

A Chronology of Evacuation and Relocation (6-1879-BU-COS-WP)

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—1941—

December 7 — The attack on Pearl Harbor

December 8 — Declaration of war against Japan.

—1942—

February 13 — Letter to the President from the Pacific Coast congressional delegation recommending the evacuation from strategic areas of all persons of Japanese ancestry, and others, both aliens and citizens, whose presence might jeopardize or hinder the Nation's war effort.

February 19 — Executive order of the President authorizing the Secretary of War or designated military commanders to prescribe military areas from which any or all persons may be excluded, or in which their movements may be restricted.

February 21 — Hearings of House Committee on National Defense Migration (the Tolan Committee) begun on the Pacific Coast with regard to problems involved in dealing with enemy aliens and other persons living in that area.

February 23 — Telegram from the Tolan Committee to the President, cabinet members, and congressional leaders urging establishment of a regional office of the Alien Property Custodian in the Pacific Coast area.

March 2 — Proclamation issued by Lieut. Gen. J. L. DeWitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, designating military areas in the States of Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona from which certain persons or classes of persons, as the situation might require, might be excluded. Restrictions placed on Japanese, German, and Italian aliens. Military Areas No. 1 included roughly the western half of the three coastal States and the southern half of Arizona. Military Area No. 2 comprised the remaining portions of all four states. Period of voluntary evacuation begun.

- March 6 — Federal Reserve Bank designated as a co-operating agency to assist persons to be evacuated in disposing of their property or making other arrangements for handling such property. The Farm Security Administration was later authorized to render similar assistance with respect to agricultural property and to help in placing other operators on farms that had been vacated.
- March 14 — The Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA) established as an agency of the Western Defense Command, under Col. Karl R. Bendetsen, to have direct supervision of the evacuation program.
- March 14 — Proclamation issued designating the States of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Utah as military areas No. 3, 4, 5, and 6 respectively.
- March 16 — Work underway on clearing land and erection of housing for evacuee assembly center at Manzanar, California, under direction of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- March 18 — Executive Order (9102) issued by President Roosevelt creating the War Relocation Authority, a non-military agency, with authority to formulate and carry out a program for a planned and orderly relocation of persons evacuated from military areas. Milton S. Eisenhower appointed director.
- March 19 — Telegrams sent by Tolan Committee to 15 Western Governors to determine attitude of States toward receiving Japanese evacuees; all but one of the replies unfavorable.
- March 21 — Enactment of Congressional legislation (HR 6758) providing penalties for persons violating orders as to entering , remaining in, or leaving military areas.
- March 23 — Movement of first contingent of evacuees of Japanese ancestry, 1,000 volunteers from Los Angeles, to the assembly center at Manzanar to assist in preparing the new community for the later arrival of 9,000 others.
- March 23 — Civilian Exclusion Order No. 1 issued by Lieut. Gen. J. L. DeWitt directing all persons of Japanese ancestry both aliens and citizens, to evacuate Bainbridge Island near Seattle, Washington, on or before March 30.
- March 27 — Effective date of curfew order coving German and Italian aliens and all persons of Japanese ancestry in Military Area No. 1, requiring them to be in their places of residence between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.; forbidding possession of firearms, explosives, cameras, radio transmitting sets or shortwave receiving sets, and barring travel more than five miles from home without permit.
- March 29 — Further voluntary evacuation from Military Area No. 1 by Japanese, aliens or American-born, prohibited after this date by order of Lieut. Gen. DeWitt.

- March 30 — Three thousand people of Japanese ancestry ordered to evacuate the Terminal Island area in Los Angeles harbor by April 5 and move to the assembly center at Santa Anita.
- April 7 — Salt Lake City conference attended by 10 Western governors or their representatives, and by other state officials and representatives of federal agencies including the War Relocation Authority, to discuss relocation program and ascertain the views of the various states toward it. States represented were: Utah, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Oregon, and Wyoming.
- April 16 — Construction started on Gila River Relocation Center near Sacaton, Arizona.
- April 17 — Appointment of E. R. Fryer as Regional Director of the War Relocation Authority at San Francisco announced.
- May 7 — Organization of National Student Relocation Council, a non-government agency, initiated through the efforts of the American Friends Service Committee with the approval of the War Relocation Authority and the War Department, to assist in a program by which evacuee students are enabled to continue their education at colleges outside the evacuated area.
- May 8 — Arrival of the first contingent of evacuees at the Colorado River Relocation Center near Parker, Arizona.
- May 8 — Action started by the Native Sons of the Golden West in California Federal Court to deny American-born Japanese the right to vote.
- May 8 — Evacuation of Japanese in Arizona completed.
- May 16 — Atlantic coast designated a military area by the Eastern Defense Command.
- May 19 — Civilian Restriction Order No. 1 issued by the Western Defense Command establishing all assembly centers and relocation centers in the eight far western States as military areas and forbidding evacuee residents to leave these areas without express approval of the Western Defense Command.
- May 21 — Departure of first group of evacuees from Portland Assembly Center for agricultural work in Malheur County, Oregon under assurances from Governor and local authorities that law and order would be maintained.
- May 27 — Opening by War Relocation Authority of relocation center at Tule Lake, California near the Oregon boundary.
- June 1 — Control of Manzanar, which had been operated as an assembly center by the Wartime Civil Control Administration, transferred to the War Relocation Authority.

- June 2 — First step in evacuating people of Japanese ancestry from Military Area No. 2 in California (roughly the eastern half of the state) taken by Lieut. Gen. DeWitt with issuance of Proclamation No. 6 forbidding the people of Japanese descent to leave this area.
- June 7 — Evacuation of 100,000 people of Japanese ancestry from Military Area No. 1 completed.
- June 10 — Plans announced to establish field offices of the War Relocation Authority at Denver and Little Rock in addition to the one at San Francisco.
- June 17 — Dillon S. Myer appointed national director of the War Relocation Authority succeeding M. S. Eisenhower.
- June 20 — Appointment of Joseph H. Smart as regional director at Denver announced.
- June 26 — Opening trial at San Francisco on suit brought by the Native Sons of the Golden West to bar Japanese-Americans from voting.
- June 29 — Announcement that a total of 1,600 evacuee workers had been released from assembly and relocation centers to help relieve an acute labor shortage in sugar-beet areas in eastern Oregon, Utah, Idaho, and Montana.
- July 9 — Evacuation of approximately 10,000 people of Japanese ancestry from Military Area No. 2 in California (eastern portion of the state) started, with movement direct to relocation centers instead of to assembly centers as in the evacuation of Military Area No. 1.
- July 9 — Appointment of E. B. Whitaker as Regional Director of WRA at Little Rock, Arkansas.
- July 18 — Opening of Gila River relocation center near Sacaton, Arizona.
- July 25 — National Defense Appropriation Act including (among many other items) 70 million dollar appropriation for the War Relocation Authority for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1942 signed by President Roosevelt.
- August 7 — Evacuation of 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry from their homes in Military Area No. 1 and the California portion of Military Area No. 2 completed.
- August 8 — Appointment of Elmer M. Rowalt as Deputy Director of the War Relocation Authority.
- August 10 — Arrival of first contingent of evacuees to open the Minidoka Relocation Center near Eden, Idaho.
- August 12 — Opening of Heart Mountain relocation center near Cody, Wyoming.

- August 18 — War Department proclamation designating as military areas the four relocation centers outside the Western Defense Command issued by Secretary Stimson.
- August 19 — Announcement by Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt of a program under which any persons deemed dangerous to military security would be excluded from vital areas in the Western Defense Command.
- August 27 — Opening of Granada Relocation Center near Lamar, Colorado.
- September 10 — Individual exclusion program for 16 states in the Eastern Defense Command announced by Lt. Gen. Hugh A. Drum, providing for the exclusion of “any person whose presence in the Eastern Military area is deemed dangerous to the national defense.” The War Relocation Authority was authorized to assist persons excluded from either the Western, Eastern or Southern military regions to re-establish themselves in non-prohibited areas.
- September 11 — Opening of the Central Utah Relocation Center near Delta, Utah.
- September 15 — Order issued by Western Defense Command permitting evacuee workers at the Poston and Gila River Relocation Centers to enter certain parts of Military Area No. 1 in Arizona to assist in the harvest of the long-staple cotton crop.
- September 15 — Announcement made that the Evacuee Property Division of WRA at San Francisco had set up branch offices in Seattle and Los Angeles and was responsible for the administration of evacuee property holdings valued at more than two-hundred million dollars.
- September 17 — Opening of Rohwer Relocation Center near McGehee, Arkansas.
- September 20 — Resolution adopted by national convention of the American Legion at Kansas City asking that control of Relocation Centers be “returned to military authorities” and that evacuees “be denied the privilege of leaving these camps under any pretext for the duration of the war.”
- September 21 — Joint Resolution introduced in the United States Senate by Senator Rufus C. Holman of Oregon proposing amendment to the Constitution giving Congress the power to regulate conditions under which persons subject to dual citizenship may become citizens of the United States.
- September 25 — Offices of the War Relocation Authority opened in New York City and Baltimore to assist persons excluded from Eastern Military areas in finding work and homes in non-restricted areas.
- October 1 — Effective date of WRA regulations under which evacuees may obtain permits to leave relocation centers for temporary or permanent residence outside if the following

conditions are met: (a) that the applicant's loyalty to the United States is unquestioned; (b) that he has an offer of employment or other means of support so as not to become a public charge; (c) that he will keep the Authority advised of any change of residence; (d) that there is reasonable assurance that his presence will be acceptable in the community to which he is going.

- October 6 — Opening of the tenth and last Relocation Center at Jerome, Arkansas, near Dermott.
- October 10 — Robert O'Brien, former Assistant Dean at the University of Washington appointed national director of the Student Relocation Council, succeeding Dr. Robbins Barstow who returned to his duties as president of the Hartford Theological Seminary.
- October 24 — More than 8,000 evacuees engaged in harvest work in Western states to relieve acute shortage of farm labor.
- October 30 — Assembly centers cleared with movement of final contingent of evacuees from Fresno to Jerome Relocation Center.