Americans in 1941.<sup>2</sup> The efforts of these individuals to cast Japanese Americans as an invasion-in-waiting deserves additional examination as a cause of mass Japanese American internment. The anti-Japanese movement’s efforts were designed to influence American politics, foreign policy and popular opinion and were ultimately used by United States government in support of anti-Japanese goals. In short, the history of the anti-Japanese movement, or ‘Japanese problem,’ between 1868 and 1941 shows a consistent and unwavering racial connection between Japanese Americans and the military expansions of Imperial Japan, which allowed for the anti-Japanese movement to present Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans as a military threat.

This paper reviews Japanese American internment during the Second World War as a product of long term anti-Japanese rhetoric intent on defining Japanese Americans, as a race, as a

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<sup>2</sup> Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr., *The Verdict of Public Opinion on the Japanese-American Question*. (New York: Privately Printed by Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., 1921), 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 32, 33, 44, 46, 51.



hostile threat to national security. Although not a formal association, the anti-Japanese movement included numerous organizations and individuals intent on informing and dictating change toward Japanese Americans and helped cultivate continued anti-Japanese oppression. The primary focus of their argument was that Japanese Americans posed a military threat and therefore had to be dealt with under the same pretense. A significant part of the paper is devoted to analyzing the presumed racial differences between Japanese and other Asian races to identify how Executive Order 9066 separated ‘yellow peril’ from the ‘Japanese problem’ and why the latter term better describes the racism faced by Japanese Americans. In addition, as anti-Japanese rhetoric placed emphasis on the military necessity as a means to resist what they believed to be Japanese American concerns, it is important to review the validity of those claims. Through examination of the link between the anti-Japanese movement’s push to associate Japanese Americans with military necessity and the eventual government argument for military confinement, the basis of racial issues becomes transparent.

### **‘Yellow Peril’ and the ‘Japanese Problem’**

The idea of ‘yellow peril’ looms large in the discussion on Japanese internment during World War II. Originally coined by German Kaiser Wilhelm II, the term reflected on the growing fear the Western or ‘white’ world had in the increased predominance of the Asian or ‘yellow’ races.”<sup>3</sup> In many ways ‘yellow peril’ included all Asians, from Pacific Islanders to Chinese and

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<sup>3</sup> Hugh H. Lusk, "The Real Yellow Peril," *The North American Review* 186, no. 624 (1907): 375. It is important to comment on the terms ‘race’ and ‘white’ here. Ideas of race are culturally defined and therefore fluid in, as seen with ‘yellow races’ changing over time to fit the understanding of ‘peril.’ The same is true for ‘white’ Americans. For this text, ‘white’ refers to the Euro-American view of generally Western European male majority within the United States that has become consensus American history.

Japanese, as a means to incorporate anyone that posed an assumed 'peril.' However, it extended further by combining all Asians as 'yellow,' allowing for them to be seen in purely racial terms and not as individuals or even separate national groupings. At its core the term understood Asians as an undefined and unidentifiable mass that could be presumed a single color; it was purposely ambiguous. For the United States, 'yellow peril' focused on some of the first Asian races to migrate in large numbers to the nation including Filipinos, Chinese and Japanese. Far from novel, this racist idea mixed misconception with cultural differences to term the Asian races a concern to the then dominant Eurocentric world.<sup>4</sup> Historian Erika Lee notes that Asian 'yellow peril' in the eyes of Americans "were described as being unassimilable aliens who brought economic competition, disease, and immorality."<sup>5</sup> The United States in particular saw the growth of Sinophobia with the expansion of Asian immigration. Seen as a potential impediment to the American destiny, the perceived combined Asian race, whether it be Chinese, Korean or Japanese, threatened the balance of American harmony.<sup>6</sup> Another historian, John Dower, notes that 'yellow peril' was intrinsically based on race, that "the vision of the menace from the East was always more racial rather than national. It derived not from concern with any one country or people in particular, but from a vague and ominous sense of the vast, faceless, nameless yellow horde: the rising tide, indeed, of color."<sup>7</sup> 'Yellow peril' certainly was understood as the threat of the outsider, the racially different and presumably dangerous "yellow horde." The Asian race

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<sup>4</sup> Gary Y. Okihiro, *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawaii, 1865-1945* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 84-88.

<sup>5</sup> Erika Lee, "The 'Yellow Peril' and Asian Exclusion in the Americas," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (2007): 537.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 537-539.

<sup>7</sup> John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 156.

was competition to the prevailing ideas of Western civilization economically, culturally and militarily.

The generally accepted concept of race prejudice relating to Japanese American internment stems from this terminology 'yellow peril.' The study of 'yellow peril' has developed substantially over time and remains an important concept linking anti-Asian racism with anti-Japanese racism. It is not an all-encompassing term however, and it cannot fully explain Japanese internment because it fails to address how the anti-Japanese movement differs from that of other peoples, historically, and problematically, described as 'yellow races.' The perceived international relationship that existed between Imperial Japan and its citizens living abroad helps connect the specific racism faced by Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans. The ideas are interconnected but important to differentiate as only together can the full racial prejudice toward Japanese be understood. 'Yellow peril' is too broad when examining Japanese American internment as the act separated Japanese from the larger group. It combined the racial identifiers prominent in 'yellow peril' with an Eurocentric understanding of nationalism with Japan. The Euro-American ideas of imperialism and nationalism merged to present Japanese different than others of the Asian continent.

The 'Japanese problem' then accepts the racial fears of 'yellow peril' but also includes nationalistic viewpoints unique to Imperial Japan. Whereas 'yellow peril' certainly crossed international borders - the concept exists in large part due to the fear of Asian transnational mobility - it does not fully show how a powerful Japanese state reflected on the perception of Japanese people. When reviewing the presumed threat Imperial Japan had to 'white' homogeneity, there is a different view of Japanese immigrants separate from other Asian races. This variation to the broad 'yellow peril' terminology better describes the 'Japanese problem' by incorporating race

concerns but also understanding how nationalism played a role. The ‘Japanese problem,’ through this vital difference, created a more militaristic stance toward Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans. Connected through both race and Imperial Japan, the Japanese people were elevated to a significant national security concern.

### **The Anti-Japanese Movement**

The anti-Japanese movement promoted a strong connection between Japanese and military concerns. Literature between 1900 and 1940 confirms a significant faction within the United States who supported the connection between Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans to military threats. This group formed a consensus opinion of Japanese which deemed them a national security threat. More so, this faction strongly argued that it was a movement of the people of the West Coast. In 1909, media baron John P. Young wrote:

The recital of these facts ought to warn the Eastern critics of the anti-Japanese immigration movement on this coast that they may be in error in assuming that the attitude of the Pacific Coast on the subject has been inspired by labor agitators, and that the demand for exclusion does not represent the sentiment of all classes in California and of the other states on the Pacific Coast. As a matter of fact, such an assumption is wholly erroneous.<sup>8</sup>

Despite Young’s self-serving comments as an anti-Japanese publisher who profited on anti-Japanese sentiment, this paper supports there was indeed a strong consensus on the ‘Japanese problem.’ From the early 1900s to early 1930s, Japanese living in the United States were described as a direct military threat; that is to say, they were classified as a risk of ‘invasion.’ The believed

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<sup>8</sup> John P. Young, "The Support of the Anti-Oriental Movement," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 34, no. 2 (1909): 232.

strong connection between Imperial Japan and Japanese globally assumed their citizens embodied the imperialistic views and attitudes of the Japanese nation. As argued by Brian Hayashi, Japanese racial and cultural connections to Japan were rarely disputed or differentiated, resulting in the belief that Japanese loyalty stemmed directly from their race alone.<sup>9</sup> As Imperial Japan was considered by many opposed to Japanese expansion to be a direct military threat well before conflict actually occurred, the Japanese people, even internationally, were considered racially alike and constituted the same threat of ‘invasion.’

Many within the anti-Japanese movement then focused their prejudice on the racial differences between white Americans and Japanese immigrants and their inability to coexist. The Japanese, they insisted, were unable to assimilate to the American way of life understood by white homogeny. California Senator James Phelan in 1900 claimed, “Japanese are not bona fide citizens. They are not the stuff of which American citizens can be made...Personally we have nothing against Japanese, but as they will not assimilate with us and their social life is so different from ours, let them keep at a respectful distance.”<sup>10</sup> Those like Phelan believed the inability of Japanese immigrants to assimilate to the American way of life stemmed from their connection to Imperial Japan. Not only were the religious, social and economic methods of the Japanese entirely incompatible with white Americans, Japanese as a group, no matter location, had an unwavering connection to Imperial Japan and its ultimate leader, the Emperor; “Politically immature,

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<sup>9</sup> Brian Masaru Hayashi, *Democratizing The Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 16.

<sup>10</sup> Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press), 1962, 21.

trained in docile obedience, and tied to the ‘divine’ Emperor by all the ties of tradition and religion.”<sup>11</sup> As a people and a race, even if American-born, they were innately Japanese without exception. Their presence in the United States constituted an attack on the established social order.

The racial bond that connected Japanese in Imperial Japan with those in the United States quickly morphed into a military concern. General John L. DeWitt, the infamous American military commander of Western Defense Command that advocated for and oversaw the Japanese American evacuation, noted his opinion on the Japanese American connection to their ancestral homeland, “A Jap’s a Jap. It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen or not...Theoretically, he is still a Japanese and you can’t change him. You can’t change him by giving him a piece of paper.”<sup>12</sup> Japanese Americans, in the eyes of the man in charge of the defense of the Western United States, General DeWitt, were the enemy based solely on race. Japanese Americans by nature could not be loyal subjects to the United States. Whereas other ethnic groups like German Americans had similar racial and cultural heritage with the Nazi Germany enemy, the prejudice directed at them differed from that of Japanese Americans who were unable to disassociate from Imperial Japan. The ‘Japanese problem,’ as a long held and unrelenting opinion, opened the door to action in the form of internment. The anti-Japanese movement put forth numerous works denoting the extreme risk of Japanese Americans to national security.

This fear of Japanese Americans can be seen in the writing of Peter Bernard Kyne of San Francisco. Relatively unknown today, Peter Bernard Kyne wrote the book, *The Pride of Palomar* (1921). Published in several editions of *Cosmopolitan Magazine* and then later adapted into

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<sup>11</sup> Otto D. Tolischus, *Tokyo Record* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1943), 77.

<sup>12</sup> Okihiro, 92.

a silent film, the fictional story is presented as absolute fact and attempts to convey the true nature and danger of the 'Japanese problem.' Further, through efforts of the main characters, the text attempts to confirm the strong anti-Japanese consensus of the American West Coast. The fictional work spearheads the racial arguments of the anti-Japanese movement by showing how Japanese Americans were negatively affecting natural born white Americans. The story's hero, Don Miguel Farrel, a handsome, educated American soldier and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, returns home to his family estate in Southern California to find his land on the verge of purchase by a Japanese man. Farrel philosophically educates the other whites to the peril of the Japanese; "They feel that they have as much right in North America as we have, and they propose over-running us and making our country Japanese territory."<sup>13</sup> The hero, the celebrated son of Palomar, is confirmed in his stance on Japanese Americans when the Japanese antagonist Okada attempts to assassinate him so that he can gain ownership of the land. Yet the Celtic-Spaniard Farell is wise to the treachery of the Japanese American and foils the plot sending the duplicitous man out of his community. The tale ends happily as Farell marries the story's love interest and they live on the land together free of the 'Japanese problem.'

Despite the fictional nature of the story, there is no doubt about the author's desire to educate the reader and promote anti-Japanese rhetoric. Even after Okada had retreated from the story, Farrel attempts to demonstrate the inability of Japanese Americans to part ways with their Japanese heritage. Through conversation with a white school teacher in a majority Japanese American area, the reader discovered this continued connection:

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<sup>13</sup> Peter B. Kyne, *The Pride of Palomar* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1921), 74.

She pointed to a brown house half a mile away. Over it flew the flag of Japan. “They learn ancestor worship and to cow-tow to the Emperor’s picture down there, after they have attended school here...After they have learned here that Columbus discovered America on October 12th, 1492, they proceed to that Japanese school and are taught that the Mikado is a divinity and a direct descendant of the Sun God...The Buddhist school over yonder is teaching them to be Japanese citizens; under Japanese law all Japanese remain Japanese citizens at heart, even if they do occasionally vote here.”<sup>14</sup>

The quote clearly defines the loyalty of the ‘invading’ Japanese. Not only do the children continue to worship the Emperor and learn about their Japanese citizenship, they do so under the flag of Imperial Japan. *The Pride of Palomar* appealed to its reader that the racial prejudice of the book’s characters were a product of necessity and not racism. National security dictated a response as Japanese were all like Okada, willing to kill for the land of white men. Without the reader’s actions, without national actions, the state of California and the entire Pacific coast would be overwhelmed by the Japanese ‘invasion.’

*The Pride of Palomar* formed the basis of a 1921 survey compiled by Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. entitled “The Verdict of Public Opinion on the Japanese-American Question” (1921). The piece made an effort to amass opinions from some of the more prominent individuals in the United States including writers, university presidents, elected officials and members of the media. So significant an issue were Japanese immigrants, felt Vanderbilt Jr, that the most important citizens from across the nation needed to be involved to solve it. *The Pride of Palomar* being published in a national publication allowed many to confront the ‘issue’ for the first time. The introduction by Vanderbilt Jr. stated that:

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 185-186.



America needs constructive statesmanship in international affairs”...“This symposium was gathered in the hope of giving the American people the unbiased outlook of Japanese-American relations as they are today. In presenting a cross-section of the public opinion of important leaders in public affairs, we have tried to develop a guide towards better relations and better understands of the two races.<sup>15</sup>

The majority opinion found an issue with the continued immigration of Japanese and several interviewed coined it an ‘invasion.’ The term ‘invasion’ was common within Vanderbilt Jr.’s book but not unique. The opinions received, from the American ‘cross-section’ as he states, were indeed varied but confirmed the very concerning nature of the discussion. Even twenty years before war broke out between Imperial Japan and the United States, anti-Japanese racism had attracted national attention and a significant consensus had begun on how to stop the Japanese American ‘invasion.’ Books like that of Peter Kyne illuminated what Vanderbilt Jr. believed to be a pressing national concern and Vanderbilt Jr.’s text confirms Kyne and himself were among many prominent individuals that favored a strong solution to the growing ‘Japanese problem.’

### **Japanese Americans: From ‘Invasion’ to ‘Fifth Column’**

Concerns over growth of the ‘Japanese American problem’ persisted through the 1920s into the 1930s. Closer to the 1930s and 1940s however, a shift occurred in the consensus opinion, which found Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans were more likely to assist Imperial Japan as fifth columnists. Although still believed to be a serious threat to the United States, Japanese Americans were expected to become saboteurs and spies. As saboteurs or spies, Japanese living in the United States, according to the diverse anti-Japanese circle, were understood to be a continued concern. Despite this shift in perceived method of attack, Japanese immigrants

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<sup>15</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 5.

and Japanese Americans remained the center of military concern within the American Pacific realm. At no point from 1900 to 1941 were Japanese Americans not presumed to be a national security threat in the minds of anti-Japanese critics. Mass Japanese American internment hinged on the argument of military necessity. The foundation of the United States' case of military need against Japanese ultimately relied on the interconnectedness of their race with loyalty.

Numerous historians have commented on this change in Japanese American threat as perceived by the American government, including Brian Hayashi. By 1931, Hayashi claims, the United States military intelligence community no longer feared Japanese 'invasion' and that the precondition of race influencing military action no longer applied.<sup>16</sup> Public fascination with assumed Japanese American disloyalty remained strong, however the military no longer anticipated Japanese Americans to be a security risk.<sup>17</sup> In fact, Hayashi states, that any expectation of 'invasion' no longer existed in any form and that the few remaining holdouts saw only minor Japanese American fifth column potential. Hayashi is correct in noting the change between ideas of 'invasion' and that of the fifth column, a term derived from the Spanish Civil War referring to individuals within a state supportive of an external force. Yet, his confidence in the United States military intelligence community lacking fear of Japanese Americans, whether viewed from the point of 'invasion' or fifth column, misses the point. Even if the assumed threat shifted, Japanese Americans during the 1930s constituted a significant military threat in the minds of many within the military community as well as the broader public. A 1933 report confirms Hayashi's belief that fifth column activity was more plausible than Japanese Americans arming

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<sup>16</sup> Brian Masaru Hayashi, "Kilsoo Haan, American Intelligence, and the Anticipated Japanese Invasion of California, 1931-1943," *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 2 (2014): 285-286.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

themselves as combatants, but it also stresses Japanese Americans remained a major concern to the Hawaiian islands; a concept strong enough to affect the positioning of aircraft right before the Pearl Harbor attack in a manner designed to avoid sabotage, not aerial attack.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Question of Military Necessity**

All told, internment took almost 120,000 American citizens away from their lives, placing them in camps as far away from the West Coast as Arkansas.<sup>19</sup> These individuals were not charged with a crime or presented with evidence of their disloyalty but instead were assumed guilty of intent to undermine or destroy the United States. Their crime was their assumed treacherous heritage, not their individual actions. At the time of the presidential action, however, the response taken by the government was described as necessary for national defense. Even still, there remain those that maintain fifth column activity was a paramount risk to national security due to the threat of Imperial Japanese military invasion and the potential reaction of Japanese Americans to this.<sup>20</sup> The fifth column threat encompassed numerous concerns focused on efforts of sabotage and espionage for the invading force by those loyal to their cause. One such critic, former National Security Agency officer David Lowman, in his book *Magic: The Untold Story of the U.S. Intelligence and the Evacuation of Japanese Residents From the West Coast During WWII* (2000), stated “Seldom has any major event in U.S. history been as misrepresented as has U.S. intelligence related to evacuation...The United States did not act shamefully, dishonorably,

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 165-172.

Gordon W. Prange, *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor* (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), 154-155.

<sup>19</sup> *Personal Justice Denied*, 3, 149.

<sup>20</sup> Francis MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes: The Axis Fifth Column & the American Home Front* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 5.

and without cause or reason as charged.”<sup>21</sup> The potential Japanese fifth columnists were believed to be active supporters of Imperial Japan and to have significant strength within the United States to not only encumber war efforts, but act as operatives in the event of Imperial Japanese invasion. As suggested by Lowman, this clear and obvious risk prompted uncommon yet necessary methods and fully outweighed the clear violation of citizen rights. This argument was also presented by the United States government in 1942 as the necessity behind internment. So strong and likely was the potential of Japanese American treachery the government indicated, that evacuation and detainment set by racial lines allowed for military action.

General DeWitt made the United States government’s case for internment in his report, *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942* (1943). The document indicated that the unbreakable connection between individuals of Japanese ancestry resulted in a clear and obvious threat to the nation. Their concentration near military installations was far from coincidental, their religion and deification of the Emperor of Imperial Japan were not benign, their continued education in the Japanese language and tradition was for ulterior motives. The report ‘confirmed’ to the American public that the Imperial Japanese government was utilizing the assistance of Japanese Americans within the United States. Further, the report noted that due to their inability to assimilate, Japanese Americans were impossibly difficult to differentiate, and they had to be assessed and detained as a group. DeWitt stated in the report, “The evacuation was impelled by military necessity...The continued presence of a large, unassimilated, tightly knit racial group, bound to an enemy nation by strong ties of race, culture, custom and religion

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<sup>21</sup> David D. Lowman, *Magic: The Untold Story of the U.S. Intelligence and the Evacuation of Japanese Residents From the West Coast During WWII* (London: Athena Press, Inc., 2000), 3.

along a frontier vulnerable to attack constituted a menace which had to be dealt with. Their loyalties were unknown and time was of the essence.”<sup>22</sup> DeWitt’s report advised the American public that Japanese Americans had actively participated in fifth column treason and were undeniably a threat to security; “It, therefore, follows that along the vital Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential enemies, of Japanese extraction, are at large today.”<sup>23</sup> Without doubt, the report summarized, Japanese Americans were disloyal and were a serious military threat to the Pacific conflict.

Introduced in mid 1943, the *Final Report* intended to confirm the government’s rationale for internment by focusing on the Japanese race as an enemy and hostile race. It was the official document of Western Defense Command defending government action and was introduced well after the action had already taken place. The goal of the document was to reinforce the war time requirements of internment and to stress the inability to verify friend from foe. At the time of its official release in June 1943, continued internment of Japanese Americans was being challenged in the courts and the government was fearful that a judgement in favor of Japanese Americans could dissolve mass internment, thus questioning the idea of military necessity entirely. The *Final Report* became the cornerstone of the government’s case written by the military commander who ordered the action. Instead of verifying a legitimate stance of military need, it confirmed racism to be the central theme of internment. In an effort to prove military necessity it emphasized race and the result was a prejudice driven document that could not utilize facts to prove its point. Examination of the *Final Report* is vital to understanding internment because it shows both the racial and nationalistic identifiers commonly associated with Japanese Americans. It also demonstrates the weakness of the military necessity concept it attempted to support. These

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<sup>22</sup> John L. DeWitt, *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation From the West Coast 1942*. (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office), vii.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 34.

two notions, the identification of the ‘Japanese problem’ related to military necessity along with the question if national security required internment, represent the argument of this paper.

Advocates of internment cite both the Niihau incident and the Magic code breaking as validation of the claim that Japanese Americans were a legitimate threat to the United States. The Niihau Incident, they claim, confirms that Japanese racial ties were stronger than were ties to American values prompting the only Japanese on the island to collaborate in Japanese military efforts. Similarly, Magic code breaking offered a glimpse into the desires of Imperial Japan, which advocates indicate supports a broad aim to utilize any and all Japanese Americans in fifth column activities. Although a tightly guarded military secret, internment advocates have argued that Magic supported the necessity of mass internment of Japanese as it confirmed the inability to differentiate between loyal and disloyal Japanese. Niihau likewise, so claimed supporters of military necessity, demonstrated loyalty could not be expected and for all intents and purposes was likely to come down to race.

The concept of military necessity became the official basis for the United States’ internment of Japanese Americans in early 1942. The United States military and elected government presented this connection between national security and the ‘Japanese problem’ declaring internment the only reasonable solution. General DeWitt overstated connections between Japanese Americans and naval losses off the West Coast,<sup>24</sup> while Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox aligned Imperial Japanese Naval success at Pearl Harbor with Japanese American fifth column activity<sup>25</sup> as well. Emphasis was first placed on the potential threat Japanese Americans had on

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>25</sup> MacDonnell, 85.

Greg Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 77.

the American war effort as a measure of avoiding the obvious racial considerations that came with singling out a small racial minority. Despite these efforts, Executive Order 9066 vilified Japanese Americans for their race and not their potential national security risk. Even more transparent is General DeWitt's *Final Report*, whose inescapable theme cannot disconnect race and security. Consistently, DeWitt focuses on suspected or claimed Japanese American fifth column activity by connecting Japanese Americans to Imperial Japan or Japanese cultural heritage. These connections he claims are unavoidable as a racial marker and are so prevalent and indistinguishable between individuals that the entire race on American soil had to be seen as a threat controllable only through internment. Further, as aptly demonstrated by Historian Eric Muller, military necessity drew from the presumed disloyalty of Japanese opposed to substantiated fact.<sup>26</sup> The concept of military necessity has more connection to racism than substantial military need and this continued consensus informed the decisions of American leadership on internment. Simply put, the conditions for military internment did not exist.

Lowman's argument, like that of DeWitt's before, falls short of the historic complexity of internment. Both men centered their reasoning on specific evidence, which they claimed supported that an unparalleled action was needed to protect the delicate military situation of early 1942. That only through broad military authority could the threat of Japanese Americans be averted. The arguments of DeWitt and Lowman suggested that Japanese Americans were the enemy and their submission, through military means, was required to deprive the Imperial Japanese state of a weapon of war. Their unassimilable nature and inability to be seen as individuals re-

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<sup>26</sup> Eric L. Muller, *American Inquisition: The Hunt for Japanese American Disloyalty in World War II* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 5.

quired that all Japanese Americans faced the same compulsory treatment. Inevitably, their evidence is too narrow, at times outright incorrect and ultimately unable to encapsulate the multitude of factors involved. As correctly stated by historian Rodger Daniels, “the evacuation of 1942 did not occur in a vacuum.”<sup>27</sup> There was not a single motivational factor in this act, just as military necessity cannot effectively excuse away the executive order. Careful examination of documents in the decades connecting the start of Japanese immigration to the attack on Pearl Harbor dispute the need for military necessity. Beyond that, this concept of military necessity for the ‘Japanese problem’ was invented through numerous works by the anti-Japanese movement intent to prove the Japanese race as hostile to the national interests of the United States. This study then attempts to illuminate how continual efforts in politics, the media and within the military from this anti-Japanese community helped lead to mass internment after the Pearl Harbor attack.

The argument of this paper is not that every Japanese American was loyal or had undiluted patriotism to the United States. This parameter is also far too complacent and simplistic. Although Japanese Americans were by and large aligned with American interests, Magic messages show that Imperial Japan had the intention of bringing conflict to American shores and to utilize any resource possible to promote fifth column activity.<sup>28</sup> The issue is not on the individual level but rather with the governmental assumption that race alone was a factor in loyalty. Mass internment verifies this was the causation, not military need. The treatment of Japa-

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<sup>27</sup> Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camps North America: Japanese in the United States and Canada During World War II* (Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 1993), 2.

<sup>28</sup> *The “Magic” Background of Pearl Harbor*. Vol 1-5. (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office).



nese Americans in Hawaii during the Second World War demonstrates a departure from pure racial discrimination and confirms the lack of wholesale Japanese American fifth column activity. The emphasis placed on individual internment over mass internment highlighted the stark difference between the mainland United States and the territory of Hawaii, but also the over emphasis of military necessity. A second study into Nazi Germany's fifth column threats in the United States further illustrates that Germany, not Japan, had more potential in this field and demanded greater concern than that of Imperial Japan.<sup>29</sup> Between successful fifth column activity during the First World War, popular Nazi American movements and espionage networks and operatives working within American borders, Germany better defined the 'Japanese problem' notwithstanding the obvious racial disconnect between the two.

Aside from the connection between racism and the 'Japanese problem,' the idea of military necessity remains a hollow facade. The argument in and of itself, when seen in conjunction with the evidence supplied by the government, produces little to substantiate a connection between Japanese Americans and national security. So underwhelming was the evidence and actions of Japanese Americans after internment that California Attorney General Earl Warren claimed the lack of anti-American activity by Japanese Americans itself as proof of nefarious intent.<sup>30</sup> In fact, the evidence put forth by the government follows the course of those that promoted ideas of Japanese racial harmonization internationally during the pre- Second World War twentieth century period. These arguments attempt to connect Japanese nationalism, inability to assimilate and cultural associations with perceived fifth column activities. DeWitt's *Final Report* categorically touches on all these points in an effort to link Japanese Americans to Japanese

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<sup>29</sup> MacDonnell.

<sup>30</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 126-127.

nationalism, disloyalty, and even direct enemy military action. Ultimately, his argument links the historical prose of the anti-Japanese movement with conflict in an attempt to devalue the clear racial motivations inherent in internment. The consensus which formed to define the 'Japanese problem' as racially driven further classified Japanese Americans as a military threat.

## **Historiographic Review**

The connections between race and Japanese American internment has been well studied as an understood focal point of the event. Asian Americans as a whole were not detained as a result of Executive Order 9066, only Japanese Americans. Race prejudice towards Japanese is often highlighted as the greatest cause of internment. The idea has strong historical evidence as well as a clear academic following. Long time historian on the anti-Asian movement, Roger Daniels, highlights the long running racist dialogue within the United States as a principle reason for internment in *The Politics of Prejudice* (1962). Although an older text, *The Politics of Prejudice* remains a benchmark in discussing in detail how anti-Japanese prejudice was reflected in California politics. His understanding of the topic, which merges the idea of race and culture together, saw the nation ripe with racist 'yellow peril,' allowing for a general lack of empathy for the plight of Japanese Americans at the time of internment.<sup>31</sup> *The Politics of Prejudice* outlines the history of political racism within California through lobbying and anti-Japanese groups, which influenced politics as well as eventual military leadership. Daniels defines 'yellow peril' to be the primary culprit of Japanese American internment and does not delineate 'yellow peril' from the 'Japanese question.' This point of view illustrates that all racism within the United States, whether against 'red, yellow or black individuals,' "were all part and parcel of the same

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<sup>31</sup> Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*.

phenomenon.”<sup>32</sup> Long standing racial fear through ‘yellow peril’ set the preconditions for internment according to Daniels, but the racism seen was not inherently different than racism against any other group.

Another historian, Gary Okihiro, built much of his argument on the connection between race and culture, as Daniels did. Okihiro’s *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawaii, 1865-1945* (1991) argues that the preexisting racist condition within the United States and the territory of Hawaii created the conditions for internment. Further, he indicates that the views of political and cultural white leadership shared views and strategies similar to the military; more so, both the military and political leadership worked together in this regard.<sup>33</sup> All of these prejudiced views on the ‘Japanese problem’ created the idea of the ‘Japanese problem’ itself but also streamlined the narrative toward resolution of the issue through internment. The ‘Japanese problem,’ according to Okihiro, was all encompassing to white homogeny thought, including culture, politics, economy as well as militarily. Again, Okihiro postulates that race was the central tenant, claiming “a kinship with the history of other minority groups in America.”<sup>34</sup> Racism within the United States did not substantially differ between minority groups whether they be African American, Native American, or Japanese American.

Thus both Daniels and Okihiro focus on national issues of race as the central cause behind internment. The overarching theme of race blended with Japanese culture served to differentiate and isolate Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans from the rest of white American society. Historian Brian Masaru Hayashi in “Kilsso Haan, American Intelligence, and the Anticipated Japanese Invasion of California, 1931-1943,” (2014) argues this understanding of

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, vi.

<sup>33</sup> Okihiro, xiii.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, xv.

causation is incomplete. He challenges the failure of Daniels and Okihiro to differentiate ‘yellow peril’ as a broad topic to the ‘Japanese problem.’ Racial prejudice alone fails to understand the development of military concerns towards Japanese Americans as a continuous and a consistent threat.<sup>35</sup> Hayashi argues that anti-Japanese prejudice has to be understood in a more global context with factors including geopolitical dynamics being observed. “Race, culture and loyalty,” notes Hayashi, better identifies the causes of internment.<sup>36</sup> Historian Greg Robinson also argues that the variance that made the ‘Japanese problem’ unique must be analyzed. As such, he has approached Japanese American internment in a number of ways by reviewing political leadership as well as studying internment as a phenomena exclusive not only to the United States. In *By Order of the President* (2001), Robinson concentrates on how the federal government under President Roosevelt allowed widespread race prejudice in conjunction with political disinterest to present Japanese Americans as an internal enemy.<sup>37</sup> Although the book outlines the failures of Roosevelt's leadership as paramount in understanding internment, it identifies the undercurrent of race to be the primary contributor to internment.<sup>38</sup> In *A Tragedy of Democracy* (2009), Robinson expands the concept of anti-Japanese prejudice as a North American event that included Latin America and Canada as well. The importance of this work is the more global context of how the Japanese race was understood and how Japanese immigrants and their children faced hostility throughout the continent. Japanese prejudice in the United States was immense, but not unique. By reviewing this often missed aspect of the North American Japanese

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<sup>35</sup> Brian Masaru Hayashi, “Kilsoo Haan, American Intelligence, and the Anticipated Japanese Invasion of California, 1931-1943,” 277–93.

<sup>36</sup> Hayashi, *Democratizing The Enemy: The Japanese American Internment*, 16.

<sup>37</sup> Greg Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

experience, Robinson is able to show how racial fears and the depiction of Japanese nationalism demonstrated a threat understood outside of individual nations.<sup>39</sup>

In another text, *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (2004), Brian Hayashi again argues that singular focus on United States domestic issues cannot lead to a full understanding of Japanese American internment. Race and wartime hysteria do not speak to the full context of events occurring outside of the United States. Indeed, the third ‘cause’ of internment listed in *Justice Denied*, failure of political leadership, cannot account for the anti-Japanese movement that existed across the Americas during this period. Hayashi’s perspective determines that the relationship between ideas of race and culture which ‘determine’ loyalty were global. Other historians as well have highlighted the inability to understand Japanese American internment as a strictly domestic affair. Writers such as Eiichiro Azuma in “Japanese Immigrant Settler Colonialism in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands and the U.S. Racial-Imperialist Politics of the Hemispheric ‘Yellow Peril’” (2014) and Erika Lee in “The ‘Yellow Peril’ and Asian Exclusion in the Americas” (2007) further this concept. All find that the changes in Japan and its influence within Asia factored greatly into the lives of Japanese immigrants within the Americas. The way in which they were perceived as a threat different than other Asians stems from Japanese Imperialism.<sup>40</sup> This further connected to military threats and dictated a response, or as Azuma notes, the establishment of a “national security regime” within the United States.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Greg Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy: Japanese Confinement in North America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

<sup>40</sup> Eiichiro Azuma, "Japanese Immigrant Settler Colonialism in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands and the U.S. Racial-Imperialist Politics of the Hemispheric ‘Yellow Peril,’” *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 2 (2014).

Lee.

<sup>41</sup> Azuma, 257.

Racism was not unique to the United States and the geopolitical relationships of the Pacific greatly influenced the perception of Japanese immigrants globally. This paper agrees, finding a significant relationship between the strength and imperialistic growth of Imperial Japan with the image of Japanese Americans. 'Yellow peril' helps preface the racist ideas confronting people of Asian descent within Western culture, yet it fails to grasp the differences in how Japanese descendants were pictured. Race, in addition to nationalistic viewpoints, allows for a fuller understanding of the interconnectedness of the 'Japanese problem' and eventual mass internment.

### **Thesis Agenda**

This paper attempts to explain two key points. First, in Part I, how military necessity was perpetuated over the decades before World War II as the only true solution for the 'Japanese problem' based on a racial understanding of Japanese Americans. Ideas of race and culture that bound Japanese Americans to Imperial Japan's Pacific expansion and thus visualized them as a threat is vital to this understanding. Although connected to the concept of 'yellow peril,' these significant differences were a precondition setting Japanese Americans on an individual level of risk associated with military conditions. This section analyzes the works and commentaries of leading state, territorial and federal politicians, members of the media, Asian culture, military and history experts, as well as military leadership to explain the growth of a consensus opinion of the 'Japanese problem.' The initial part looks first at the variation between the idea of 'yellow peril' and the 'Japanese problem,' while also confirming the specific elements that defined this so called 'problem.' These sources and individuals must be reviewed to determine the pattern of

prejudice against Japanese Americans. It must also be noted that the arguments promoting military action toward the ‘Japanese problem’ were facilitated from various points of views and for various reasons, but the emphasis on ‘invasion’ followed by fifth column activity were so well defined for decades that it allowed for this false depiction to construe reality. Japanese American internment became a condition of the United States’ tainted view of the ‘Japanese problem.’

The second portion, Part II, assesses the merit of military necessity presented by internment supporters and how that topic compares to other threats or geographical areas of concern. Did DeWitt have “no alternative but to conclude that the Japanese constituted a potentially dangerous element from the viewpoint of military security”?<sup>42</sup> By looking at the government decision to intern as well as direct examples in their argument, we are able to reaffirm the existence of the anti-Japanese movement but also the lack of tangible evidence to support claims of ‘invasion’ or fifth column activity. Specifically, this portion looks at the use of Magic code breaking and the Niihau incident as oft used evidence to verify Japanese American ill desires. It also reviews the threat posed by Axis alliance partner Nazi Germany and the nuanced variations on how the Hawaiian territory dealt with their large Japanese American population in comparison to the American West Coast. These elements together confirm West Coast Japanese American extraction overstepped military demands.

The period between the start of Japanese migration to the United States and Japanese American internment is littered with numerous events that help to explain how such an extreme outcome occurred. Efforts to identify Japanese migrants and Japanese Americans as a military threat were widespread, descriptive, and represented a wide element of American society and should therefore not be overlooked. The tone of these efforts explained the Japanese race as not

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<sup>42</sup> DeWitt, 19.

only undesirable, as were many other non-white races, but conceptualized a racial plot to dominate the American Pacific states and territories. Japanese Americans were clearly delineated from others based on this notion that they held an inherent desire to conquer all of the Pacific. Literature from numerous sources presented a view into the duplicitous schemes of this enemy race and guided them toward undemocratic solutions explained as necessary to combat the evil. Ideas of necessity were built through intolerance and prejudice based in fear; they were successful because the images depicted the loss of dominance.



## PART I: 'YELLOW PERIL' VERSUS ANTI-JAPANESE RHETORIC

*'Yellow peril' is often used as a blanket term to define the significant racism found globally toward people of Asian descent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This terminology defines a broad view of events and rhetoric and thus encapsulates a high level understanding of the Asian experience during the period. Ultimately it highlights the oppression of Asian races as a whole in terms of pure racial identification. This section attempts to draw out the specific basis of anti-Japanese rhetoric as a separate issue from 'yellow peril.' By doing so, a greater understanding of the racial and national divergence within the Asian races are identified. For Japanese Americans the racism they faced incorporated aspects of the racial identities of 'yellow peril' but further connected Imperial Japan's growing Imperialism based on Eurocentric models to a sense of nationalism rarely exhibited or identified in general Asian fears.*

The differences between the anti-Japanese movement in the United States and the concept of 'yellow peril' are important in understanding how Japanese mass internment occurred. Japanese were but only one race that was besieged with the racial concerns of 'yellow peril.' Yet the discussion on the disconnect between these two terms warrant further discussion. 'Yellow peril' is a complex topic that incorporates ideas of race and culture in manifesting Asian populations as a threat to the Western world. Gary Okihiro argues that 'yellow peril' was not solely just media sensationalism but "was accorded legitimacy by respected leaders."<sup>43</sup> The idea of how this threat would materialize was not always clearly defined and allowed for numerous concepts of irrational fear. Economic fears that Asian immigrants had a lower standard of living than native workers and therefore could undercut the cost of native labor was but only one such example. Racial differences between the Oriental and the Occidental worlds helped broaden this misunderstanding and the ominous view of Asians. Scientific racism authors like Lothrop Stoddard in *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (1920) and Madison

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<sup>43</sup> Okihiro, 80.

Grant in *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Basis of European History* (1918) supported that Asian populations, based on their race, would marginalize the white dominated world through vast population growth, increased miscegenation and continued immigration into nations considered traditionally white, and both men alluded to collapse of Western superiority.<sup>44</sup>

Writers like Stoddard and Grant argued that race was the bond that kept Asia and its immigrants connected internationally. Despite immigration that took individuals thousands of miles from their place of birth, they remained entirely connected to their racial homeland. Further, they argued that those bonds could not be broken because cultural differences could not overcome racial ones.<sup>45</sup> For Asian races, they were unable to assimilate to Western culture. As such, it was argued by ‘yellow peril’ advocates, that Asians were likely to bring their culture with them internationally which clashed and even threatened, in the case of Japanese, that of the native population. In this sense, Japanese were considered similarly unable to assimilate. Japanese immigrants did not possess the racial ability to assume the cultural traits of their new homelands.<sup>46</sup> This created a threat to Western nations like the United States. As Stoddard believed, the threat of the ‘colored’ races including Asians, was “A mighty problem - a planet-wide problem - (which) confronts us today and will increasingly confront us in the days to come.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1920), 48, 249, 256  
Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Basis of European History* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1918), 5, 144.

<sup>45</sup> Grant, 59-60

Stoddard, 27-28.

<sup>46</sup> Stoddard, 268-269.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

Race, argued the anti-Japanese faction, was significant in encumbering assimilation of Japanese immigrants, but it also presented a concern for native populations. The perceived Japanese inability to assimilate drove racist feelings towards Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens alike, but it also drove military fears. This frame of mind was vital for the concept of military necessity as it confirmed there was no distinction between Japanese people and assumed all had to be disloyal. The argument of General DeWitt's *Final Report* stressed a connection between assimilation and loyalty. DeWitt claimed the Japanese race was unassimilable and argued that their deep cultural ties to religion, Japanese language and education were the factors that maintained this connection to Imperial Japan; "Because of the ties of race, the intense feeling of filial piety and the strong bonds of common tradition, culture and customs, this population (Japanese) presented a tightly-knit racial group."<sup>48</sup> The result was a Japanese American population that racially appeared indistinguishable from one another and whose allegiance could not be trusted by American officials. As noted by Historian Eric Muller, family ties were more significant than national ties, "loyalty followed families."<sup>49</sup> The General stated in his 1943 report that "no ready means existed for determining the loyal and the disloyal with any degree of safety."<sup>50</sup> All Japanese, argued DeWitt, whether citizens of the United States or natives to Japan, were the same enemies of the United States. The military considerations were clear, the treatment of Japanese Americans should be no different than native Japanese with the inclusion of military internment.

Yet, critics of Japanese immigration to the United States argued long before DeWitt that if Japanese immigrants were unable to become good Americans, they should not be welcomed

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<sup>48</sup> DeWitt, 9.

<sup>49</sup> Muller, 19.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

members of society. This argument found support from a wide swath of Americans including a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania attorney, Edwin M. Abbott. Abbott remarked that “The encroachments of the Yellow race on American soil should never be tolerated. This menace is one that should be fought at every turn...It is surely a Yellow peril of a most pernicious kind and every true American will respond to the call to duty to enforce most stringent laws to protect our soil, our homes, our heritage, and our Nation from such an evil now and forever.”<sup>51</sup> Edwin Abbott is careful to term those needed to suppress this issue as ‘true Americans’ as not to be confused with Japanese Americans. One respondent to Vanderbilt Jr.’s survey, Walter M Harvey, was an attorney from Tacoma, Washington. His argument could have doubled for the teacher in *The Pride of Palomar* and her views on assimilation of Japanese Americans, “They (Japanese Americans) do not look with favor upon America nor upon American institutions or the Christian religion and no matter how long they may live in this Country or in any of our territorial possessions, they still hold fast to their loyalty to Japan and its institutions including its method of education and its religion. They are a sharp, shrewd, capable but absolutely unreliable and untrustworthy race.”<sup>52</sup> Harvey argued that Japanese were loyal to their nation of origin only but also defined them by race as ‘unreliable’ or disloyal. His argument also parallels Madison Grant’s who believed that “Oriental races, who throughout history have shown little capacity to create, organize or even to comprehend Republican institutions”<sup>53</sup> should not be trusted. Both men were unwilling to accept Japanese into democracy due either to their lack of intelligence or their lack of respect.

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<sup>51</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 10.

<sup>52</sup> Kyne, 185.

<sup>53</sup> Grant, 218.

Numerous politicians agreed that the Japanese race could not assimilate. According to California State Senator Hiram Johnson, “Once Japanese, always Japanese...they will remain Japanese to the end.”<sup>54</sup> California in particular attempted to prevent Japanese immigration to the United States and highlighted those fears as a reason. California Senate Joint Resolution Number Six of 1909 drew out concerns on the ability of the Japanese to assimilate by stating, “Whereas, The Progress, happiness and prosperity of the people of a nation depend upon a homogeneous population; people who are unsuited for American citizenship or for assimilation with the Caucasian race, has resulted and will result in lowering the American standard of life and the dignity and wage-earning capacity of American labor.”<sup>55</sup> The state presented their argument against Japanese immigration on the basis of the state’s economic wellbeing by concluding that racially, Japanese could not become or enhance the “homogeneous population.” Between 1905 and 1945, the California legislation saw the introduction of anti-Japanese bills every biennial session<sup>56</sup> including 27 measures introduced in 1911 alone.<sup>57</sup>

State politicians were not the only ones who found Japanese assimilation impossible. After the 1907 ‘Gentleman’s Agreement’ under President Theodore Roosevelt, in which Japan agreed to stop issuing passports for Japanese laborers into the United States,<sup>58</sup> the federal government, seventeen years later, amidst continued concerns of Japanese immigrants in the United

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<sup>54</sup> Okihiro, 91-92.

<sup>55</sup> Hichborn, Franklin, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1909* (San Francisco: Press of The James H. Barry Company, 1909), 215.

<sup>56</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 20.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 50.

<sup>58</sup> Okihiro, 37-38.

States exceeding 'viable' limits, passed the 1924 Immigration Act outlawing all Japanese immigration and confirming the ineligibility of Japanese immigrants to become naturalized citizens.<sup>59</sup> Future President Franklin D. Roosevelt used a popular racial argument in a 1925 speech where he indicates both the United States and Japan do not want to see the mixing of their cultures. Japanese could not assimilate to the American way of life the same as Americans could not embrace a Japanese lifestyle:

Californians have properly objected on the sound basic ground that Japanese immigrants are not capable of assimilation into the American population...In this question, then, of Japanese exclusion from the United States, it is necessary only to advance the true reason—the undesirability of mixing the blood of the two peoples. This attitude would be fully understood in Japan, as they would have the same objection to Americans migrating to Japan in large numbers.<sup>60</sup>

The argument, that Japan too objected to mixing of races, attempted to justify discriminatory policies but only continued to promote the clearly understood racially driven rhetoric of the anti-Japanese movement.

The perceived inability of Japanese to assimilate into the American culture became a point of emphasis for the anti-Japanese movement. Accordingly, if Japanese immigrants were unable to become American, then they would naturally attempt to create a Japanese sphere within the United States. In fact, noted many anti-Japanese writers, Japanese almost always

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<sup>59</sup> U.S. Congress, House, *Immigration Act of 1924 (Johnson-Reed Act)*, HR 7995, 68th Cong., 1st sess., Introduced to the House April 12, 1924.

<sup>60</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Editorials for the Macon Telegraph: April 30, 1925," Georgia Info: An Online Georgia Almanac.

lived in close proximity to other Japanese immigrants in an effort to maintain their cultural heritage.<sup>61</sup> This appeared to many to support that racial ties bound the Japanese together and prevented their association with Americans. This argument was significantly more convenient than realistic attempts to be inclusive to foreigners. It further disregarded similar ethnic European neighborhoods throughout the nation that functioned as highly connected and sometimes isolated communities. However similar, the racial highlights of Japanese enhanced a negative viewpoint not always shared when examining European immigrants, especially as the twentieth century advanced. In turn, Japanese immigrants were racially unable to become Americans and therefore were a threat as they possessed ties to Imperial Japan. If race supported they could not assimilate it also supported their acceptance of Imperial Japan's conquest.

Certainly the ties between Imperial Japan and its immigrants internationally were difficult at times to differentiate. As Gary Okihiro observed, the strong connection Japanese immigrants had to their Japanese culture in the form of religion, language, press and education bred significant anti-Japanese fear.<sup>62</sup> These perceived anti-American actions were understood by many to be both racial or nationalistic in nature. Realistically, the combination of the two perceived concerns, an unassailable race and strong national patriotism linked to an imperial power, defined why Japanese were elevated to a military risk not seen by other Asian races. California State Senator W.R. Sharkey's 1921 comments illustrate how the two ideas combined beliefs on Japanese; "The Civic Code of Japan provides that a child born in this Country is a citizen of Japan and is subject to military duty in Japan between the ages of 17 and 40 years, unless expatriated, therefore the American-born Japanese hold dual citizenship. First, with allegiance to Japan

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<sup>61</sup> Okihiro, xi.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

under military service, and secondary, rights of citizenship in America. I feel that further comment upon this phase of the situation is unnecessary other than to say that, 'once a Japanese, always a Japanese.'"<sup>63</sup> Sharkey both attacks the race and nationalism of Japanese indicating that Japanese are always Japanese racially but also held full allegiance to the Japanese military. Ironically, in Sharkey's comment Japanese nationalism is understood to be a negative which makes American citizenship secondary, yet his own strong nationalistic tie is understood to be a positive. For Sharkey, Japanese Americans could not be relied on as Americans due to their race.

The connection to the Imperial 'conquests' of Japan helps explain how 'yellow peril' and race alone do not fully explain the anti-Japanese hostility. Racism certainly played a role in Japanese internment but the racism encapsulated by 'yellow peril' cannot stand as a singular explanation. Authors from the early to middle twentieth century proclaim the inability of Japanese immigrants to blend into the fabric of American life significantly related to both the cultural and racial differences between the natives and the immigrants. These differences alone did not make them a military threat, but it indicated to many the inability to verify their loyalty to the United States in the event of conflict. As such, it would be incorrect to assume that was the only reason for mass internment of Japanese. Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans identified as national security risks in 1942 found their racial ties to Imperial Japan further associated them with Japanese imperialism, military conquest and ideas of nationalism.

Race was the understood connection between the Asian populations and their potential threat, even if their intentions were not always clear, according to those advancing 'yellow peril.' To the anti-Japanese movement in the early twentieth century, the threat of the Japanese race was

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<sup>63</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 51.



not vague. Although Japanese bore similarities to other Asians from a racial standpoint, that similarity alone did not fully explain their threat. Asian races together formed a concept of often undefined concerns to the 'white' world but the threat specific to Japanese was enhanced due to the rapid advancement of Imperial Japan. By the early twentieth century, Japan had become a significant military power within Asia, who used this strength mimicked from the Western world to become an imperial power.<sup>64</sup> This constituted a direct threat to the Western powers but also the United States who, through the Monroe Doctrine, considered the Pacific their domain.<sup>65</sup> During the Second World War, Japan challenged not only the military standing of the Western world but also their racial and cultural superiority over Asia.<sup>66</sup> Therefore the Japanese, from a nationalistic standpoint, stood out from 'yellow peril' as a more defined and realistic threat. Their individual race, as Japanese, showed an association to a competitor in the Pacific but also a potential militarily hostile nation.

The history of Japan's rise to predominance started when the United States' forcefully 'opened' Japan to trade in 1853, after which Japan began a rapid modernization based on Western ideals.<sup>67</sup> This development included economic, cultural and militaristic changes as Japan started to compete with European influence in Asia. Through its own expansion, Japan believed they would be seen by Europe as equals but also avoid European domination of their island nation as well. In only a few decades, Japan became a powerful force of its own and contested the superiority of other Western nations, who only years before it had emulated. China, a proud and

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<sup>64</sup> Richard Storry, *A History of Modern Japan* (New York: Penguin Books, 1960), 134-137.

<sup>65</sup> Dower, 59.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>67</sup> Storry, 85-93.

resource-rich nation, failed to modernize with the changing world and became an example to Japan as the European powers, as well as Japan, began to colonize it for their own benefit.<sup>68</sup> An indication of Japanese growth was its imperialistic measures in claiming Korea and attacking Russia.<sup>69</sup> After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan was more than capable of placing an advanced army in the field but also commanded respect with a large, modern navy, capable of spreading the nation's prestige outside its own territorial waters. The influence of the United States in Asia and the Pacific, shown in part by its 'opening' of Japan to the international community, had in many ways, created a rival in Japan. Unsurprisingly, ideas of potential military conflict between the two predominant powers in the Pacific, Japan and the United States, became a frequent topic of review.

Concern for Imperial Japan as a military opponent began to build well before the Second World War despite very little political hostility between the United States and Imperial Japan. In fact, several authors identified Imperial Japan as a greater threat to the United States during the First World War than Imperial Germany. Imperial Germany too was a burgeoning imperialistic power during this period of heightened nationalism but its expansionism appeared more benign to numerous anti-Japanese writers.<sup>70</sup> The difference between the two came back to race. The imperialism of an Asian nation garnered more concern than that of a European nation to the anti-Japanese movement. Indeed, the combination of Japanese racial understanding and their unique standing in the world guided the Japanese race toward 'problem' status. Author James Francis

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 125-128

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 125-128, 138-143.

<sup>70</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), 142-144.

Abbott, a scholar with experience at the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy and Washington University in St. Louis, lived for some time in Japan. His book, *Japanese Expansion and American Policies* (1916) argued that American expansion into the Pacific was acceptable policy through the Monroe Doctrine whereas Japanese movement needed to be scrutinized as hazardous against Western civilization.<sup>71</sup> Despite millions of deaths occurring on European battlefields and the close Japanese alliance to the United Kingdom at the time of writing, Abbott still envisioned isolationist America to be most interested in the Japanese threat.<sup>72</sup> Although advocating for peace based on economic cooperation, Abbott feared Japanese expansion. Further underscoring the vast misunderstanding of Japanese immigrants' culture, Abbott spoke of his disdain of race prejudice, "Race prejudice is an evil, and we should strive by every possible means to eradicate it, for our own sake,"<sup>73</sup> but failed to understand that his approach to Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans was indeed prejudicial. His immense failure to properly analyze his own concerns of Imperial Japan as race driven underscores that the anti-Japanese movement gained traction through significant dramatization of an incomplete and consistently wrong depiction of Japan and its descendants.

Looking again at Scientific Racism advocate Lothrop Stoddard, this concept of Japanese racial differences and its threat was discussed in his book as well. He argued that Japanese migration was dangerous to world peace and that the Japanese were "Fired by a fervent patriotism" to become a global power.<sup>74</sup> He concluded that Japan "must find lands where Japanese can

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<sup>71</sup> James F. Abbott, *Japanese Expansion and American Policies* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1916).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 248-250.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 211.

<sup>74</sup> Stoddard, 49.

breed by the tens of millions if she is not to be automatically overshadowed in course of time...This is the secret of her aggressive foreign policy, her chronic imperialism, her extravagant dreams of conquest and 'world domination.'"<sup>75</sup> The idea of "fervent patriotism" related to the racial Japanese makeup. Another author, Carl Crow, directly interwove these concepts to identify, what he considered, the true Japanese identity solely linked through the Emperor. "The Japanese constitution, written and interpreted more with a view to strengthening the power and prestige of the Emperor than to safeguarding the rights of the people, declares him to be sacred and inviolable, the head of the Empire, holding in himself all rights of sovereignty. The entire structure of the Japanese state and the entire system of Japanese morality are based on this foundation."<sup>76</sup> Therefore, describes Crow, the Japanese are wholly connected through the Emperor to devotion to Japan and its race. DeWitt's *Final Report* found the worship of the Emperor concerning as it deviated from expectations of proper Americans and strengthened their connection to the Japanese homeland.<sup>77</sup>

To be sure, the patriotism displayed by Japanese immigrants to the Emperor and Imperial Japan, real or imagined, was a point of emphasis to those opposed to Japanese immigration. An East Coast editor, J. R. Hastings, agreed that the very introduction of Japanese Americans into the United States was "of sinister portent" but also that Japan's brand of patriotism was inconsistent with American ideals:

The 'peaceful penetration' by the Japanese to which you refer in your letter is a matter that stirs strong feelings in me - possibly because I am a native of California, and have

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 49.

<sup>76</sup> Crow, 31.

<sup>77</sup> DeWitt, 10-14.

had the opportunity to observe these people and their reactions to Western customs. In my opinion there can be nothing but evil as a result, if we permit this penetration to go on. Their psychology is not ours. Their patriotism, fanatic devotion to their own ruler, moral concepts, stands of living, all are at variance with our own, and to such an extent that their presence in numbers is, in my opinion, of sinister portent.<sup>78</sup>

J. R. Hastings broaches both the lack of similarities between the two races of people and the assumed duplicitous plotting of the Japanese. As he states, if continued ‘penetration’ occurs nothing but ‘evil’ can come. After a 1920 Japanese American and Japanese migrant protest in Hawaii to ascertain better pay and working conditions, an official federal report on the incident found their actions to have nothing to do with class conflict and everything to do with racial ties to their Japanese heritage.<sup>79</sup> The Federal report and Hastings appear to align. The efforts of Japanese Americans as individuals to improve their lives were seen only as well scripted maneuvers, as though Imperial Japan was nothing more than a ventriloquist controlling its Japanese American dolls from across the Pacific. The anti-Japanese movement of the United States brutally engaged Japanese Americans, attacking their psychology and customs. They further questioned their ambitions and loyalties, marking them a group that threaten those that greatly outnumbered them. Hastings, like many of his compatriots including the fictional character Don Farrel in *The Pride of Palomar*, could not see beyond their own ‘patriotism’ in their attempt to fend off invaders and protect their nation. The “fanatic devotion” and “patriotism” which defined Japanese Americans were incompatible with American society. The continual attempts by

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<sup>78</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 16.

<sup>79</sup> Okihiro, 92.

Japanese Americans to gain equality made those characteristics dangerous, albeit both “devotion,” and “patriotism” were considered desired American virtues. Unsurprisingly, the hypocrisy of these shared traits were lost on the anti-Japanese movement.

The perceived connections between a nationalistic Japanese race and Imperial Japan, as well as their assumed inability to assimilate, was portrayed by the anti-Japanese movement as a potential national security crisis. Pundits from varying fields including the media, politicians, military advisors and cultural experts argued these links indicated the military aims of the Japanese race as a whole and therefore the military necessity of intervention. The mass internment, as argued by the military, established the same arguments of military necessity toward the Japanese threat as had been presented over the last forty plus years. Arguments of cultural links, inability to assimilate and the ever present connection to the Japanese race highlighted in the official document explaining internment, *Final Report*, but the same arguments had been seen for years in anti-Japanese literature. Military necessity remains the link between anti-Japanese literature and Executive Order 9066.

### **Fears of an Imagined Japanese ‘Invasion’**

*Some of the earliest anti-Japanese writers argued that the threat of Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans bordered on an ‘invasion.’ In fact, by the early twentieth century some writers indicated the invasion was already happening. These arguments perpetuated a growing fear of Japanese Americans by connecting them to hostile forces of Imperialistic Japan and the racial hysteria on the ‘yellow’ races of Asia. By connecting Japanese Americans to ideas of ‘invasion’ those opposed to Japanese immigration were indeed bridging the gap between a hypothetical minority population risk to a national security emergency. Through continuation of this message into the 1920s the anti-Japanese consensus formed a unified position of military need toward Japanese Americans.*

Some of the first individuals to argue this point of military necessity, between 1898 and the mid 1920s, specifically warned of a Japanese ‘invasion.’ The powerful term ‘invasion’ was

often found in anti-Japanese literature of the time and represented a wide array of American society. Two of the more powerful and influential West Coast media voices against Japanese Americans were those of William Randolph Hurst and the already mentioned John P. Young.<sup>80</sup> Their newspapers pushed obviously racist agendas but their continuing emphasis on the military concern was evident. In 1905, Young's *Chronicle* noted that the "inundation of Japanese" if not stopped would lead to a "complete Orientalization of the Pacific Coast"<sup>81</sup> while Hurst's *Examiner* in the same year reported that Japanese in Hawaii were having infantry drills and were armed. Within the same article it was said that the Japanese were "secretly preparing for hostilities."<sup>82</sup> In September of 1905, the *Examiner* again visualized the Japanese threat to its readers by publishing an illustration of a Japanese soldier whose shadow loomed over the Pacific and California.<sup>83</sup> The image's message was clear; the Japanese were a legitimate threat to American dominance in the Pacific and even the American West Coast. Invasion from foreign forces as well as those currently armed and drilling in Hawaii and the West Coast were presented as a reality to readers of Hurst papers.

The influence of the media, especially Hurst papers, was felt throughout the years that followed these 1905 publishings. In 1921, editor for the *New York American*, W.A. Thayer, noted the work of a Hurst correspondent in uncovering Japanese treachery:

Mr. Joseph Timmons, of the Los Angeles Examiner staff... has just made a thorough investigation of the Japanese 'invasion' of the Hawaiian Islands. A series of articles giving the results of his investigation is now appearing in the Hurst papers. Mr. Timmons

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<sup>80</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 25.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 70-71.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 70.

finds that the islands, so essential to the defense of the Pacific Coast, are more like Japanese territory than American, and that in the event of war all the islands except Oahu could be taken easily by Japan, while Oahu is not prepared to stand a siege. Few of the Japanese could be counted on to be loyal to America, and their influence is all toward a continuation of the 'peaceful peril penetration' of the mainland.<sup>84</sup>

Thayer expressed Japanese intentions as an "invasion" and "peaceful" penetration. His terminology alludes to fears of the Japanese race but it also directs his reader to acknowledging a national security element underlying Japanese intentions. Along those lines, Thayer also questioned the loyalty of Japanese in Hawaii. This question was especially important as the islands appeared more like Japan than America to the editor. Historian Gary Okihiro points out that during the 1920s Hawaii's political and economic leadership pushed a strong idealized American culture to Americanize non-whites but also to oppose Japanese cultural influence.<sup>85</sup> Thus Thayer's comments must be attempting to illustrate that the Japanese race was the reason for the territory being more Japanese than American.

One of the more influential military writers of the early twentieth century, Alfred Mahan, believed in the threat of Japanese. Although Mahan died in 1914, his work on naval strategy and views on the Pacific greatly influenced many during this period. As a former American Rear Admiral, Mahan believed future conflict for the United States would be emanating from the Pacific and that resources should be diverted from the Atlantic to counter this risk:

Considering the American states as members of the European family, as they are by traditions, institutions, and languages, it is in the Pacific, where the westward course of empire again meets the East, that their relations to the future of the world become most apparent. The Atlantic, bordered on either shore by the European family in the strongest

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<sup>84</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 20.

<sup>85</sup> Okihiro, xi.



and most advanced types of its political development, no longer serves, but binds together.<sup>86</sup>

Mahan noted the races of Western Europe and the United States were so similar that conflict between the two appeared implausible. Yet, the commonality of “tradition, institutions and languages” did not exist between the East and the West. These differences that served to link some were likely to create conflict between others based on race. It was the Pacific, where Japan’s expansionist goals presented a significant risk to the national security of the United States, and to western civilization, that Mahan found concerning. Again, writing right before his death in 1914, Mahan urged then Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, to focus on the Pacific over the Atlantic.<sup>87</sup> Although on the eve of the First World War Mahan inexplicably failed to realize the true nature Europe’s coming conflict. He, like James Abbott, was more concerned with the racial complexion of the Pacific to the colonial concerns of the Atlantic. Together, the writers underscored how the combination of race and nationalism, something they viewed as a positive in Eurocentric nations, was a threat when displayed by the nations of the East.

The overall focus of Mahan’s earlier work, *The Interest of America In Sea Power, Present and Future* (1898), directed itself against Japan and China as the former continued to gain influence in the Pacific. Interestingly, China was still a concern for Mahan despite Japan’s dominance in the region and China’s inability to avoid European partition. Mahan’s inclusion of China as a threat points again to his history of to indiscriminately lumping ‘yellow’ races when politically and militarily only Japan had a legitimate opportunity to expand its empire. The use

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<sup>86</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America In Sea Power, Present and Future* (Boston: Little, Brown, And Company, 1897), 259.

<sup>87</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 27.

of a racialized notion of Asians illustrates that Mahan, at least initially, saw Asians as a singular unit. The book continued by indicating that dividing the fleet between the two oceans, even if connected via canal in Central America, would severely hinder American naval power in turning back the imminent Japanese threat. Immediate action was needed to prepare the nation to protect the West Coast, including consideration of those peoples coming to populate the region:

The military needs of the Pacific States, as well as their supreme importance to the whole country, are yet a matter of the future, but of a future so near that provision should begin immediately. To weigh their importance, consider what influence in the Pacific would be attributed to a nation comprising only the States of Washington, Oregon, and California, when filled with such men as now people them and still are pouring in, and which controlled such maritime centers as San Francisco, Puget Sound, and the Columbia River. Can it be counted less because they are bound by the ties of blood and close political union to the great communities of the East? But such influence, to work without jar and friction requires underlying military readiness, like the proverbial iron hand under the velvet glove.<sup>88</sup>

This powerful statement alerted the reader to the risk of Japanese immigrants in the United States. The hypothetical question presented by Mahan explained that without action in the near future, the controlling element on the West Coast would be Japanese immigrants. Not only were Japanese immigrants occupiers, they were ‘pouring’ into the nation with the potential to ‘control’ multiple maritime centers. Census figures place the Japanese immigrant population within the United States at just over 24,000 in 1900, a number that questions both the idea of Japanese ‘pouring’ in and occupying.<sup>89</sup> Further, their residence in important maritime cities invoked military concern. The concentration of Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans in maritime locations was proof of harmful intent to Mahan in the early 1900s, but also to DeWitt in 1942.

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<sup>88</sup> Mahan, 25.

<sup>89</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 1.

The latter stated in support of internment that “It could not be established, of course, that the location of thousands of Japanese adjacent to strategic points verified the existence of some vast conspiracy to which all of them were parties...It seemed equally beyond doubt...that the presence of other was not mere coincidence.”<sup>90</sup> DeWitt also tailored his message of military necessity to include the Japanese inability to assimilate, an idea Mahan alluded to in his book decades before. Ties of “blood,” or race, were the defining factor. Mahan’s statement concluded by indicating military action is the answer. The idea of the “iron hand under the velvet glove” further alluded to the application of military invention. A newspaper editor W.W. Emmerson came to a similar conclusion as Mahan, writing in 1921 that the only potential solution would be one “that can *only be settled by the arbitrament of the sword* (Author emphasis).”<sup>91</sup> Although Emmerson was writing a couple decades after Mahan, the tongue in cheek conclusion on the ‘Japanese problem’ presented by both men alluded to military solutions.

In the years that followed Mahan’s work additional books began to touch on the ‘Japanese problem.’ One of these military writers was Homer Lea. Despite having never served in the military, Lea presented himself as an expert on military affairs and did actually become a leading military advisor to China. His popular book, *Valor of Ignorance* (1909) showed him in full military regalia though he held no rank. Having spent time in China as a military advisor, Lea believed that the isolationism of the United States was a major concern to the aggressive tactics of Japanese expansion. Certainly, he argued, the two nations were on a collision course over the Pacific.<sup>92</sup> Not only did he believe that Japanese expansion would come into contact with the American territories of the Philippines and Hawaii, but also the American West Coast. *The*

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<sup>90</sup> DeWitt, 9.

<sup>91</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 45.

<sup>92</sup> Homer Lea, *The Valor of Ignorance* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1909), 192.

*Valor of Ignorance* went to great lengths to illustrate how a literal Japanese invasion and American defenses would likely play out in the coming conflict. A central aspect of this coming conflict was the Japanese immigrant ‘invasion’ Lea indicated had already begun. Working in concert, Japanese immigrants, Japanese Americans and Japan would be well coordinated and represent a true military concern capable of rapid dislocation of American military forces. Lea’s text, despite his actual lack of military experience, gathered great support from those within the military establishment of the United States.

The *Valor of Ignorance* was transparent on the perceived issues with Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens:

Japanese immigration into the Hawaiian Islands, from 1900 to 1908, has been 65,708. The departures during this periods were 42,313. The military unfit have in this manner been supplanted by the veterans of the great war, and the military occupation of Hawaii tentatively accomplished. In these islands at the present time the number of Japanese who have completed their active term of service in the imperial armies, a part of whom are veterans of the Russian War, exceeds the entire field army of the United States. Within twenty-four hours after a declaration of war the solitary American battalion that stands guard over these islands will disappear. As Hawaiian sovereignty passed forever in a single day, so shall this Republic be put aside in the same manner and in longer period of time.<sup>93</sup>

Lea’s view on Japanese Americans was entirely based on their suspected militant nature. They were, in his judgement, instrumental in a plot to establish Japanese control over the Pacific. As stated also by Mahan, they were an occupying force and a direct military threat to the United States. The immigrants themselves, connected to their homeland through military service and

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 250-251.

race, had less interest in agricultural pursuits than military ones; simply put, they were soldiers from the ‘great’ Russo-Japanese War only waiting for the order to advance.

Lea’s text was strongly supported by the military community. Lieutenant General Adna R Chaffee, former United States Army Chief of Staff, wrote an introduction to the book which started by pronouncing “Hail - The Valor of Ignorance!!”<sup>94</sup> before concluding that “We do not know of any work in military literature published in the United States more deserving the attention of men who study the history of the United States and the Science of War than this - *The Valor of Ignorance*.”<sup>95</sup> Major General JP Story also wrote an introduction to the book which supported the overall message of Lea’s text.<sup>96</sup> Both generals certainly had self-serving goals which rabble rousing promoted. It is not happenstance that Lea concluded the book with numerous pages citing the strength of Pacific navies in shipping, guns and personnel; statistics Lea informed illustrated the severe disadvantage of the United States to Japan.<sup>97</sup> Lea, much like these two generals that supported him, had a vested interest in seeing the American military expand and their argument assures the necessity of said expansion. Yet Chaffee and Story also commanded significant prestige and authority over military matters. For active military leaders with the ability to push actual policy to support the idea of a Japanese ‘invasion’ as very conceivable and Japanese immigrants as Japanese military operatives here for the coming ‘invasion’ supports the very real nature of the anti-Japanese movement’s push to term them a national security threat.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid, xi.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, xi.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, xxi

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 323-324.

The information Lea provides is on formational strength of the two forces. Lea provides the number and class of shipping as well as armament including number and size of large guns. Past that, he also provided size of the naval forces broken into enlisted and officer as well as their average age and experience. Although the United States, by his chart, had an advantage in capital shipping, they were lacking in both smaller vessels as well as experienced officers.

Mahan and Lea were explicit in their ideas of literal Japanese ‘invasion’ with the use of immigration. The racial and nationalistic connections presented Japanese immigrants no different than Japanese in military uniform. Other writers found the Japanese threat significant but presented Japanese immigration in less dramatic terms. However, their racial and nationalistic understanding of Japanese did not waver. James Abbott in *Japanese Expansion in American Policies* defined Japanese immigration to be an intentional “peaceful conquest of the country (United States).”<sup>98</sup> He argued that Japanese immigrants were devoted to “their national history and its ideals”<sup>99</sup> and therefore had no interest in becoming true American citizens. In fact, stated Abbott, Japanese immigrants were migrating so fast and in such great numbers that they intended to create their own Japanese-based nation and could do so through the democratic process “when his vote is one of a majority.”<sup>100</sup> Although between 1900 and 1924 Japanese immigration consisted of only 245,000 people, or less than .002 percent of the population of the United States in 1920, and with the majority being in Hawaii, Abbott states that Japanese immigrants could become the majority as well as threaten the United States through democracy.<sup>101</sup> Carl Crow further emphasized Japanese culture a threat within the United States. In his book, *Japan and America: A Contrast* (1916), he pressed the unassimilability of the Japanese race as well as connected it with the idea of the Japanese empire. In the first chapter of the book, titled “Problems of the Pacific,” the author quickly identifies Japanese immigration to the United States as a concern; “So different are the institutions of the two peoples that neither can without danger to itself adopt the ideals and culture of the other...the influx of a large number of Japanese to the United States

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<sup>98</sup> Abbott, 180-181.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 180-181.

<sup>101</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 1.

would create new labor problems and seriously threaten American institutions.”<sup>102</sup> Democracy according to Crow, was at risk because of Japanese immigration. Crow, much like Abbott, introduced his comments from the position of a Japanese ‘cultural expert’ based on his time living in Asia and interacting with China and Japan. Yet, racial identification, not culture, shows why Crow explained Imperial Japan to be a “menace” and “a serious issue”<sup>103</sup> but also how he incorporated that to include all Japanese.<sup>104</sup>

Assumed ties between Japanese Americans and national security concerns in the United States was not limited to any one group. The anti-Japanese movement in fact connected numerous factions and segments of society but few were as powerful and outspoken as politicians. As seen previously, few elected officials scrutinized the Japanese people as did Californians, especially James Phelan. California Senator James Phelan was a highly vocal anti-Japanese advocate that spent the better part of three decades defaming his Japanese American constituents. Phelan wholeheartedly agreed that people of Japanese ancestry could not assimilate or become viable members of the American fabric. Even more so, the Senator described Japanese immigration as a legitimate threat to destabilize and even colonize the American territories of the Pacific. In a 1921 statement that was later added to the Federal Congressional Record, Phelan commented that the Japanese population in Hawaii constituted an issue of national security. “It is inconsistent with our national interests to harbor in the islands people, now comprising one-half their

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<sup>102</sup> Carl Crow, *Japan and America: A Contrast* (New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1916), 1.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 308.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 177.

entire population, who owe loyalty and military service to Japan and cannot be Americanized.”<sup>105</sup> The comment harkens back to how Japanese were unable to assimilate racially and how that established disloyalty. Potentially more importantly, it connects this issue with that of military concern. In a 1912 letter to then Presidential candidate Woodrow Wilson, Phelan again identifies Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans as “a blight on our civilization” which are “destructive of the home life of the people.”<sup>106</sup> He continues by associating this in terms of invasion stating that “The Japanese have invaded the Central valleys of California” and concluding that if Japanese immigration continues, “California would be a plantation and the white population would for a period of time, possibly, remain as overseers, but, indeed, with my knowledge of the Japanese, that would be for a very short time. The end would soon supervene.”<sup>107</sup> Like so many others, Phelan’s message establishes a future void of ‘white’ American homogeneity and political control.

Arguments like Phelan’s which stressed the growing likelihood of Japanese superiority on the American West Coast became more common with time and marked a consensus within the anti-Japanese movement. Japanese Americans were viewed as an existential threat despite minority status and citizenship. Congressman George Favrot of Louisiana wrote to Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. in 1921 stating:

I agree with you that the only solution of the problem is the absolute exclusion of all Orientals. Japan’s growing power is a menace to us, and I fear that the average American fails to realize the gravity of the situation. Japan is over-populated. Her present area is

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<sup>105</sup> “Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the Second Session of the Seventy-Seventh Congress of the United States of America, Volume LXII - Part 6 April 13 to May 8, 1922.” Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1922, 5461.

<sup>106</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 55.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.



insufficient for the support of her population. And her industry and her commerce are not sufficient to supply the deficiencies of her resources. She is driven by a force inexorable, resistless and relentless; a force before which statesmanship is helpless...The Sentiment of the white colonials of Great Britain's Pacific possessions will not permit of their use as a Japanese dumping ground. Such is the naval power of Great Britain that Japan dare not attempt to force upon the British colonies the reception of her undesirable national. Following the line of least resistance, she must look to our Pacific coast.<sup>108</sup>

It should be noted that Australia too struggled with anti-Japanese sentiment and eventually banned all Japanese immigration to maintain a 'white' nation.<sup>109</sup> The congressman's comments clearly speaks to efforts of nations like Australia to maintain a homogeneous nation for 'whites.' Numerous individuals attempted to draw parallels with how better off Australia had been as a result of its firm stance on the 'yellow peril.' In *Japanese Expansion and American Policies*, Abbott gives pause for what he argues could have been; "For the condition of Australia to-day with respect to the physical subjugation of the country resembles that of America a century ago."<sup>110</sup>

Favrot's statement has a deep underlying military tone to it as well. Indeed, the congressman considers 'statesmanship as helpless' in solving the menace. The solution he argues can be understood by observation of how Great Britain controlled its Pacific possessions. It is not politics that had thwarted the Japanese migration to British controlled regions but the many guns of the Royal Navy. Favrot believed that the British had allowed their powerful navy to dictate their resolute stand on Japanese immigration. However, this does not appear an option for the United States, implies Favrot, as he ended his statement with the concern of the American West Coast,

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<sup>108</sup> Vanderbilt Jr., 28.

<sup>109</sup> Abbott, 148-156

Roderick D. McKenzie *Oriental Exclusion: The Effect of American Immigration Laws, Regulations and Judicial Decisions upon the Chinese and Japanese on the American Pacific Coast*. (New York: American Group Institute of Pacific Relations, 1928), 10-16.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 149.

without preventative military authority on the matter, was now the target of Japanese ‘dumping.’ Military strength dictated immigration and the United States in the eyes of Favrot had not done enough to forestall aggressive Japanese colonization.

Ideas of Japanese ‘invasion’ had significant literature, and support, within the anti-Japanese community. Authors like those writing in *The Valor of Ignorance*'s introductions predicted active Imperial Japanese invasion while those such as Abbott and Crow suggested the ‘invasion’ was likely to develop internally from immigrants. Concepts of race, culture and loyalty connected the Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans to Imperial Japanese soldiers as well. The racial differences presented between them were indistinguishable. This link further allowed for a military agenda to take hold of the ‘Japanese problem.’ As all Japanese were of the same identical race, then the methods of containment, as military action, should too be based on racial containment.

Military intelligence also played an active role in how Japanese immigration was understood. The intelligence community of the United States included the army’s intelligence group G-2, the navy’s Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), the State Department, and the Bureau of Investigation before being renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935.<sup>111</sup> All of these departments concluded in reports between 1920 and early 1930s that the placement of Japanese Americans was consistent with Japan’s designs on the Pacific. The reports support that the relationship between Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans with Imperial Japan were in agreement with anti-Japanese writers. That is to say, the military intelligence community confirmed the Imperial Japanese threat in the Pacific was real and consistent on racial lines.

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<sup>111</sup> MacDonnell, 163.

A report by G-2 Colonel George Brooke, “Estimate of the Japanese Situation as it Affects the Territory of Hawaii, From the Military Point of View” (1920), illustrates several important views on Japanese immigrants. The official military document indicated that actions in Hawaii were a part of a “peaceful expansion and penetration” and that this was a part of a larger “scheme” of “absorption and consolidation.”<sup>112</sup> Brooke indicated that the Japanese race and culture were inseparable, leading to a “very complete system of espionage” in the Hawaii islands.<sup>113</sup> This connection of race and culture was understood to include the entire community. As Okihiro argued and Brooke confirmed through the report, military intelligence believed Japanese businesses, media, religion and education advanced nationalistic Japanese views and in turn “promoted colonization in various parts of the world.”<sup>114</sup> Accordingly, the Japanese within the islands were working in concert for the Emperor. The report also reveals strong misunderstanding of Japanese culture. Brooke indicated that Japanese procreation was used as a weapon and that it “may make even polygamy a virtue.”<sup>115</sup> Immigration was considered an issue, but the continued ‘procreation’ of Japanese people was noteworthy to Brooke who went as far as to claim that polygamy might be involved. This assessment, that Japanese Americans and Japanese immigrants were participating in polygamy, had no basis whatsoever and distinctly confirmed a complete misapprehension of the Japanese people. Brooke fully asserted his knowledge on the Japanese plan of ‘absorption and consolidation’ and then failed to comprehend basic Japanese culture.

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<sup>112</sup> Okihiro, 111.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, xi, 111.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 111.

The anti-Japanese movement took significant liberties in arguing the loyalty and attitudes of Japanese Americans yet comments such as Brooke's were solidly out of focus with reality and verified the omnipresent nature of anti-Japanese racism.

Brooke's successor at G-2, Captain S. A. Wood Jr, also saw concern in Japanese procreation. Multiple anti-Japanese authors, including James Abbott, Brooke and Wood, noted that Japanese immigration, if allowed to continue at a high rate, had the potential to overwhelm American society democratically.<sup>116</sup> Although many Japanese immigrants had virtually no opportunity to become naturalized citizens, their children born in Hawaii were Americans by law. Almost 70 percent of the Japanese American population in Hawaii in 1933 were able to vote, a number that only increased with time.<sup>117</sup> In "The Japanese Situation in Hawaii" (1921), Wood stated "It must be remembered that they feel that they are as much subject to Japan's laws and regulations as if they were actually living in Japan...Will these voters who are American citizens of Japanese ancestry vote according to the principles of American citizens in the United States or will they vote according to the vest interest of the Japanese community, and this means as directed by the Japanese government?"<sup>118</sup> His comments link race and culture as one element when referring to Japanese. American democracy was being destroyed "by the infiltration of an alien and unassimilable race."<sup>119</sup> The text also subtly notes the difference in Japanese Americans and 'American citizens.' Japanese Americans it was expected, would not vote for the common goals of 'white' American citizens causing continued alarm to Japanese American democratic strength.

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 112.

<sup>117</sup> Franklin Odo, *No Sword to Bury: Japanese Americans in Hawaii During World War II* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 70.

<sup>118</sup> Okiihiro, 112.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

Not only was democracy indicated to be at risk but it was the natural rights provided through democracy to Japanese Americans that threatened the nation. Infringement of those corner stones of democracy, some argued, was the only means to protect the insinuations of government. The institutions of Western society, the peaceful glue between Europe and the United States in the mind of Mahan, were institutions military intelligence deemed inaccessible to the Japanese race. They were far from alone, as Mahan, James Abbott, Madison Grant, George Brooke and S. A. Wood all dedicate time in illustrating the incompatibility of Japanese and democratic ideals.<sup>120</sup> Japanese Americans, defined by race as inherently Japanese and not American, threatened the American way of life through arguably the most basic demand of democracy, the right to vote. This paradox then supported a military solution to the ‘Japanese question’ as it extended capabilities not accessible to civil authorities. By allowing a military option, Hawaiian authorities could circumvent the individual rights Japanese Americans expected and deserved. Continual military viewpoints depicting Japanese American ‘invasion’ lessened public concern for these citizens and cast them as dangerous scapegoats for non existent national security issues. Unsurprisingly, when national security appeared at risk, military options leap to the forefront and a scared American populace found little concern for Japanese Americans defined as treacherous for decades.

Military intelligence agencies, both in Hawaii and on the American mainland, were forming a consensus on the Japanese race. As stated by a Bureau of Investigations report, “Japanese Problem in the United States,” (1921) “the white race, in no long space of time, would be driven

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<sup>120</sup> Mahan, 25.  
Abbott, 248-250.  
Grant, 218.  
Okiihiro, 111-112.

from the state, and California eventually become a province of Japan...further, that it would be only a question of time until the entire Pacific coast region would be controlled by the Japanese.”<sup>121</sup> The report pressed the situation’s importance by again alluding to the significant future change to be expected without drastic intervention. The conclusion was that race and ties to Imperial Japan created a military problem.

Another report known as the “Summerall Report” (1922) built on these themes. The document concluded that the second generation Japanese, *Nisei*, were “a military liability to the United States.”<sup>122</sup> The ‘Summerall Report’ did much to defame the presence of Japanese Americans. The document considered familiar issues including population trends, inability to assimilate and their reliance on language schools and education related to Imperial Japan and connection with Japan’s consulate.<sup>123</sup> The ‘Summerall Report’ cited the Japanese consulate in Hawaii to be a source of duplicitous Japanese planning and operations. Their presence reinforced racial ties to the homeland and reaffirmed Japanese American militaristic goals in the United States. The Japanese Foreign Office caused concern right up until the attack on Pearl Harbor, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Hawaii Field Office Agent in Charge Robert Shrivvers calling it “definitely a source of potential danger.”<sup>124</sup> The conclusion of the ‘Summerall Report’ too was familiar; Japan and Japanese Americans represented the greatest single threat to the Pacific.<sup>125</sup>

Military intelligence was but one perspective on Japanese immigration in the United States. It did not, however, greatly differ from other perspectives presented by anti-Japanese writers. Like those that wrote on Japanese culture or on the political ramifications of Japanese

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 116.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 118-123.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 118-121.

<sup>124</sup> Prange, *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor*, 152.

<sup>125</sup> Okihiro, 118-121.

immigration, military intelligence drew similarities to Imperial Japan from Japanese in the United States. As a 1929 joint ONI and G-2 document argued, “beyond any question the Japanese race in the Hawaiian Islands, whether alien or native born, is a very definite military liability to the United States, and any failure to estimate the race as such will in the final analysis, result adversely for the army.”<sup>126</sup> Without question, the Japanese race was deemed a threat. At no point were individuals listed, it was the entirety of the race no matter the citizenship that was the potential threat. The report confirmed this with its conclusion which stated, “In the event of a war with Japan all Japanese, alien and Hawaiian-born, of all ranks, should be considered as enemy aliens ab initio.”<sup>127</sup> Japanese Americans, according to their own government, were a foreign enemy.

### **From Fears of an ‘Invasion’ to ‘Fifth Column’ Rhetoric**

*Few things in history are static including anti-Japanese rhetoric. From the beginning of Japanese immigration to the United States, Americans saw them as racially and culturally different, eventually leading to prejudice. As argued by this paper, this type of prejudice highlighted the potential threat of Japanese to the United States. Between 1868 and the early 1930s the threat was thought to be of an ‘invasion.’ This shifted during the 1930s to predicate the method of Japanese espionage to be based on the concept of fifth columns. Despite this, Japanese Americans still were identified as a threat worthy of military review.*

Eventually, ideas of ‘invasion’ were replaced with the more modern understanding of fifth columns. Fifth columns focused on support for an invading party through numerous means, including sabotage, due to the loyalty shown to the attacking force. They were a Trojan Horse made up of foreign spies and domestic traitors.<sup>128</sup> This was not a new concept and although some indicated that Japanese Americans were literally ‘invaders’ many others understood the

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<sup>126</sup> Okihiro, 123.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> MacDonnell, 3.

‘invasion’ terminology to be categorical support for Japanese military attacks. The anti-Japanese movement at various times argued Japanese nationals living in the United States were enemy agents and enemy soldiers, but also seemingly normal Japanese Americans whose loyalty was to Imperial Japan and not the United States. During the late 1930s and early 1940s as Nazi Germany swept across nations in Western Europe including France in May of 1940, many argued that their impressive victories were in large part due to fifth columnists.<sup>129</sup> This fear soon built an American assumption of sinister intent which included the Japanese. After the attack on Pearl Harbor Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox called Japanese fifth column activity the “most effective” outside of Norway.<sup>130</sup> The idea that Japanese immigrants themselves were going to be invaders was substituted with expectations of espionage and sabotage. The anti-Japanese movement began to quickly disseminate this new variation of their rhetoric. They argued that Japanese Americans could cause major disruption and distractions, and obtain significant intelligence for enemies of the United States. Despite this perceived change in Japanese methodology, there was no change in the racial and cultural ideas that presented them as a military concern.

Leading historian on Japanese American internment Brian Hayashi argues that by the mid 1930s American military intelligence no longer feared Japanese invasion of the United States and that anti-Japanese prejudice was not widespread.<sup>131</sup> His article, “Kilsoo Hann, American Intelligence, and the Anticipated Japanese Invasion of California, 1931-1943” notes that the American military’s assessment of Japanese Americans shifted during this period. According to him, there remained a faction within the United States military that believed the propaganda of Kilsoo

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 3-5, 7-8.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>131</sup> Hayashi, “Kilsoo Haan, American Intelligence, and the Anticipated Japanese Invasion of California, 277.



Hann, a Korean working with the American military against Japan. This group was swayed by Kilsoo Hann's beliefs that Japanese Americans were still a disloyal threat to the United States.<sup>132</sup> Yet, Hayashi presents a case that American military intelligence was not among those that feared a supposed Japanese American fifth column and they had concluded Japanese Americans were loyal. Hayashi's argument enhances the delineation between shifting anti-Japanese rhetoric as few, if any, writers were expecting a literal Japanese American invasion in the mid 1930s. However, documents from several perspectives during the middle to late 1930s and early 1940s continue to suggest, contrary to Hayashi, that numerous policy experts including those in military intelligence had only reimagined the Japanese threat as the fifth column, not dismissed it. Moreover, the racial ties that connected Japanese did not diminish during this period as evidenced by numerous documents.

Looking specifically at military intelligence, a 1933 G-2 document illustrates both the shift to fifth column but also that issues of loyalty associated with race still existed. The document read in part, "The local Japanese population will be disloyal to the United States" and, "there will be, in any war, an appreciable group loyal to the enemy." That group will know "where all power plants are located; where all wires and cables (including the fire control cables) are placed; what the sources of water supply are; where dams, reservoirs, and pumping plants are built; and where all military, navel and civilian owned gasolines and oils are stored."<sup>133</sup> The expectation of the report was that "considerable damage by the employment of sabotage" was likely.<sup>134</sup> A further joint Army-Navy Committee report commissioned by the President in 1936

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, 187-189.

<sup>133</sup> Okihiro, 165-166.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 166.

found reason to fear Hawaii's Japanese population to be future partisans for Japan.<sup>135</sup> The report accepted that the frequent docking of Japanese vessels on the islands reinforced Japanese American loyalty to Japan; "every effort of Japanese naval personnel ashore here appears to be deliberately calculated to advance Japanese nationalism and to cement bonds of loyalty."<sup>136</sup> It was shortly after this report that Roosevelt proclaimed that 'concentration camps' were a viable solution to Japanese Americans in the event of war.<sup>137</sup> Again, nationalism as connected through race reflected on loyalty.

President Roosevelt himself was an important factor in Japanese American internment. His failure to prevent Japanese American internment is often cited as a major cause of internment. As noted before, historian Greg Robinson supports that the President engaged in Japanese American policies with little concern or disdain for Japanese themselves, but rather as a political outlet to boost his own goals. The popularity of the anti-Japanese movement, argues Robinson, influenced the President's interest in eventual mass internment with relatively little concern for civil liberties.<sup>138</sup> A prime example of this was the President's disinterest in ending mass exclusion in favor of individual internment as advocated by the Department of War and Western Defense Command for most of 1944. The reason was simple, the 1944 election and Roosevelt's interest in his political affairs over individual rights.<sup>139</sup> His interest in the 'Japanese problem' started years before the Second World War. In correspondence between Mahan and himself in 1914, Roosevelt agreed with Mahan's understanding on the racial hostility of the Japanese race

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<sup>135</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 51-54

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>137</sup> Okihiro, 174.

<sup>138</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 167-170.

<sup>139</sup> Muller, 94-97.

and its inherent risk to the United States.<sup>140</sup> It is clear that the influence of the anti-Japanese movement and its emphasis on race, nationalism, and military threat had profound effects on the future President. In a May 1940 ‘Fire Side Chat’ so common to Roosevelt’s tenure in office, he kept the fifth column threat at the forefront of the conversation. The speech clearly meant to draw significant attention to Nazi Germany and its military conquest of France and the Low Countries in May of 1940 which many believed again to be the work of the German fifth column. Fear of the fifth column was almost palpable in the spring of 1940 as indicated by reports of espionage. On a single day in May of 1940 the Federal Bureau of Investigations received over 2,800 complaints while the entire period between 1933 and 1938 averaged only 35 a year.<sup>141</sup> Fear of fifth column activity elevated concern of the ‘outsider.’ The discussion read in part: “Today’s threat to our national security is not a matter of military weapons alone. We know of other methods, new methods of attack. The Trojan Horse. The Fifth Column that betrays a nation unprepared for treachery. Spies, saboteurs and traitors are the actors in this new strategy. With all of these we must and will deal vigorously.”<sup>142</sup> Although heightened by events in Europe, Roosevelt’s understanding of the racial conflict in the Pacific certainly played a role as well. Japanese Americans too were considered foreigners in the United States by many and often faced segregation.<sup>143</sup> Imperial Japan also were allied with Nazi Germany and its assumed fifth column threat. By 1940, the Japanese immigrant ‘issues’ and American military concern in the Pacific had linked the needed preconditions for internment.

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<sup>140</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 27.

<sup>141</sup> MacDonnell, 8.

<sup>142</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “May 26, 1940: Fireside Chat 15: On National Defense,” University of Virginia, Miller Center: Presidential Speeches, Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidency.

<sup>143</sup> Allan Beekman, *The Niihau Incident* (Honolulu: Heritage Press of Pacific, 1982), 44. Muller, 28.

The idea of fifth column threats were widespread. Interestingly, the cartoonist and equality advocate Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as children's book writer Dr. Seuss, used his skills to present political cartoons attacking fascists Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Father Charles Coughlin, isolationists like Charles Lindbergh and segregationist Eugene Talmadge of Georgia. He also besieged Japanese Americans. His February 1942 comic published in *PM* shows a line of West Coast Japanese Americans, their faces indistinguishable from one another, in a line to collect bricks of TNT labelled 'Honorable 5th Column.' The text of the comic reads, "Waiting for the Signal From Home..." and has a Japanese male with a telescope looking West to Japan. Seuss, a social advocate for numerous American minorities, appears entirely accepting of the notion of the Japanese fifth column's coming attack.<sup>144</sup> His generally left-leaning judgement appears swayed by the overwhelming plethora of anti-Japanese propaganda.

Despite the change in rhetoric from 'invasion' to fifth column activity, from 1898 to 1941 the emphasis placed on the Japanese military threat from Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans living in the United States did not change. To be sure, it could be argued that it actually intensified as relations between Imperial Japan and the United States devolved towards conflict. The racial and cultural attributes of Japanese Americans and Japanese immigrants bore resemblance to the imperialistic goals of Imperial Japan, argued critics of Japanese migration. Anti-Japanese sentiment relied on these arguments to explain the danger of Japanese but to also term them a military threat. Without this precondition of Japanese Americans over decades by varying members of the anti-Japanese movement, it is plausible that the risk associated with Japanese Americans might not have formulated such a strong following and internment might have

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<sup>144</sup> Richard H. Minear, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 65.

never occurred. Although the logic for this might be potentially too optimistic, the fact remains that decades of prejudice put forth by the anti-Japanese community only presented Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans as an enemy force.

## PART II: THE INADEQUACY OF MILITARY NECESSITY IN EXPLAINING MASS JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT

### Introduction

General DeWitt's *Final Report* epitomizes the inherently flawed logic of Japanese American mass internment. The document attempts to present a verifiable military position capable of validating Executive Order 9066 but only serves to confirm the deeply racial reasoning of internment. Written in 1943, DeWitt's report had the potential to detach race from internment and support the base argument of the executive order, that of the need for "Successful prosecution of the war requires every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense."<sup>145</sup> Instead, the report aligned with anti-Japanese rhetoric including issues of loyalty, culture and how those of Japanese race could not be differentiated between individuals. The report displayed Japanese Americans as though they were caricatures of Dr. Suess' 1942 drawing; indistinguishably identical and disloyal threats of fifth column activity.<sup>146</sup> Potentially most shocking was that John McCloy of the War Department had to make General DeWitt rewrite a first, unpublished version of the *Final Report* as he considered it difficult to defend in upcoming court battles over Japanese American rights. As stated by Robinson, the document prior to revision "stated flatly that he (DeWitt) had ordered racially based evacuation because it was impossible to distinguish loyal from disloyal Japanese Americans and that lack of time for hearings had not

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<sup>145</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Document for February 19th: Executive Order 9066: Resulting in the Relocation of Japanese." General Records of the United States Government, 1942.

<sup>146</sup> Minear, 65.

been a factor in his decision.”<sup>147</sup> Indeed, the governmental arguments for Japanese American internment only proved the inconsistency and racist nature of their position. Simplistic ideas on loyalty and cultural ties to Imperial Japan did not confirm a network of spies or that Japanese Americans would assist the Imperial Japanese military. Review of the evidence presented by advocates of internment as well as similar situations that did not create the military conditions needed for internment solidify the failing of Executive Order 9066 but also the strong effects anti-Japanese rhetoric had on Japanese American internment. Although far from comprehensive, these examples help define both the racial and nationalist motivations of the executive order and draws away from the government indicated necessity of military intervention. The connection between anti-Japanese rhetoric and military need is best defined by the evolution of prejudice seen in part I of this paper. However, to fully understand that the driving force of this prejudice was not in fact a legitimate military concern must also be verified.

### **Niihau Incident**

*The Niihau Incident is included as a review of military necessity because the United States used it as verification of Japanese American disloyalty. The premise of Japanese American incarceration depended on proof that Japanese Americans could not be trusted and posed a threat to the nation. This incident, as presented by individuals in support of internment, note both of these situations occurred. However, full analysis including review of racial prejudice greatly expands this discussion and presents a more holistic view of events.*

The Hawaiian island of Niihau, less than eighteen miles from Kauai’s western coast, was the site of one of the strangest incidents of the Pacific War. A single Japanese naval aviator, with the help of the three Japanese Americans on the small island, attempted to gain control of

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<sup>147</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 184-185.

the island. The result of the incident for the anti-Japanese movement was the advancement in ideas of wholesale Japanese American disloyalty to the United States. This perception of widespread disloyalty, backed by years of similar messages from anti-Japanese rhetoric, eased public opinion on the argued military necessity of internment. During their investigation into the incident, the official United States Navy report by Lieutenant C.B. Baldwin from January 26, 1941 rebuked the Japanese American participants writing, “The fact that the two Niihau Japanese who had previously shown no anti-American tendencies went to the aid of the pilot when Japanese domination of the island seemed possible, indicates the likelihood that Japanese residents previously believed loyal to the United States may aid Japan if further Japanese attacks appear successful.”<sup>148</sup> The statement indicates the difference between Japanese and Americans on a racial basis notwithstanding citizenship as the two “Japanese” noted by the document were in reality Japanese Americans. Using race and the assumed anti-American tendencies of Imperial Japan, the United States Navy, as well as the government as a whole, attempted to characterize race as the pretense to loyalty and then to associate that to national security.

The incident had no true relevance to the attack on Pearl Harbor or the outcome of the war as a whole. Even with the inclusion of Japanese American participation, the incident warrants a minor and inauspicious footnote in the annals of history. Defender of racial profiling, or as she calls it ‘threat profiling,’ Michelle Malkin uses the incident to indict all Japanese Americans of loyalty to the emperor over allegiance to the United States; “The Haradas were neither radical nationals nor professional spies. They were ordinary Japanese Americans who betrayed

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<sup>148</sup> Beekman, 114.



America by putting their ethnic roots first.”<sup>149</sup> Malkin’s book, *In Defense of Internment* (2004), attempted to excuse military confinement of American Muslims during the War on Terrorism using Japanese American internment as a historical precedent.<sup>150</sup> By attempting to justify Japanese American internment as a necessity, Malkin argues that identifying individuals on race is logical, if not required, to protect the welfare of the nation. Using these isolated actions of Japanese Americans, Malkin advocates for mass internment just as the United States government did in 1942. Yet, the tense moments on the ‘forbidden island,’ so named because of its private ownership, gives more to the character of racism and individual action than anything else. The Japanese Americans on Niihau were acutely aware of their status as Japanese, not Americans, in Hawaii. Historian Eric Muller notes that Japanese Americans were more akin to “native born foreigners” than true American citizens.<sup>151</sup> If anything, the Navy’s report only confirmed this societal position built on decades of anti-Japanese arguments by affirming that their race alone was their defining characteristic. The incident on Niihau, proponents of mass internment argued, confirmed the presumed disloyalty of Japanese Americans and validated decades of warnings on the true nationalistic intent of Japanese Americans; the incident signaled need for military involvement.

The attack on Pearl Harbor resulted in a euphoric victory for the Japanese with only 29 aircraft and crew losses including a Mitsubishi Zero fighter plane piloted by Airman First Class Shigenori Nishikichi.<sup>152</sup> Damaged during the attack, the aircraft was unable to make the journey

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<sup>149</sup> Michelle Malkin, *In Defense of Internment: The Case for ‘Racial Profiling’ in World War II and the War on Terror* (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2004), 6.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Muller, 28.

<sup>152</sup> John Keegan, *World War II: A Visual Encyclopedia* (London: PRC Publishing LTD, 2000), 414.

back to its carrier *Hiryu* and crash landed on the ‘forbidden’ and privately owned island of Niihau. Japanese intelligence believed the island to be uninhabited and designated it a rescue point for disabled aircraft, with the intent of having a submarine execute the extraction. The island had been owned by the Robinson family for several generations and they had managed to maintain ownership without the general oversight of the territory or the United States.<sup>153</sup> Of the around 200 inhabitants, the vast majority were natives; 3 individuals were of Japanese descent.<sup>154</sup> Aylmer Robinson, the most recent Robinson family owner, lived on the nearby island of Kauai and visited the island every Monday. He was almost the only lifeline to the outside world, with the island having no telephones and only one radio; the poorly educated natives limited connection to society beyond the shores of Niihau was all but entirely restricted to the Robinson family. Very few had ever left the island.<sup>155</sup>

The events that followed were chaotic. After his crash landing which had temporarily knocked him unconscious, Nishikichi’s military flight documents were confiscated by local natives, starting a five day violent effort to retrieve the information by controlling the island. Even though the pilot’s flight documents contained classified information, the United States already had similar reports from other Japanese aircraft lost in the attack, rendering Nishikichi efforts moot. The ultimate result was the death of the pilot and a Japanese American accomplice, the shooting of a native of Niihau and the detainment of the other two Japanese individuals involved. Indeed, all three racial Japanese on the island assisted in Nishikichi’s efforts to varying levels. As the only individuals able to converse with the Japanese soldier and being fully cut off from

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<sup>153</sup> Beekman, 64-66.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, 50.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 21.

the outside world, *Issei* (first generation) Ishimatsu Shintani, *Nisei* Yoshio Harada (second generation) and his *Nisei* wife Irene Harada eventually agreed to assist Nishikichi, despite the Haradas being American citizens. Historian Allan Beekman notes the understood limit of Americanness in Japanese Americans as it was their Japaneseness that defined them, not their connections to America; “The public schools registered the Nikkei (person of Japanese ancestry), born under the American flag, as of Japanese nationality. The authorities exposed the Nikkei, from the cradle upward, to the doctrine that they were foreigners in the land of their birth.”<sup>156</sup> Much like the comments of California State Senator Sharkey, Japanese Americans were innately Japanese first even if ‘American-born.’ Not only did Japanese Americans face hostility based on racial assumptions but segregation furthered the gap between Japanese and white Americans. Japanese American oppression was not only the prejudice they faced in everyday life, it was reflected in official government policies against them as well. This distinction informed many opinions within the United States government but also many Japanese Americans who felt significant detachment to both the United States and Imperial Japan.<sup>157</sup> According to Irene Harada, her husband felt obligated to assist the Japanese pilot due to his cultural upbringing that emphasized kindness to outsiders, not his Japanese race.<sup>158</sup>

The chaos on the island of Niihau after Nishikichi efforts to claim the island was mirrored across the Hawaiian Islands in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor. For a week, the Niihau Incident existed in a bubble unknown to the outside world. It was not until December 14th that the United States military arrived on Niihau. Along with Aylmer Robinson, the military relief party included 13 enlisted men and a single officer. Despite numerous attempts by the

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>157</sup> Muller, 34-36.

<sup>158</sup> Beekman, 132-134.

people of Niihau to contact the island of Kauai with fires, it was not until the arrival of an island native who had escaped Niihau that the precarious situation was understood.<sup>159</sup> The commanding officer of the relief party was Jack Mizuha, a second generation Japanese American and future Supreme Court Justice for Hawaii. As Mizuha could not speak Japanese himself, another second generation Japanese American, Ben Kobayashi, also made the trip to translate.<sup>160</sup>

Harada's treason made early war headlines and still elicits attacks on the character of Japanese Americans as demonstrated by Malkin's book; Mizuha and Kobayashi's heroism in the face of demotion and degradation has been all but forgotten.<sup>161</sup> Almost as though validation of the long awaited Japanese fifth column, the military highlighted the actions of the Haradas and Ishimatsu Shintani (while allowing their own failures to be deflected) to emphasize their own role in containment of the 'problem.' In approaching the events as directly connected to the Japanese race and not an isolated incident, the government promoted continued anti-Japanese sentiment and ultimately military necessity.

Contradictory reactions by Yoshio Harada and Jack Mizuha however underscore the inability to question ethnic background as a precursor to treacherous activity. Although the Japanese on Niihau shared a common language with the Japanese pilot, few other commonalities existed. Despite this, General DeWitt on the West Coast indicated the impossibility to separate friend from foe when referring to Japanese Americans, an argument pointed at race.<sup>162</sup> This situation demonstrates an obvious flaw in that logic. Elements of time and communication weighed heavily in the actions of those involved. With knowledge of the attack on Pearl Harbor from

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 75.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>161</sup> Although Malkin speaks only shortly about this topic, her book does not mention either Mizuha or Kobayashi at all.

<sup>162</sup> DeWitt, vii.

Nishikichi but no communication with the outside world including the man they were so dependent on, Aylmer Robinson, the Niihauans were left without a problem solver or full understanding of their fluid situation. Conversely, the Japanese pilot Shigenori Nishikichi presented himself as a wealth of information and the language barrier allowed his uninhibited influence over the few Japanese speakers on the island. Their evolving situation, including individual experiences in a nation that saw their citizenship as a technicality, became more accepting of Nishikichi perspective with each day and the continued communication gap with Robinson. Not only was this incident unsupportive of mass internment under the guise of national security but it continued to regurgitate arguments inspired in anti-Japanese racism. Leaning heavily on the consensus opinions of the anti-Japanese movement, the government attempted to latch onto a singular event to verify continued racial connections to military conditions.

The Niihau Incident certainly played a role in explaining what the government defined as the wartime need for Executive Order 9066. Although the motivations of the executive order was underlined by race, the government attempted to utilize the Niihau Incident to support action against Japanese Americans. Japanese American actions, not race, the government argued, dictated military intervention. Because of these actions an entire race had to be assumed guilty of disloyalty. The event was highly publicized at the time, especially on the West Coast where additional stories of fifth column activity including the Japanese American support of Japanese aircraft during the attack on Pearl Harbor were presented as documented fact.<sup>163</sup> Even one of the biggest advocates of civil liberties for all Americans and well known human rights advocate, Eleanor Roosevelt, “First Lady of the World,” commented to Louis Adamic during a dinner in January 1942 that “some of the Japanese on the Coast *have* (emphasis by Adamic) been caught as

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 8.

spies of the Japanese government.” Adamic remarked in his book *Dinner at the White House* (1946) afterward:

The general (General John DeWitt), faced with a potential military problem, was disposed to listen to the pressure groups out West who were taking advantage of the war to stir up hysteria. Had that hysteria touched Mrs. Roosevelt during her recent trip to California?...The chances are that the decision to evacuate the Japanese Aliens and Japanese Americans from the Coast - virtually to put them into concentration camps - had already been made.<sup>164</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt opposed what she considered to be an oppressive measure in internment.<sup>165</sup>

Yet, the hysteria, which included the violence on Niihau and how it was portrayed, appears to have even affected the First Lady. Even as she presented discord in her husband’s policy to intern Japanese Americans, Adamic’s statement grapples with the fact that Mrs. Roosevelt too connected fear of Japanese Americans to national security at least to some extent.<sup>166</sup> More so, she too had indicated incorrectly that Japanese Americans had failed to maintain loyalty to the United States. The facts presented, in the way they were presented, gave the false impression of internment necessity. Niihau directly contributed to this idea by focusing on singular acts and ignoring widespread historical racism but by also blurring self-serving anti-Japanese reports with confirmation of fact. Yet, during this period even government and military actors blatantly lied to the public about the Japanese American threat as evidenced by DeWitt’s *Final Report*.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Louis Adamic, *Dinner At The White House* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1946), 44-45.

<sup>165</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 75.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid*, 93-94.

<sup>167</sup> DeWitt, 8.

Lieutenant Baldwin's comment, "when Japanese domination of the island seemed possible," is telling as well. The immediate implication of the entire statement relates to Japanese American disloyalty, but it delves deeper. The statement relates to the fears perpetuated for decades that a few well-placed Japanese Americans were a dire threat to the nation. Indeed, far from spies or trained military soldiers, these American citizens opted for an alliance based only on ethnicity just as anti-Japanese figures such as media baron Hurst and writer Homer Lea years before had predicted. Three Japanese Americans, guided by a single Japanese officer, were capable of 'domination' over American territory. Unlikely as it may sound, little more was needed to indicate this possibility to those so long influenced by the 'Japanese problem' as a military dilemma. Yet, the ultimate perception of the government followed as Adamic stated "potential military concern" faced by the West Coast as though three individuals had verified its need.<sup>168</sup> This prejudice obscured the key elements to Harada's motivation. Ultimately, individual circumstance determined Harada's support of the enemy, an act that far from dictated military action against all Japanese Americans.

### **Magic Code Breaking and Japanese American Internment**

*Magic has been presented by modern history revisionists as tangible support that Japanese American internment was vital for national defense. Advocates inevitably appear to connect this stream of thought to other situations where they support limitation of civil rights such as the War on Terrorism. However, Magic code breaking is a weak argument for mass Japanese American incarceration. The documents show a Japanese foreign service unequipped and unsuccessful at meeting the goals of Tokyo while still attempting to save face in doing so.*

Much like the Niihau incident, supporters of internment point to Magic codebreaking as viable proof of Japanese American ill intent. Authors like David Lowman and Michelle Malkin

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<sup>168</sup> Adamic, 44-45.

argue that Imperial Japanese diplomatic code verified Japanese American fifth column activity and as a result Japanese Americans loyalty to the United States could not be confirmed. This argument adds a new slant to the purpose and potential usefulness of Magic code breaking. With the release of classified Magic cables in the late 1970s and early 1980s, World War II historians gained a wealth of information on various topics including Japanese American internment. Magic code breaking was one of the best sources of American intelligence on Japanese military and diplomatic intent before and during the Second World War. It was invaluable to the American war effort, saving the lives of thousands of individuals and shortening the war.<sup>169</sup> In the now famous letter sent to Presidential candidate Governor Thomas E. Dewey from Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, the latter remarks in an attempt to silence Dewey's attempt to revisit the attack on Pearl Harbor for political gain, "They (Magic messages) contribute greatly to the victory and tremendously to the savings of American lives, both in the conduct of current operations and in looking toward the early termination of the war."<sup>170</sup> Magic contributed to numerous victories on land and at sea by foreshadowing Japanese movements, troop positions and formation capabilities; "We know their strength in various garrisons, the rations and other stores continuing available to them, and what is of vast importance, we check their fleet movements and the movements of their convoys."<sup>171</sup> The remarks of Marshall solidifies his faith and reliance on Magic as a tool. Despite this, Magic cannot connect Japanese Americans to the perceived elaborate fifth column of Imperial Japan. Advocates contend that the messages demonstrate an active and significant plot against the United States and that the conditions during late

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<sup>169</sup> George C Marshall, "Top Secret Letter from George C Marshall to Thomas E Dewey, Sept 25, 1944." National Security Agency, 1944.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.



1941 and early 1942 dictated military action. Thus, it is vital to review the messages to determine their value related to Japanese American internment and consider what, if any, impact this intelligence had.

David Lowman, as mentioned before, is one of the greatest advocates of Magic's ability to validate the government's position for Japanese American internment. As a former intelligence expert for the National Security Agency of the United States, he was a vocal opposing view of the 1982 Congressional Hearings on Japanese American internment, whose conclusions he considered revisionist in nature. In his book, *Magic*, Lowman faults the committee for not even reviewing the messages nor connecting what he considered valuable information used by leadership on Japanese American Internment. Although the committee did thoroughly review the messages after Lowman's comments, it certainly marked a failure of the committee that continues to prompt arguments against their motivations and impartiality to the historical evidence. According to Lowman, Magic intelligence entirely explains Japanese American internment as it supplies evidence to verify military necessity. As though confirmation of the anti-Japanese movement, who predicted the racial ties of Japanese Americans impossible to overcome, Lowman argues Magic indicates this connection verifies military intervention as well. Both Lowman's book and his disciple's, Michelle Malkin, who replicates her argument in light of his own, focus almost all their attention on the messages uncovered by the United States between 1940 and close to the end of 1941. Their contentions are not comprehensive and do not attempt to review the historical basics of Japanese American prejudice or the continual efforts of politicians, the military and the media to establish links between Japanese expansion in the Pacific and Japanese Americans. Instead they argue within the singular concept of Magic by presenting governmental decisions as unaffected by historical proceedings or context outside of black and white

messages. Whereas most historians on the anti-Japanese movement and internment begin discussion in the decades before World War II, Lowman and Malkin observe only the months before Pearl Harbor.

The United States began monitoring and decoding classified Japanese signals shortly after the end of the First World War. Buoyed by fear of the growing Japanese position in the Pacific, the United States broke Japanese diplomatic and naval codes just prior to the Washington Naval Conference in 1921-1922.<sup>172</sup> The Japanese diplomatic code at the time, codenamed 'RED,' was replaced in the 1930s by Japanese code 'BLUE' and then on the eve of war in Europe by code 'PURPLE.,' an incredibly complicated set of ciphers not cracked by the United States until fall of 1940. By the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, the United States had 700 individuals working on enemy signal traffic, although only a few of those were actual cryptologists. This number was to grow to around 50,000 men and women by 1944, "whether in cryptanalysis itself, or in translating, or in evaluating, distributing and applying in action the intelligence gained."<sup>173</sup> This exponential growth of American cryptology between 1941 and 1944 was a result of American espionage's greatest misstep, its inability to prevent the Pearl Harbor attack.

December 7, 1941 dictated through failure the need to reimagine the intelligence network of the United States. Although Magic had provided the circumstantial evidence that an attack on Pearl Harbor was possible, if not likely, the warning signs were not heeded. Historian Ronald Lewin notes "Hypersensitivity about security, rigid restrictions as to who 'needed to know,' false

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<sup>172</sup> Ronald Lewin, *The American Magic: Codes, Ciphers and the Defeat of Japan* (New York: Farrar Staus Giroux, 1982), 20-23.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 19-27.

assumptions about who actually knew” were but a few of the shortcomings.<sup>174</sup> Intelligence gathering has inherent flaws. The achievements of programs like Magic and Ultra, the British version of Magic, were significant but not without faults. When declassified by the United States in the late 1970s and through further updates in the 1980s, Magic consisted of over 126,000 messages.<sup>175</sup> This magnitude of information translated to, on average, 50 to 75 messages a day, peaking at times to 130 messages a day.<sup>176</sup> All ciphers that could be read had to be decoded, translated and unknown information surmised. Not all encrypted text was intercepted or understood and there remained periods when changes in the Japanese codes prevented any interception of messages at all. “Looking back at the war Rochefort (United States Navy Captain and Cryptologist) believed that the best average was reading 12 to 15 percent of a Japanese message.”<sup>177</sup> “The gaps,” or the other 85 to 88 percent, “were filled by intuition, back referencing to other signals and general understanding of the enemy and situation.”<sup>178</sup> However educated and informed the cryptologists and their hypothesis, it remained at its core, a guess.

Critical to the war effort, Magic was a closely guarded secret with few individuals having access to the inscriptions. Not even Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J Edgar Hoover, whose group spearheaded foreign intrigue, nor Western Defense Command’s commanding officer Lt. General DeWitt were apprised of its messages. Even those closely related to the program like Captain Joseph Rochefort and eventual Rear Admiral Edwin T. Layton, Chief Intelligence Officer for Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, worked on breaking the code but did not have access to the full information themselves. General Marshall’s

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 121.

<sup>176</sup> Lowman, 60.

<sup>177</sup> Lewin, 89.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

letter to Dewey again underscores how few knew about Magic and even more, the limited influence it had on front line commanders. Further, despite the success of signal intelligence at the Battle of Coral Sea in early May of 1942, which allowed the overstretched American navy to be at the right place at the right time, leadership still believed the intelligence had to be validated. With Pearl Harbor still a recent failure of the cryptology, commanders had to regain faith in a system they did not fully understand or even have complete knowledge of. Even more, those same commanders had to trust that what was being provided was reliable intelligence and then appreciate its implications and still act properly with the knowledge and limited resources early in the war.

Despite the inherent weaknesses in intelligence gathering, David Lowman's book *Magic* argues that these specific documents were the crux of the Roosevelt administration's Executive Order 9066. Notwithstanding the limited knowledge of the project, Lowman states that the administration had a full grasp on Imperial Japanese intent based on this information. Of the thousands of messages decoded by the United States before hostilities erupted in late 1941, several have peaked the interests of those supporting Magic's role in Japanese internment. Message #44 of January 30, 1941 is one such message. Sent from Tokyo to Washington DC, the signal directs several priorities for the embassy including the formation of intelligence gathering services within the United States. The message is indicated as verification of necessity by internment supporters due to section six which requests the use of "second generation" Japanese Americans for intelligence purposes.<sup>179</sup> However, there is significantly more to the signal than just this.

Section six directs the Japanese foreign office to consider "Utilization of our "Second Generations" and our resident nationals. (In view of the fact that if there is any slip in this phase,

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<sup>179</sup> Lowman, 136.

our people in the U.S. will be subjected to considerable persecution, and the utmost caution must be exercised).”<sup>180</sup> Defenders of internment note correctly that ‘second generation’ Japanese Americans were at least considered for espionage activity. Yet, they fail to comment on the importance of section five. Section five reads “Utilization of U.S. citizens of foreign extraction (other than Japanese), communists, Negroes, labor union members, and anti-semites, in carrying out the investigations described in the preceding parish would undoubtedly bear the best results.”<sup>181</sup> This section then bears two main points. First, it clearly states that any minority American citizen who is not of Japanese descent would be preferable for Japanese spying. Second, the Japanese were attempting to recruit from groups which already had some contempt or disillusionment with the United States. Indeed, section five confirms that using Japanese Americans is not desirable and requested the usage of more clandestine options. Even section six cautions the use of Japanese Americans. The embassy also indicates through its preferred usage of non-Japanese Americans that they believed Japanese Americans are likely to be less successful than other racial groups. Ultimately the message indicates the need to avoid any action that would involve Japanese peoples in espionage and presses the embassy to find other American citizens for utilization of the task.

This idea of using non-Japanese American citizens is seen again in Message #67 from May of 1941. This signal maintains it is best to use “white persons and Negroes, through Japanese persons whom we can’t trust completely.”<sup>182</sup> Although slightly unclear as to why the Japanese person cannot be entirely trusted, the statement still confirms Japanese intent to avoid Japanese persons for these activities. Further information on the Japanese handler in this situation is

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> *The “Magic” Background of Pearl Harbor*, 162.

unknown, yet it is worth noting that the embassy appears more optimistic in use of white and African Americans than Japanese individuals. The use of African Americans is a common theme for the Japanese government as well. A message from Tokyo in June of 1941 urged for the training of African Americans as potential fifth columnists but nothing similar was ever indicated regarding Japanese Americans.<sup>183</sup> Message #67 continues by indicating there are some “absolutely reliable Japanese in San Pedro and San Diego.”<sup>184</sup> These individuals were to supply information on troop and ship movements, but it is unclear if they are Japanese nationals or American citizens or how successful their mission was. They are also only mediators of information and not desired for potential training as fifth columnists. The Japanese government’s need to categorize ‘reliable’ Japanese from those that could not be fully trusted further emphasizes the wide gap in their understanding of Japanese American loyalty and why they were adamant in using non-Japanese races for espionage.

Message #67 does have another revelation in which it indicates the embassy had been in “contact” with “second generation” Japanese who were in the United States Army and working in airplane plants.<sup>185</sup> Contact is assumed to mean for intelligence gathering, but this is an uncertain point as the embassy may have only approached them. Additionally, from this section it is unclear to the number of individuals they are referring to or their position. No other messages surface indicating these individuals or potential intelligence obtained from them, again lending to the assumption that they were unsuccessful within this role. If anything, the continual messages requesting recruitment of non-Japanese Americans support they received limited information from these groups. Similarly, the embassy could be overly stating its network in an effort to

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<sup>183</sup> Lowman, 131.

<sup>184</sup> *The “Magic” Background of Pearl Harbor*, 162.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

show its non-existent success to Tokyo. It can also be viewed from the final paragraph of this message that the embassy, through a Japanese national named Nakazawa with the help of both Americans and African Americans, was also investigating military and labor movements, not Japanese Americans.<sup>186</sup> Overall, the message cannot confirm any true risk to the United States.

The reliance on American citizens of non-Japanese ancestry and Japanese nationals are apparent from the communications. Message #239 from February 1941 requests that Japanese residents be used for intelligence gathering including those who work in the media and cooperate business.<sup>187</sup> Another communication from May of the same year confirms again that “foreign company employees, as well as employees in our own companies here (Seattle, United States)” were targeted by the Japanese. That message also notes that “We are now exerting our best efforts toward the acquisition of such intelligences through competent Americans.”<sup>188</sup> As the term does not indicate Japanese nationals or “first or second generation” Japanese, the conclusion can be drawn this refers specifically to American citizens not of Japanese ancestry. Several messages sent to Tokyo from Manila confirm the chief information gatherers were Japanese nationals, not Japanese Americans; all messages start similarly, “The following is from a report of a Japanese resident in Cebu,” “According to a report handed on to me by a Japanese who has lived in the Province of Ilocos Norte...,” “A report given me by a Japanese who resides in Camarines Norte.” All messages provide military assessments of the local area and are supplied to the embassy by Japanese nationals.<sup>189</sup> Although potentially useful during conflict, this information was

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Lowman, 130.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 188-189.

also publicly known during times of peace and generally took little skill to obtain, making it of limited value.

Although a multitude of messages are specific to isolated situations or needs, themes are easy to conceptualize. The Imperial Japanese Government through their foreign service desired intelligence on the political, economic, and military situation in the United States. This is far from unusual for any diplomatic mission. In planning for the assumed eventual war with the United States, they were prepared to move their intelligence apparatus outside of the United States and they also were interested in keeping in touch with their nationals, including dual citizenship-holding Japanese Americans, in case of escalation between Japan and the United States. Efforts made within the Imperial Japanese embassy and consulates were aimed at supporting an eventual war effort and even with this knowledge very few transmissions constitute a serious military threat against the United States. The assumed Japanese fifth column was little more than wishful thinking by Tokyo.

By looking at the messages themselves we see the Japanese consulate's desire for fifth column activity, but also their overall inability to create a system that could adversely affect the United States war effort. At times, the Japanese embassy even notes their limited funding to pursue intelligence efforts; "Taking into consideration the small amount of funds we have at our disposal, we have decided to deemphasize propaganda for the time being, and instead to strengthen our intelligence work."<sup>190</sup> Their continual request for additional intelligence operatives and clarification on important information verifies the perpetual need to improve intelligence but also the lacking of the program as a whole. A May 19, 1941 cipher supports the deficiencies, if not utter deterioration, of the embassy's work:

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<sup>190</sup> *The "Magic" Background of Pearl Harbor*, 138



The duties of an intelligence office are becoming increasingly difficult. Because of the existence of the Dies Committee and of the application of the regulations regarding Americans in foreign employ and regarding foreigners resident in America the gathering of accurate secret information is far from easy. This is only one example and there are many other 'delicate' problems.<sup>191</sup>

The Dies committee was not fully preoccupied with looking at Japanese Americans but also Germans and Italians. Yet, if the imagined Japanese fifth column could be so seriously hampered by such a committee, it is hard to imagine its success against organizations like the Federal Bureau of Investigations. Further, the reoccurring theme that it was more likely to see a white or African American citizen spying for Japan, by their desire, than someone of Japanese descent remains the same. In the few situations in which Japanese spies were captured almost all were white Americans.<sup>192</sup> Even messages that refer to Japanese spies are rarely clear on whether they are Japanese Americans, Japanese nationals or members of the Japanese diplomatic envoy.

Advocates of internment place too much emphasis on a few cryptic Magic messages. The idea that the magnitude of Magic messages observed in the context of 1942 America left the Roosevelt administration with no choice but to assume national security was at risk is simply not true. In reality those advocating for internment in 1942 were not those informed on Magic, meaning their understanding of Japanese American threat could not include this information. Above all, the messages do not confirm the existence of a major Japanese American fifth col-

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<sup>191</sup> Lowman, 149.

The message referred to the federal congressional committee formed by Senator Dies of Texas, which probed for 'un-American' activity in the lead up to the Second World War.

<sup>192</sup> MacDonell, 82-84.

umn. Even if the messages did verify a major national security risk, the two month delay of Executive Order 9066 after the attack on Pearl Harbor is far from logical. As it was, both Lowman's and Malkin's arguments boil down to a handful of messages which desired an intricate network of espionage and premised the sheer possibility of a few Japanese American intelligence gatherers for Imperial Japan warranted the apprehension and internment of over one hundred thousand Americans assumed to be connected. *The Magic: Background of Pearl Harbor* (1977) consisting of 25,000 messages from February 1941 to December of the same year only divulges the terms 'second generation' or 'fifth column' in 11 messages.<sup>193</sup> Whereas Lowman and Malkin had ample time to review the messages in friendly formats and under no pressure, cryptologists did not have any such luxuries. Even if these messages were discovered and then forwarded to the correct authorities on the matter, which is a significant stretch on its own, the few total messages and context point not to systematic Japanese espionage but in fact few individual spies organized from within the Japanese embassy itself. From a military perspective, Magic did not confirm Japanese Americans on the whole to be agents of Japan or an excessive threat. More accurately, this connection was solely made through race on the pretense that nationality, ethnicity and religious connections confirm disloyalty and required military intervention.

### **Individual versus Mass Detainment of Japanese Americans in the Hawaii Territory**

*A key government argument for Japanese American mass internment was assumed Japanese disloyalty and where they lived. Most all Japanese Americans in 1941 lived on the American West Coast or in Hawaii in close proximity to United States strategic locations for the Pacific War. These reasons together would appear to dictate equal military necessity against Japanese Americans in both regions. This, however, did not occur. The following analysis shows that concern for Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans were just as significant in Hawaii as in the contiguous United States. By framing the fault in military necessity logic when looking at Hawaii, identification of racist motivations become more transparent. Japanese Americans were no*

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<sup>193</sup> *The "Magic" Background of Pearl Harbor.*

*more a threat in Hawaii than the American mainland and the variation of events support that the universal blanket of the Japanese race as a threat is woefully indecisive.*

The territory of Hawaii presented the United States with a unique situation regarding Japanese Americans. When the first Japanese immigrated to Hawaii in 1868 as laborers for the sugar cane plantations, it was not anticipated that 46 years later that population would have expanded to 160,000 people. From the 148 men, women and children that first arrived in 1868<sup>194</sup> would grow the largest majority ethnic group in the Hawaiian islands at almost 40 percent the total population in 1940.<sup>195</sup> By comparison, in 1930 California, people of Japanese ancestry made up two and one-tenth percent of the population of the state.<sup>196</sup> Unified resistance to Japanese Americans in California from both political entities and many media outlets stressed their ability to propagate at a higher rate threatening the white homogeny of the state.<sup>197</sup> However unreasonable this was for California, the ability of Japanese Americans to gain influence and substantial voting control appeared a reality to many white land owners in the islands of Hawaii. This served to promote a militant stance by those opposed to Japanese American influence along racial lines of the anti-Japanese movement. Leaders of Hawaii, but also the United States, saw Japanese Americans as a threat and a potential enemy. Despite this, no mass internment in Hawaii occurred. Instead, martial law was implemented and those that were believed disloyal were interned on an individual basis, proving the conditions for military confinement of Japanese

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<sup>194</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 4.

<sup>195</sup> Odo, 2.

<sup>196</sup> Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 1.

<sup>197</sup> Stoddard, 288.

Americans did not exist. Veritably, the civil liberties of citizens in Hawaii disintegrated as a result of martial law. However, there was no racial discrepancy in martial law supporting race alone was not a prerequisite to confinement.

Japanese laborers were targeted by Hawaiian sugar cane plantation owners in the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century as a replacement for Chinese labors. After the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Japanese citizens began to move to the islands in increasing numbers.<sup>198</sup> The economy of Hawaii was defined by sugar, and almost all ownership was held by the ‘Big Five.’ This “financial oligarchy”<sup>199</sup> made up the “agents for thirty-six of the territory’s thirty-eight sugar plantations during the 1930s,” allowing for 90 percent of all Hawaiian product to be controlled through them.<sup>200</sup> “The Big Five also controlled businesses associated with the sugar plantations, including banking, insurance, transportation, utilities and wholesale and retail merchandising. Through interlocking directorates, intermarriages, and social associations, the *haole*, or white elite managed to keep the wealth within a small circle of families.”<sup>201</sup> Much like a slave-master relationship, the contracts between Japanese laborers and their employers were governed by the Masters and Servants Act; the Big Five endeavored to maintain absolute dominion over the Hawaiian economy and their imported labor.<sup>202</sup> As stated by the Hawaiian Sugar Plantation Association secretary Royal D. Mead in 1910, “the Asiatic has had only an

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<sup>198</sup> McKenzie, 28-32.

<sup>199</sup> Robert M. C. Littler, *The Governance of Hawaii: A Study in Territorial Administration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1929), 14.

<sup>200</sup> Okihiro, 14.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid, 33.

economic value in the social equation...his presence is no more felt than is that of the cattle on the ranges.”<sup>203</sup>

Japanese migrants, much to the dismay of their employers, were not satisfied with the status quo established by the island’s oligarchy. Mead’s words might have attempted to indicate the desired social and economic position of the imported workers, however, strikes suggest they posed many more problems than did the island’s livestock. When looking at Japanese American history in Hawaii, it is vital to understand the significant unrest that came well before the Second World War and how that differed from the mainland United States. Although the anti-Japanese movement unified a great number of individuals and groups opposed to Japanese Americans, within Hawaii Japanese and Japanese Americans faced a united front controlled by the island’s oligarchy. This group, well before mass internment of Japanese Americans on the United States West Coast, visualized Japanese labor in Hawaii as a singular entity; whereas General DeWitt noted the inability to differentiate disloyal and loyal Japanese Americans, government in Hawaii assumed a disloyalty due to group mentality long before 1942. Further, the necessity of Japanese labor on the islands gave them greater leverage when organizing work stoppage, which in turn developed hostile, often military reactions. Sugar plantation need for Japanese laborers therefore allowed for more latitude in pursuit of rights but also invoked immense anti-Japanese fear and opposition understood within racial groups. Labor unrest became a common and contentious theme which eventually drew military interest, and numerous reports from military intelligence confirm fear of Hawaiian Japanese Americans was rampant. Initially, this fear stemmed from

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<sup>203</sup> United States Congress, House, “Committee on Territories,” HR 3643, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945.

their ability to disrupt the economy but over time, with the growth of the population, the angst shifted toward concerns of power and control.

Between 1890 and 1900, no less than twenty insurrections occurred by Japanese laborers, many of which involved numerous individuals and sometimes organized protests, even if they failed to be sustained or effective in improving the Japanese position.<sup>204</sup> Although relatively minor, these disputes became a growing trend. Lessons learned were reapplied more effectively in other disputes, with the Japanese laborers becoming more organized and their demands economically strategic. By 1904 a single walk out consisted of over 1,200 workers, shutting down an entire plantation and the 1909 strike had over four times the participants than five years before.<sup>205</sup> Although several other strikes occurred after 1909, the 1920 strike represented a more solidified Japanese community approach to labor issues through American ideals. The strike itself was not limited to people of Japanese lineage but included Filipino, Puerto Rican and Spanish workers as well. In all, over 8,300 workers, or 77 percent of the workforce of Oahu, struggled to “safeguard their livelihood against the tyranny and encroachments of capitalists.”<sup>206</sup> Continued class revolt had significant effects on the Japanese population but also on how they were perceived by the white population.

Although success was limited to minor victories, the motivations of Japanese movements became only outmatched by the strength of the plantation and governmental response. Work stoppages in 1904, 1905, 1909 and 1920 elicited strong reactions from the ‘Big Five’ with the support of the military. After the 1905 riots, a federal commissioner of labor unapologetically

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<sup>204</sup> Okihiro, 41-42.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid, 77.

called the action a race conflict and not one of class conflict although not only Japanese were involved; “(Japanese laborers) do not feel any hostility toward employers or capitalists as a class... (but by) intense race solidarity and the powerful influence over the workers exercised by such organizations as they possess.”<sup>207</sup> The government defined the actions by the Japanese as “blood unionism,” a description that disallowed their actions to be seen as common desires of workingmen but those of a unified and hostile force.<sup>208</sup> This force, unsurprisingly, was understood by their racial makeup. The military reaction bears this fact. In addition to over 100 armed police officers from several municipalities, the governor requested the National Guard, which arrived armed with rifles and field artillery in 1905. Whereas laborers were unarmed and identified their purpose based on class, the territorial government viewed the the disruption as race based.<sup>209</sup> Labor disputes during the period in the United States generally drew a strong armed response that supported business owners yet these generally were considered class conflict, not race conflict as with Japanese in Hawaii.

Even more disturbing, during the 1920 revolt the military took it upon itself to aid plantation owners on their own initiative. Military intelligence documents during the early 1920s like the “Estimate of the Japanese Situation as it Affects the Territory of Hawaii, From the Military Point of View” and “Summerall Report” note that Japanese labor disputes were secondary in concern to racial conflict and the military judged Japanese under this view.<sup>210</sup> As plantation owners had been able to curtail the 1909 uprising with the use of other minority labor groups as ‘scabs,’ the governor decided against a show of force as had been done in 1905. Despite this

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid, 43.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, 118-123.

more docile approach from the territorial authority, army officers connected directly with plantation management and requested any updates if an “emergency” arose out of the strike.<sup>211</sup> The underlying message was clear; the military saw Japanese labor movements as an extension of an elaborate ‘invasion’ and intended to direct a military response. Anti-Japanese writer Homer Lea had noted the likelihood of Japanese ‘invasion’ of the islands and the military’s response appeared in line with his dramatic conclusions.<sup>212</sup> Numerous other military intelligence reports during the 1920s and 1930s also presented Japanese Americans as a well-organized threat. Labor disputes had little to do with the rights of the island’s lowest class and their semi-slavery conditions in the eyes of the military establishment and were instead to the eventual takeover of the island by the Japanese. As noted in the *Pride of Palomar* the goal was the installation of numerous ‘little Japans;’ “It means that literally a slice of Japan has been transplanted in La Questa Valley...And it is lost to white men!”<sup>213</sup> An editorial in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* in 1905 elaborates on those fears stating “The peril is obvious...considerable fear was felt at first by some of the white residents on account of the violence and the collision between the police and the Japanese, and it was felt that in the face of the overwhelmingly Asiatic population the whites were in some danger.”<sup>214</sup> The peril lie not with soldiers armed with rifles and cannons but from the ‘overwhelming’ Asiatic population. The danger was not in minor violent outbreaks, but the persistently believed threat of a Japanese ‘invasion’ of the island.

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid, 95.

<sup>212</sup> Lea, 250-251.

<sup>213</sup> Kyne, 184.

<sup>214</sup> Okihiro, 45.



The local newspapers of Hawaii sold the idea of Japanese ill desires on the islands. In 1920 the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* was again stoking the fires of the anti-Japanese movement; “What we face now is an attempt on the part of an alien race to cripple our principal industry and to gain dominance of the American Territory of Hawaii.”<sup>215</sup> Another periodical, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* concluded that “This is what we meant in declaring that back of the strike is a dark conspiracy to Japanize this American territory.”<sup>216</sup> Far from individuals interested in creating a better life for themselves and their family, the *Star-Bulletin* believed there was a cynical ploy by the nation of Japan to embed hostile individuals and that labor revolt was the embryonic state that led to wholesale Japanese domination. Labor disputes primed not only the ‘Big Five’ and the media for an argument for military reaction, but also the military itself. These actions and beliefs by the military and government clearly denote their racial understanding of Japanese and Japanese Americans and how this connected to military themes. Further, based on the continual concern of dispute and riot, it set conditions even more toward military resolution, allowing the military to formulate strategies of internment in the decades before the Second World War.<sup>217</sup>

Hawaii must also be viewed with its geographical location in mind. Hawaii was significantly closer to Imperial Japan and its ever growing Pacific empire than was the American West Coast, making it an important crossroads for political development. Homer Lea impressed the island’s importance to the mainland United States in *The Valor of Ignorance* stating:

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid, 169-173.

If this Republic had created at any time a great naval and military base in Hawaii, Japan's opportunity of seizing the islands would have been lessened if not prohibited; and so long as these islands formed an invulnerable American base, the mainland of the Republic would be removed from the sphere of military enterprise. While the establishment of American naval and military power in the Pacific or Hawaii has not been attempted, yet Japan has prepared for this eventuality in so effective a manner that, notwithstanding what the naval forces of the United States may be in the future, these islands can be seized from within and converted into a Japanese naval and military base so quickly that they will be impregnable to the power of this Republic, regardless of what it may be on the mainland.<sup>218</sup>

Not only does the text stress the vital importance of the islands, but it attempts to foretell how the Japanese were prepared to conquer Hawaii 'from within.' Included as well is the concept of Hawaii being the door to America; whoever controlled these islands could dictate their desires on the American mainland. When combined with the large Japanese population and numerous labor disputes, Hawaiian Japanese Americans, in the mind of the anti-Japanese movement, had to be seen as a threat beyond even that of Japanese Americans in California. Despite this, mass internment did not occur in the islands, indicating the military necessity to do so did not exist.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States invoked martial law in Hawaii but did not pursue mass internment. Within hours of the conclusion of the attack, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (with help from local authorities) began rounding up local Japanese identified as dangerous or potential fifth columnists. The majority of these individuals were community leaders such as religious, education or Japanese cultural figures.<sup>219</sup> These groups, it was believed, had long supported the continual tie to Japan and assisted in the unassailability of Japanese

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<sup>218</sup> Lea, 248.

<sup>219</sup> Odo, 119.

Americans. American media supported these actions and continued to present Japanese Americans as the enemy. The *LA Times* in their December 8, 1941 publication announced, “We have thousands of Japanese here and in light of yesterday’s demonstration that treachery and double-dealing are major Japanese weapons.”<sup>220</sup> By December 8, 391 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans living in Hawaii were in custody, many of these were from the ‘ABC’ list of potentially dangerous individuals created after President Roosevelt’s 1936 comment that “every Japanese citizen or non-citizen on the Islands of Oahu who meets these Japanese ships (arriving in Hawaii) or has any connection with their officers or men should be secretly but definitely identified and his or her name be placed on a special list of those who would be the first to be placed in a concentration camp in the event of trouble.”<sup>221</sup> Ultimately over 1,200 people of Japanese ancestry were interned in Hawaii, of which the majority were American citizens. German and Italian citizens were also apprehended and interned in less significant numbers, including a German national who had actively spied on the United States Navy for years solely for Japanese benefit, Otto Kuehn.<sup>222</sup>

Martial law had been proposed as a potential military solution to the ‘Japanese problem’ well before 1941 but became active for the first time only hours after the Pearl Harbor attack. It would remain in effect for the next 3 years till October 1944, well after the Japanese military held any likelihood or ability to invade the islands. Martial law suspended the writ of habeas corpus, imposed a curfew and maintained blackouts on the island, all under the control of the military. Thousands of Japanese citizens and Japanese Americans alike were investigated by the

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<sup>220</sup> Odo, 103.

<sup>221</sup> Okihiro, 210.

<sup>222</sup> Bertrand M Roehner, “Relations Between Military Forces and the Population of Hawaii,” University of Paris, (2013), 13.

United States and some were tried in provost courts. Courts were held as military tribunals outside of civil procedures and lacked most protections granted by the United States Constitution including legal representation, jury trials and the ability to appeal. The system was designed for enemy combatants and those tried were at the full mercy of the military. Provost courts held between 55,000-120,000 trials during the war, of which thousands were for Japanese Americans.<sup>223</sup> However, relatively few of these trials were for serious offenses and only a handful were related to issues of sabotage or espionage and none of those were for Japanese.<sup>224</sup> No one of Japanese ancestry is known to have been convicted of disloyalty to the United States, although several were implicated in these activities including Irene Harada and Ishimatsu Shintani, as the surviving Japanese members of the Niihau Incident.<sup>225</sup> Neither one of them were tried for their actions on the island of Niihau. Without question, martial law had negative effects on the population of Hawaii during the war years. Yet, the imposition of martial law in Hawaii was based on equality; that is, it applied to everyone on the islands without concern for race. DeWitt's *Final Report* confirmed that race had been the determining factor in evaluation and internment on the West Coast of the United States, although it could be argued that the greater threat of potential Japanese fifth column activity was in Hawaii.

The cases represented that issues of disloyalty were handled on an individual basis and although under military tribunal, defendants still maintained some, however limited, protections. Individuals were not interned for their race but instead on their transgressions. The islands contained a Japanese American population larger than the mainland, making up a significant portion of the overall population in the area most likely at threat of Japanese aggression, and yet the

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>224</sup> "Justice Denied: Personal Justice Denied."

<sup>225</sup> Ibid, 3.

same necessities seen on the mainland did not apply here. DeWitt's report had stated that the Imperial Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor included "positive enemy knowledge of our patrols, our naval dispositions, etc., on the morning of December 7th," only possible through Japanese American intelligence and yet the extreme measures of the American West Coast were not seen as necessary in Hawaii.<sup>226</sup> Although cities like Los Angeles and Seattle were vital for American wartime efforts in the Pacific, they were not as significant as Hawaii. All of these locations had highly condensed Japanese American populations near military installations and vital war production areas and yet it was only cities in the mainland that were deemed military zones and thus evacuated. The government had planned to pursue full scale Japanese American internment in Hawaii.<sup>227</sup> Wholesale internment was eventually seen as unpractical in Hawaii and those individuals believed to be of concern were thus detained.

The juxtaposition between Hawaii and the West Coast underscores the issues of internment being a military necessity. The justification of internment dealt with the clear threat of Japanese Americans as fifth columnists and their inability to be seen as individuals. This long held but fictitious and highly sensationalized idea was supported as fact by the United States. Rumors of Japanese Americans cutting crops to direct Japanese aircraft in Hawaii and making signals via radio and light to signal ships attacking the US mainland, however false, found a wide and gullible audience.<sup>228</sup> These stories added to a myriad of additional reasons that internment was found acceptable and deemed a necessity. These explanations were presented as reality in

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<sup>226</sup> DeWitt, 18.

<sup>227</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 156-157.

<sup>228</sup> DeWitt, 8.

both areas and ultimately dictated varied reactions. Had the military threat been justified in California, Oregon and Washington, how could Hawaii not be included in similar governmental action? In addition, the idea that a population is too big to wholesale intern has its merit from a feasibility standpoint, however, it remains a separate issue from military necessity. The Japanese American population in Hawaii was realistically too large for wholesale internment from a logistical standpoint yet that does not therefore determine whether it was needed. If internment on the West Coast was required, in and of itself no small task, then so would have internment in Hawaii; the economic and political difficulties does not alleviate the necessity. National defense against the 'Japanese problem' simply failed to verify the portion of internment in any region.

Popular consensus pushed by the anti-Japanese movement incorporated the Japanese race as a direct military threat to the United States. In many ways it formed the basis of Japanese American internment by creating an atmosphere conducive to verifying its own position. And yet, Hawaii remained an outlier where the racial motivations of military necessity could not trump appeasement to economic need.<sup>229</sup> Ironically, numerous Japanese Americans took up the role of protecting their homeland while at the same time Japanese Americans on the American West Coast were assumed dangerous. The idea of American citizens, trained within the national guard or territorial guard, proceeding to take up arms and defend their nation seems expected, even natural within the American value system, but when Hawaiian Americans of Japanese ancestry did so after Pearl Harbor they were armed by a government who had noted their potential threat as fifth columnists for decades. The government, through numerous reports over the

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<sup>229</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 156-157.

years, had identified Japanese Americans as a ‘menace’ and military threat. A 1922 Federal Labor Commission noted “Hawaii may have its labor problems and the Commission believes these problems can be solved from time to time as the emergency arises, but we believe that the question of National Defense and the necessity to curtail the domination of the alien Japanese in every phase of the Hawaiian life is more important than all the other problems combined.”<sup>230</sup>

In the pivotal moment when needed most, when headlines all over the United States sensationalized the threat of Japanese Americans, they stepped up. On December 7, 1941 over 300 men from the Hawaiian territorial guard went into service; many of these young men were Japanese Americans.<sup>231</sup> They were armed and placed at strategic locations throughout the islands including, according to their commander, telephone exchanges, electric substations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation office who had coined them “a source of potential danger,”<sup>232</sup> courthouses, wells, reservoirs, pumping stations, water tanks, bridges and state institutions such as the territorial archives and governor’s residence, Washington Place.<sup>233</sup> At the same moment that Japanese Americans on the island of Niihau were offering assistance to a Japanese officer, a significantly more substantial number of Japanese Americans were confirming their unwavering support for their nation of birth. Ted Tsukiyama, a Japanese American sergeant in the ROTC, indicates right after the attack that:

They called us out into our units, and our unit was captained by Nolle Smith, the black guy, and I was first sergeant, and I don’t know if was then that we got the tin hats but anyway we got rifles with ammunition and the first order or assignment we got was that

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<sup>230</sup> Okiihiro, 112.

<sup>231</sup> Odo, 134.

<sup>232</sup> Prange, 152.

<sup>233</sup> Odo, 121.

Japanese paratroopers landed on top of St. Louis Heights and that we were to deploy and await the advice of the enemy...They knew that 80 percent of that ROTC was Japanese. They didn't ask questions. They didn't give us a loyalty oath, you know. They didn't interview us, screen us. They just said turn out, and we turned out. And the HTG - same thing.<sup>234</sup>

Japanese Americans rose to the challenge presented by war with Imperial Japan. It seemed hardly a question for many including Akira Otani. After having watched his father's arrest at gun point by Federal Bureau of Investigation and military agents, he immersed himself in his patriotic oath to protect the United States. "I think I must have felt, gee, my country needs me, you know...And today, when you think about it, I think my kids must think I'm a stupid person or whatever. Here, to see your dad get taken away and turn right around and volunteer for a country that took your dad away."<sup>235</sup> Men like Otani demonstrated loyalty in the face of racism only to be labeled by their own government an indistinguishable and disloyal mass.

The lack of mass internment in Hawaii questions the motivations of Executive Order 9066. The 'Japanese problem' was centered on the inability of Japanese Americans to deviate from their racial ties to Imperial Japan. Disloyalty was assumed as the essence of what made up a Japanese individual could not be altered by citizenship; as argued by DeWitt, there were no "means existing for determining the loyal and the disloyal."<sup>236</sup> Hawaii illustrated those limitations by disagreeing with internment of all Japanese Americans. The stories of Japanese American veterans in Hawaii are surely worth noting as it confirms the superficial extent of racism in the face of desperation. The United States could overlook the presumed disloyalty of Japanese

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid, 110.

HTG is Hawaiian Territorial Guard

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, 113.

<sup>236</sup> DeWitt, 9.



Americans in light of potential Imperial Japanese attack if it preserved the status quo. Michelle Malkin argued that preservation of the Union has to come before individual freedom and rights; that civil liberties are not sacrosanct.<sup>237</sup> This idea seems fluid dependent on circumstance however. The lack of Japanese American internment in Hawaii indicates that survival of the nation comes before military necessity as well. Otherwise how can those deemed potential enemies and interned in California be so vital for defense in Hawaii? The military powers approved in Executive Order 9066 took on authority unsupported by facts but it also did so under false pretense of racial understandings.

### **German Fifth Column Activity**

*Did potential Japanese American fifth column activity outweigh that of German Americans? Evaluation of national security is relevant to understand the potential of both Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany. The reality appears to correlate with race expectations. Nazi Germany was a significant threat but German Americans as a 'white' race were a part of accepted American society whereas Japanese Americans were of a foreign and hostile race which had no commonality with American values.*

The lack of wholesale Japanese American internment in Hawaii despite historical concerns about Japanese American labor and geography unequivocally denies the reasoning of military necessity. So too does the lack of similar treatment for German Americans further question the military necessity of Japanese American internment. Although the German American population was massive (first or second generation German Americans made up at least five million people out of the 132 million people living in the United States) and had established themselves within North America well before the twentieth century, the threat must be considered based on

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<sup>237</sup> Malkin, xiii-xiv.

the same principles as Japanese Americans.<sup>238</sup> According to the official government report in 1943, factors such as race, population and history in the United States were not the concern of internment and as such, only the true fifth column potential, or disloyalty, should be reviewed on its individual merits. A 1942 United States military intelligence survey speculated that one in ten German born Americans would turn disloyal to the United States and worse, that a large group of German Americans were likely to be “opportunists ready to leap on the Hitler bandwagon...if it appears that the Axis is going win the war.”<sup>239</sup> The survey suggests that Germans posed just as much a threat, if not more so, than did Japanese Americans by sheer numbers and that loyalty, even with significant integration into the American way of life, could not be guaranteed.

The First World War further confirms the historical concerns of German fifth column activity. Imperial German intelligence services planted numerous spies within the United States and took significant interest in the military production industry during the conflict. Imperial German intrigue had potential roles in around fifty unexplained fires at military warehouses and armament factories between 1914 and 1916.<sup>240</sup> Although definitive proof was never found in these situations, abundant circumstantial evidence pointed to Imperial German sabotage plaguing the American military production industry.<sup>241</sup> During a period that American military writers like Mahan proposed Imperial Japan was more of a threat than Imperial Germany, the latter was actively harming the United States. No single event illustrated the effectiveness of Imperial German sabotage more than the attack on Black Tom Island in New Jersey. On July 30, 1916, a

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<sup>238</sup> *Personal Justice Denied*, 289.

<sup>239</sup> Micheal Dobbs, *Saboteurs: The Nazi Raid on America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 158.

<sup>240</sup> MacDonnell, 15-17.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

massive explosion rocked the New York metro when over 2 million tons of explosives and ammunition were purposely ignited by saboteurs attempting to cripple the American war effort. The blast that killed four people could be heard as far away as Philadelphia and shattered windows in adjacent Brooklyn while even leaving damage to the iconic Statue of Liberty.<sup>242</sup> Without question Imperial German operations were performed by American citizens, however, their actions were confronted by federal law enforcement agencies using non-military methods. Due to race, the methodology of handling legitimate German American intrigue versus perceived Japanese American fifth column actions differed greatly.

Unsurprisingly, the interwar period saw continual German efforts to infiltrate the United States through various groups. The German American Bund was an organization that concerned the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the late 1930s. Comments like that of leader Fritz Kuhn in a 1938 speech help confirm this interest:

The German American Voksbund is inspired with the National Socialist world concept. We desire that the spiritual rebirth of the German people at home shall spiritually be transmitted to the Germans of America through mediums of flaming words and inspiring examples. We must leave nothing undone to gain access to the hearts and minds of our fellow German Americans. We will foster understanding for our homeland convert our American fellow citizens into true friends of the present-day Germany.<sup>243</sup>

The bund was a successor to an organization called Friends of New Germany, which had been started by the Nazi government in Germany to promote national socialist ideas in the United States. When official Nazi Germany sanctioning ended for Friends of New Germany in late

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<sup>242</sup> “Black Tom 1916 Bombing,” FBI Famous Cases and Criminals.

<sup>243</sup> “FBI Records: The Vault. German American Federation/Bund,” 128.

1935 the group broke up allowing the German American Bund to pick up the pro-fascist banner in March of 1936. Although the bund itself suggested membership of over 200,000, at its peak close to 25,000 ethnic Germans participated in the group.<sup>244</sup> They held numerous parades and rallies as well as sponsoring the establishment of several recreational camps mostly on the East Coast of the United States.<sup>245</sup> Although thousands of Japanese Americans maintained connections to Japanese cultural groups, few, if any, maintained as strong or as visible a following as did American pro-Nazi groups.

The German American Bund's most famous rally was their February 1939 'Pro-America' rally held in New York City's Madison Square Garden. Over 22,000 people attended and watched Fritz Kuhn proudly call George Washington America's first fascist while ridiculing current President Roosevelt.<sup>246</sup> Tensions ran high outside of the rally as well, and 2,000 New York City Police officers were called in to maintain order while 3,000 members of the bund's security force, the Ordungs-Dienst, scuffled with protesters around the arena.<sup>247</sup> Although the bund attempted to illustrate a connection with the Nazi government in Germany, they found little support and after the United States' entrance into the war, were disbanded. The German American Bund was not a sanctioned Nazi Germany fifth column, but rather an organic one as Japanese Americans were assumed to be. Despite this, there was little doubt of their intent to support the Nazi German government in any capacity necessary. This proclivity toward action is clearly noted by German national Bernhard Borgardt, writing in the German newsletter *Deutscher Weckruf and Beobachter* in 1939:

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<sup>244</sup> *Personal Justice Denied*, 288.

<sup>245</sup> MacDonnell, 41-45.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

In Germany one knows well that there where real German fellows and upright German women are ready to work for Germany abroad, this will can be translated into action and the country (the United States) can be snatched from Chaos...Germany stands irrevocably committed to its new times and its gigantic idea: NATIONAL SOCIALISM (Borgardt emphasis): The home land greets you, fellow countrymen! Stand firm and hold out in the storm. Close the ranks and tie the strap of your helmets tighter - for yourselves and your beautiful country.<sup>248</sup>

Even though the German American Bund was not authorized directly by the Nazi government as had the Friends of New Germany been, this did not mean they were not actively pursuing fifth column activity within the United States. Both the Rumrich and Duquesne spy rings illustrate this point. The Rumrich spy ring was a debacle for both the United States and Nazi Germany. In 1938, Guenther Gustav Rumrich, an American citizen born in Chicago, availed his services to the German government after deserting the United States Army. Rumrich claimed to have intelligence in several areas of interest to the Germans and insisted he had the ability to ascertain more. After a few minor intelligence victories, including information easily obtained by the public, the Germans connected him with a handler who assigned other targets to Rumrich. Eventually, British Intelligence caught wind of Rumrich, who was communicating with German intelligence through mail directed to an outpost in Scotland, and alerted the Americans. Rumrich was captured shortly after attempting to forge American passports and promptly turned over the names of fifteen German agents. The United States proceeded to misuse the information allowing all but four of the spies to escape the country.<sup>249</sup> Although Rumrich proved woefully inadequate in his task, his capture confirmed German interest in American aircraft and ship design as

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<sup>248</sup> "FBI Records: The Vault. German American Federation/Bund," 55.

<sup>249</sup> McDonnell, 49-71.

well as defensive plans on the Eastern seaboard. It also showed that the Nazi government had a vast network of intelligence gatherers that included American citizens.

The collapse of the Duquesne spy ring further illustrated the frequency of German spies within the United States. Duquesne was no more successful than Guenther Rumrich as both suffered from poor German personnel recruitment. Nazi officials approached William Sebold, a naturalized American citizen who had served in the German Army during the First World War, in 1939 when visiting family in Germany. Fearing for his family's safety, Sebold agreed to work with the Nazis to gather intelligence in the United States but then immediately turned himself over to American authorities, becoming a double agent. Sebold came into contact with the leader of the New York City cell, Frederick Duquesne, who was actively planning attacks on industrial plants. Mimicking some of the successful bombings during World War I, Duquesne's group of spies planned on creating fires near the plants which would lead to larger explosions. Through Sebold, the FBI became aware of all these plots and eventually apprehended 33 operatives just prior to Pearl Harbor. Of note, 26 of the 33 individuals tried and convicted of espionage were American citizens.<sup>250</sup>

The single act that best demonstrated German ability to infiltrate the United States as a legitimate fifth column threat was Operation Pastorius. Whereas Japanese Americans had been termed an 'invasion' from within by some in the early twentieth century, a group of 12 men came onto American shores in New York and Florida in 1942 literally as invaders in German military uniforms.<sup>251</sup> Trained in Germany as saboteurs, the men, led by George Dasch, had all previously

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<sup>250</sup> "FBI Records: The Vault. Duquesne Spy Ring Part 1 of 1." The Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1985.

<sup>251</sup> It should be noted that the men certainly were spies but came onshore in Kriegsmarine uniforms so that in case of capture they could claim protection under the Geneva Convention.

lived in the United States and volunteered to perform sabotage to the American defense industries as far into the heartland as Kentucky and Missouri. A trend among German spies, two of the men were American citizens, one of which, Ernest Peter Burger, had served in the Michigan National Guard during the 1930s.<sup>252</sup> Landing in the United States from U-boats in June of 1942, the Germans failed to do any damage before the mission leader Dasch surrendered himself to American authorities only days after their arrival. The outcome of the dangerous mission was an abysmal failure. Ultimately all men faced trial and all but Dasch and Burger were executed for espionage. This event halted further German attempts to place operatives on American soil until 1944.<sup>253</sup> Even though both the 1942 and 1944 plots failed to inflict harm on the American defense network, the saboteurs still were able to move freely and easily through the nation with assistance from other German Americans not involved but aware of their activities.

Situations like this required careful consideration on which coast was most vulnerable to attack. Attorney General Francis Biddle in his memoirs believed the East Coast was more likely a threat to fifth column activities than was the West Coast. “There was more reason in the west to conclude that shore-to-ship signals were accounting for the very serious submarine sinking all along the East Coast, which were sporadic only on the West Coast...But decisions were not made on the logic of events or on the weight of evidence, but on the racial prejudice that seemed to be influencing everyone.”<sup>254</sup> Military necessity for Biddle appeared more apt to apply in confronting German Americans than Japanese Americans while his comments further confirm issues of race informed most decisions. His comments on the U-boat threat is well founded as well.

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<sup>252</sup> Dobbs, 17.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 87-151.

<sup>254</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, 112.

Between January and the end of July 1942, German vessels along the East Coast and in the Caribbean Sea had accounted for 226 merchant ships, culminating in the loss of 1,252,650 tons.<sup>255</sup> By comparison, Japanese submarines sunk seven vessels from Hawaii to the West Coast and damaged four more from December 1941 to the end of 1942. They also shelled an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California and released explosive balloons which killed six American civilians in Oregon.<sup>256</sup>

Between the two failed spy rings and Operation Pastorius, Germany had shown its immense desire to adversely affect the American ability to conduct war. Regardless of outcome, Germany had shown a potential for fifth column activity not seen by any other nation against the United States. Imperial Japan, assumed an internal threat for decades, produced no such fifth column attempts. According to Historian Francis MacDonnell, “In contrast to the case of the Nazi Fifth Column, there is little evidence that Roosevelt felt grave concern at the menace posed by a Trojan horse directed from Tokyo.”<sup>257</sup> Yet, so extreme was the fear of Japanese Americans that they were forced to evacuate the American West Coast while German Americans continued to work in defense factories, in war planning and even actively fought against their ethnic counterparts. German Americans deemed a viable military risk were interned individually; Japanese Americans were forced into internment for substantially different reasons.

Whereas Magic messages indicate that the Japanese government might have had one individual within the United States aerospace industry while attempting to pursue additional individuals for this purpose, Germany had multiple high ranking individuals in the Duquesne spy

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<sup>255</sup> Ed Offley, *The Burning Shore: How Hitler's U-Boats Brought World War II to America* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 240.

<sup>256</sup> Malkin, 9-10.

<sup>257</sup> MacDonnell, 89.



ring alone. Everett Minster Roeder was one such example who “was a draftsman and designer of confidential materials for the United States Army and Navy.”<sup>258</sup> The juxtaposition between the two support that Japanese efforts to recruit non-Japanese Americans were likely their best opportunity. The large population of German Americans clearly was an advantage to German espionage efforts and additional evidence indicate a level of success, at least in terms of infiltration, never realized by the Japanese government. The willingness of numerous American citizens of German ancestry to support the Nazi German government in fifth column acts dwarfs similar Japanese efforts. If the evidence is examined based on credibility of threat alone, German efforts present a more plausible need for military intervention than does those of the Japanese.

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<sup>258</sup> “FBI Records: The Vault. Duquesne Spy Ring Part 1 of 1,” 11.

## CONCLUSION

The study of Japanese American internment is unique within American history. Although this document argues that the racism toward Japanese Americans was categorically different than prejudice faced by others, attempts to establish or to preserve white homogeneity is not new. The suffering of Native Americans and African Americans, among others, paints an American history set apart from its idealistic ideology. Yet, the oddity of Japanese American internment is in their assumed militaristic threat and lack of loyalty due to race and nationalism. US Rear Admiral Yates Stirling in 1932 asked whether or not Japanese Americans could “truly efface their allegiance to Japan and adopt full loyalty to a nation so different in historical background” as the United States.<sup>259</sup> Japanese Americans were presented as a future threat because they could possibly become one, not because they were one at the time. Their ancestry and common culture presented through nationalism with Imperial Japan, not actual treason, was presumed to indicate disloyalty and potential criminality. The government response, wholesale internment of over 100,000 citizens set apart by race, developed as a result of long term anti-Japanese prejudice separate from a shared concept of racism or ‘yellow peril’ by nationalism. The movement’s rhetoric argued in terms of national security and aligned Japanese Americans with a potential military enemy in Asia.

Therefore, this is why the type of racism endured by Japanese Americans is so important to the study of Japanese American internment. Racism as a single entity of reason cannot encapsulate all prerequisites of internment, but its continual undercurrent in American society best defines the context and develops the motivations of the period. The assumption that racism is static

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<sup>259</sup> Odo, 72.

in the United States and can equally describe a shared history between African Americans, Native Americans and Japanese Americans fails to understand how each were presented as threats. The easiest disconnect in this concept is between anti-Japanese racism and the concept of ‘yellow peril.’ Numerous historians such as Roger Daniels, Gary Okihiro and Erika Lee present an indistinguishable connection between ‘yellow peril’ and racism toward Japanese Americans. Although Lee recognizes the importance of ‘yellow peril’ transnationalism as a connection between the United States and North America as a whole, the specific prejudice differences between Japanese Americans and other Asian races cannot be understated. In fact, the differences should be explored so that the anti-Japanese movement and its ultimate success - or failure if understood in a different light - can be examined from its unique racial development that focused on the challenge of Imperial Japan to Eurocentric ideas. Differentiation of these two concepts, ‘yellow peril’ and the anti-Japanese movement, is necessary in identifying the importance of race but how it related to military concerns. It was not only unrealized ‘yellow peril’ fears but a mixture of race, nationalistic ideas, culture and loyalty that presented baseless arguments of internment.

The Japanese race, as a singularly homogenous group, was understood to be the concern by men like Homer Lea and Alfred Mahan during the late 1890s and into the 1910s. They attached the ideas of threat, specifically of an ‘invasion,’ with Japanese because they could not separate their misunderstandings of Japanese culture and their race. This culture included, in their mind, a complete dedication to an Imperial Japanese state that was a burgeoning military power in the Pacific. Ideas of culture and nationalism intertwined with race to formulate a Japan dangerous to America’s Pacific interests and a Japanese people complacent and willing to support Japan’s Imperial ambitions. Other writers like Peter Kyne and James Abbott questioned the

loyalty and assimilability of Japanese Americans. They too argued that as a race, Japanese as a transnational group were a military threat and advocated for limits on immigration and restricting the liberties of Japanese Americans. Politicians carried this ideology to their legislative positions with the promotion of legalized prejudice against Japanese Americans. Men like James Phelan and WR Sharkey supported this repressive consensus on Japanese American citizens they considered parallel to their racial risks to national security. The assumed Japanese American method of anti-American activity, 'invasion,' began to be replaced in the 1930s by fifth column activity. The United States military, including leadership and intelligence, found significant concern in Japanese Americans consistent throughout the interwar period. No change in terminology affected attitudes on Japanese American racism or national risk. These numerous individuals represented a vast American society rampant with anti-Japanese ideas and powerful connections to political and military authority. In fact, this movement of uniquely and powerfully placed individuals were ideally positioned to convey a consensus American view opposed to Japanese Americans.

These well-respected individuals were intent on connecting their misgivings towards Japanese Americans with the necessity of military action. General DeWitt may have taken national security measures that he and the government deemed necessary for protection but he only struck the match of the bonfire built on decades of prejudice. Military necessity was borne out of the anti-Japanese movement and came to placate the racially driven expectations of a panicked population in 1942. The true nature of Japanese 'invasion' or Japanese American fifth column activity was enhanced by decades of rhetoric which supplemented reality with imagination and even lies. The government used this to incriminate Japanese Americans by placing them at the enemy's disposal at Pearl Harbor and along the shores of the American West Coast. The result was

the ideas of Lea, Abbott and James Phelan coming to fruition. Imperial Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor but it had been a complete effort by the Japanese race. By signing Executive Order 9066 the United States verified the success of the anti-Japanese movement and the presumed militant nature of the Japanese race.

In reality the United States did not recognize aggressive Nazi German fifth column activity against the United States as race driven as they did with Imperial Japan. They further identified Japanese American in Hawaii under a different set of rules expedient to political and economic needs, not supposed military necessity. These examples refute arguments of Japanese Americans internment necessity. Yet, that is understandable as necessity did not exist but simply attempted to justify long held beliefs toward Japanese American minorities. Military necessity played the final role in Japanese American internment by calling on the highest authority to face what was deemed unprecedented times. It required the removal of basic rights to counter threats insurmountable without their infringement. It failed to see Japanese Americans as citizens but instead as the enemy.

Although few in the academic field argue to the contrary, there remains a need to reaffirm the danger of wide sweeping military authority, even during times of war or significant national turmoil. Eric Muller in *American Inquisition* appropriates Western Defense Commands unwavering assessment of Japanese Americans as disloyal throughout the Second World War to unwillingness to surrender authority during a time of war. He further argued that if Japanese Americans had been released in significant numbers during the conflict as 'loyal' it would undermine the broad military rights they had secured during the conflict.<sup>260</sup> A substantial goal of Michelle Malkin's book, *In Defense of Internment*, attempted to excuse continued undemocratic

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<sup>260</sup> Muller, 121-133.

practices including internment against Muslims after the September 11, 2001 attacks by relating them to Japanese American internment and a need for security. As such, her thesis attempts to indicate a certain admissibility of civil liberties prudent to protection of the Union. Citizens' rights, in other words, cannot supersede the sanctity of government authority when deemed necessary to maintain the democracy itself.<sup>261</sup>

Much like the continual racism prevalent in American history, debate on the role and limits of wartime government authority and its intersection with civil liberties has yet to reach an equilibrium either. Anti-Japanese racism describes the risks of prejudice that can mold citizens into military enemies through deliberate and calculated fear based rhetoric. Their internment was the result of these racial assumptions which withdraw rights out of convenience disguised as necessity. In the year that followed the conclusion of the American Civil War, the Supreme Court ruled on the legality of military tribunals during times of war. Although that case was not relevant to this study, a statement from Justice David Davis in *Ex parte Milligan* is. Davis stated that "The Constitution is not made for peace alone, it is made for war as well as peace. It is not merely for fair weather. The real test of its power and authority, the real test of its strength to protect the minority, arises only when it has to be construed in times of stress."<sup>262</sup> The study of Japanese American internment supports that only a single stressor is needed to remove Constitutional rights of minorities. Efforts to make Japanese Americans an antagonist in the decades prior to the stressor of World War II was the needed undercurrent.

Japanese American internment during World War II places the worst attributes of the United States on display. The anti-Japanese movement's prejudice and its creation of military

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<sup>261</sup> Malkin.

<sup>262</sup> Dobbs, 244.

concerns toward citizens highlights how undemocratic measures can grow within democratic ideals. In 1943 President Roosevelt addressed the creation of an all Japanese American combat unit, later to be known as the 442 Infantry Regiment. His message aspired to those ideas, stating, “no loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise his citizenship, regardless of his ancestry. The principle on which this country was founded and 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.”<sup>263</sup> Although President Roosevelt’s actions verified his lack of faith and adherence to the high morality of his own statement, the essence of his message certainly depicts the high calling of democracy and its inherent equality. For Japanese Americans during the Second World War these words were hollow visions as it was indeed race and not citizenship that had dictated their internment. They had not been given the opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty or to show their Americanism. Their hearts and minds were presumed devoted to Imperial Japan in the form of military threat. The true menace however had not been Japanese Americans, but instead the anti-Japanese movement and its ability to again show how racial prejudice can be a weapon in American minority history.

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<sup>263</sup> Robinson, *By Order of the President*, 170.

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