

“OUR BEING HERE IS REALLY A SMALL PART”: JAPANESE AMERICAN
INTERNEE NEWSPAPERS DURING WORLD WAR II AND THE RHETORIC
OF PATRIOTIC SACRIFICE

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In 1942, by order of President Franklin Roosevelt, the U.S. Army rounded up and relocated over 115,000 Japanese from their homes on the West Coast. Over half of them were American citizens. Their internment, the largest relocation and imprisonment of non-combatant U.S. citizens in American history, is currently viewed by historians and other social scientists as one of the most egregious violations of civil liberties in the country's history, resulting in these individuals' loss of land, farms, and belongings.¹ While many decried the internment of Nisei (American-born Japanese) and Issei (Japanese citizens living in the United States) in relocation camps in California, Oregon, and Washington, others viewed these individuals' loss of property and freedom as a necessary sacrifice during the war which the U.S. entered when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Saburo Kido, president of the Japanese American Citizens' League (JACL), for example, routinely promoted Japanese cooperation with the internment process. He went so far as to give in July of 1942 a speech to a large group of internees at the Fresno assembly center, the former fairgrounds in Fresno converted to hold Central Valley Japanese

¹ Three monographs, each on different aspects of the internment, reflect the opinion that the internment was the most egregious violation of civil liberties in U.S. history: prominent World War II historian Roger Daniels' *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971); sociologist Francis McCollum Feeley's *America's Concentration Camps During World War II: Social Science and the Japanese American Internment* (New Orleans: University Press of the South, 1999), and cultural historian Lawson Fusao Inada's *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000). However, there are a number of different internment studies that reach this same conclusion, dating back to the 1940s, when Carey McWilliams published *Prejudice; Japanese Americans: Symbol of Racial Intolerance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1944). This scholarly interpretation of the internment has become the most widely accepted among historians and sociologists specializing on this era of American history.

and Japanese Americans. In his speech, Kido proclaimed, “Although the Nisei are going through trying times, all of us must make sacrifices to help towards upholding American ideals.”² Such sentiments, which in essence advocated confinement without cause or legal recourse, were echoed in one of the richest sources detailing the life of Japanese internees: newspapers by internees, for internees, ostensibly designed to provide a community atmosphere within the assembly centers. However, the military administration in charge of the centers censored these newspapers heavily and used them to spread nationalistic rhetoric, particularly the idea of the internment as a patriotic sacrifice by Japanese Americans. The administration aimed to avert outright rebellion against internment efforts, avoid bitterness and anger from the Japanese internees, and win the internees’ consent to the internment and relocation.

An investigation of these newspapers is therefore crucial to a better understanding of how the U.S. government, particularly the War Relocation Authority, the civilian-led organization that assisted the military during the internment, used these newspapers to disseminate the idea that the relocation was the Japanese American’s patriotic sacrifice as loyal citizens. The assembly center newspapers provide an excellent glimpse into how the U.S. military presented the internment to the Japanese and Japanese Americans. The articles and editorials that claimed that the internment was simply another way in which the Japanese American citizens could prove their loyalty through active obedience can be interpreted as another method of control over a population interned in centers and camps surrounded by barbed wire. This essay attempts to prove that the military used the newspapers - and the editors they chose - to disseminate specific rhetoric and discourse so as to convince the internees to give up their civil rights in order to prove their loyalty to the United States.

² “Saburo Kido Visits the Center,” *Fresno Grapevine*, 8 July 1942, <http://ecollections.lib.csufresno.edu/specialcollections>, (accessed 3 March 2010).

Although there is a vast historiography regarding Japanese American internment most of the scholarship focuses on the legality of the internment and deals with solely with relocation camps – the second phase of the internment process – rather than with assembly centers, that is, the initial locales to which internees were taken. Scholars have failed to recognize the central role played by internee-published newspapers, particularly those published in assembly centers, in the internment experience.³ Although scholars such as E.J. Friedlander and Lauren Kessler have studied newspapers published in relocation camps, these two scholars, who make up the entirety of the historiography of internment newspapers, only focus on whether camp newspapers operated with editorial freedom.

In 1985, E.J. Friedlander argued that certain camp newspapers, particularly the newspaper within the Jerome, Arkansas relocation camp, had a modicum of editorial freedom.⁴ Friedlander asserted that because the Jerome newspaper's editor published a number of different articles and editorials criticizing the military, U.S. government, and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) over their involvement in the internment, the Jerome newspaper did not experience any editorial censorship. This fact is important because, according to Friedlander, many other camp newspapers did not publish any articles questioning the legality of the internment. This fact led Friedlander to infer that the Jerome editor was actually free to publish what he wished. In 1988,

³ The earliest historical monographs on this topic, written in the late 1940s, initially argue that the Japanese internment was not based on military necessity, but rather, was a reflection of local politics and society's racial fears. For example, Morton Grodzins, *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). Other historians elaborated on the racial agitation and the part it played in the internment decision. The leading monograph in this historiographical approach is Roger Daniels, *The Decision to Relocate the Japanese* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1975). Modern historians and sociologists contend that the internment was a state decision, and the country's racial fears did not play a part in this decision. For this argument, see Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* (New York: William Morrow Company, 1976). Another historiographical approach focused on the internment's effects on Japanese and Japanese Americans following their release, specifically concentrating on the economic and social consequences. For this approach see Leonard Broom and Ruth Riemer, *Removal and Return: The Socio-Economic Effects of the War on Japanese Americans* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949) and William Petersen, *Japanese Americans: Oppression and Success* (New York: Random House, 1971).

⁴ E.J. Friedlander, "Freedom of the Press Behind Barbed Wire: Paul Yokota and the Jerome Relocation Center Newspaper," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 303-313.

Lauren Kessler countered Friedlander's argument, arguing instead that all camp newspapers were excellent representations of the complete editorial control the military had developed and the absolute censorship the internees experienced.⁵ Rather than focusing on the single exception to editorial control, as Friedlander had done, Kessler focused on the newspapers from other major camps, such as Manzanar and Tule Lake in California and the Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming. In her article, Kessler argued that, according to the examples from these camps, the military controlled all aspects of the publishing process and, as a result, the newspapers only reflected the military's point of view, completely marginalizing the internee standpoint. Significantly, according to Kessler, military control over the newspapers echoed the complete control which the military had on the internees. There was no freedom of the press, regardless of what Friedlander argued. The military completely controlled the internees, both physically and intellectually, and they had no recourse by which to state officially their opinions about the internment. According to Kessler, this military control over the press was an extension of the prison-like environment of the relocation camps.

An investigation of assembly center newspapers helps tip the scale of this argument. While fewer in number than those published in relocation camps, assembly center internee newspapers illustrate in concentrated form that the military did exert influence on the types of articles printed. Because of this influence, the center newspapers served in fact as an outlet for military propaganda in the earliest stages of the internment. The military had to control internees within the centers in order to have a smooth relocation process, and the newspapers were the best method to do so. Though the assembly centers published a smaller number of issues than did the camps, these publications are an excellent resource for historians because

⁵ Lauren Kessler, "Fettered Freedoms: The Journalism of World War II Japanese Internment Camps," *Journalism History* 15, no. 2-3 (1988): 60-69.

they illustrate how the U.S. government coerced Japanese Americans, from the earliest stage of the relocation process, to give up their civil liberties, and to obey the internment order with little to no protest.

On 19 February 1942, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which set in motion the relocation of Japanese and Japanese Americans.⁶ Between March and May 1942, the military moved the Japanese living within the prohibited areas delineated within Executive Order 9066 – namely the regions of California, Oregon, and Washington between the coast and the center of the states – into temporary assembly centers supervised by the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA).⁷ While the internees were in these centers, they published newspapers designed to replace the their hometown newspapers, such as the *Fresno Bee* or the *Los Angeles Times*, and intended to foster a sense of community within the assembly centers.⁸ In addition, the newspaper editorial staffs used these publications to disseminate military rules and regulations, as well as news relevant to the centers. Unlike hometown newspapers, center newspapers rarely ran articles focusing on the war overseas, choosing instead to focus on center-related events such as celebrations or sporting events.⁹ One newspaper, the *Tanforan Totalizer*, from the Tanforan assembly center near San Francisco, explained that the newspapers were “intended to be [the] center’s paper in every way. Its interests are those of all the residents here. It is not the organ of any self-seeking group and it will not play any politics.”¹⁰ The editorial

⁶ Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002), 329.

⁷ Hosokawa, 329.

⁸ A large number of newspapers from different assembly centers stated this goal. See for example: “Editorial,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 15 May 1942, <http://archive.densho.org/main.aspx> (accessed 6 December 2010).

⁹ The first established newspaper, the *Manzanar Free Press* from the Manzanar assembly center and relocation camp, claimed that the internees designed the publication to cover only camp policy and internee-sponsored activities such as talent shows and athletic games. The *Free Press* began publication on April 11. “Editorial,” *Manzanar Free Press*, 11 April 1942, <http://archive.densho.org/main.aspx> (accessed 5 December 2010). Information on the publication of the newspapers, including start dates found in United States Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 213.

¹⁰ “Editorial,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 15 May 1942.

staffs of all assembly centers ostensibly followed the *Totalizer's* model and designed their publications to be the internees' mouthpiece. The editors published articles, typically in the first edition, stating that they designed their newspapers with the internees' interests in mind. Among these interests editors included center events such as baseball games, dances, and other cultural gatherings, as well as happenings that affected the internees, such as supply shortages in the centers.

Yet editors were hardly immune to politics, despite what the *Totalizer* proclaimed. In order to publish any paper at all, the editors of each paper had to accommodate the demands of the military administration of their respective center. Without the WCCA's approval, the editorial staffs would not be allowed to publish the newspapers. As the 1943 WCCA Final Report makes clear, it was government officials in each center, not the editors, who managed everything related to the internees' publications. The WCCA administration had full editorial control over what the internees wrote, picked the editorial staffs, and even supervised who could receive the newspapers within the centers.¹¹ The internees could not publish anything they wished, because the editors had to undergo a lengthy process that included the "assistance and guidance of the Public Relations Representative who saw that the news items were confined to those of actual interest to the evacuees."¹² In order to ensure that the newspapers complied, these public relations officers held final approval over each article and editorial printed, thereby limiting the editors' ability to publish what they desired.¹³ Whatever the editors submitted to be published in the newspapers, the WCCA representative had to approve; based on the articles actually published, approval was seemingly only given to articles and editorials that echoed

¹¹ United States Army, *Final Report*, 213.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

official discourse and propaganda designed to alleviate internee concerns and resentment.¹⁴ The main message the articles disseminated, with the final approval of the WCCA, was that the internment of relocated Japanese Americans represented a reasonable sacrifice, one embraced by many internees as their duty and as their contribution, as patriotic American citizens, to the war effort. By complying with the relocation orders, the WCCA-approved editorials and articles argued, the internees helped the U.S.'s war efforts overseas.

Editorial oversight by WCCA administrators in the centers ensured the publication of rhetoric matching the nationalist discourse created by the WRA and disseminated to the general public through Office of War Information (OWI) films regarding the internment. Films produced by the OWI, the propaganda machine for the U.S. during World War II, characterized the relocation of Japanese American citizens as a loyalty test for the interned.¹⁵ The OWI film *Japanese Relocation* (1942) is an excellent example of this message. As Milton S. Eisenhower, narrator of the film and then head of the WRA, stated, "The evacuees cooperated wholeheartedly. The many loyal among them felt that this was a sacrifice they could make on behalf of America's war effort."¹⁶ This voiceover accompanied scenes of Japanese and Japanese Americans of all ages lining up to register and board the buses that would take them to assembly centers all over California. According to Eisenhower, and to films such as *Japanese Relocation*, internment was simply another opportunity for the internees to prove their loyalty to both the U.S. and President Roosevelt, a message corroborated by numerous articles and editorials that echoed this message within the assembly centers.

¹⁴ United States Army, *Final Report*, 213.

¹⁵ Allan M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945* (London: Yale University Press, 1978), 2.

¹⁶ Milton S. Eisenhower, narr., *Japanese Relocation*, directed by U.S. Office of War Information, Los Angeles, C.A.: Paramount Pictures, 1942. This section is found at 3:58-4:07.

Nationalistic articles within the internee newspapers upheld the JACL's sentiment that Mike Masaoka, the JACL National Secretary during World War II, had expressed in the organization's Creed, drafted and publicly read before the U.S. Senate on 9 May 1941.¹⁷ The Creed proclaimed that Japanese Americans were ready to "assume [their] duties and obligations as citizens, cheerfully and without any reservation whatsoever," and that their compliance with the internment and relocation orders was evidence of this dedication.¹⁸ JACL President Saburo Kido then reiterated the Creed's stance in a speech on 8 March 1942 before a crowd of JACL members, the majority of whom were soon after interned in various assembly centers.¹⁹ Kido, in his March speech, urged Japanese Americans to comply with their internment because they were loyal citizens and should do anything to prove this fact. He stated, "We are going into exile as our duty to our country because the President and the military commander of this area have deemed it a necessity."²⁰ This nationalistic message, the idea that internment was simply the Japanese Americans' patriotic duty as loyal citizens, had already been expressed by prominent Japanese American leaders and businessmen from the time Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. From there, it was all too easy for the WCCA and the center editorial staffs to employ this rhetoric in the newspapers to convince the over 100,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans that compliance with military orders, a necessary sacrifice by patriotic and loyal citizens, was their best option during the war.

¹⁷ Utah Senator Elbert D. Thomas read Masaoka's JACL Creed in the United States Senate Chamber on 9 May 1942. "The JACL Creed," Portland JACL, <http://www.pdxjacl.org/about/jacl-creed/> (accessed 2 April 2011).

¹⁸ "The JACL Creed," Portland JACL, <http://www.pdxjacl.org/about/jacl-creed/> (accessed 2 April 2011).

¹⁹ Kido and Masaoka would not spend time in an assembly center; Masaoka moved to the East Coast before relocation orders were issued, while Kido moved directly to the Colorado relocation camp. Information on Kido and Masaoka may be found in the National Archives and Records Administration online database for World War II Japanese located at <http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-escription.jsp?s=623&cat=WR26&bc=%2Csl> (accessed 7 May 2011).

²⁰ The full text of Kido's statement can be found in Bill Hosokawa, *JACL: In Quest of Justice* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982), 364-369. Hosokawa's monograph is an excellent history of the JACL and tracks the changes the JACL underwent during the war, shifting from an organization representing Japanese culture to an organization that, under the leadership of Kido and Masaoka, urged assimilation with American culture and the marginalization of Japanese traditions.

The Tanforan assembly center, located in the San Francisco Bay area, was one such assembly center employing this nationalistic rhetoric of patriotic sacrifice. For example, *Tanforan Totalizer* editor Taro Katayama published on 6 June 1942 “Pros and Cons of Nisei Attitude Discussed,” an article that, while ostensibly covering both pro-collaboration and anti-collaboration arguments, in fact reinforced the WCCA’s and JACL’s stance that cooperation was the best option for Japanese American internees. The article highlighted only opinions that supported the internment, only briefly mentioning that there was some resistance to the internment. The only quotes published came from Nisei who supported the internment and agreed with the idea of the internment as a patriotic sacrifice.²¹ These published quotes reiterated the JACL’s opinion, as vocalized by both Kido and Masaoka. The key idea expressed was that to cooperate with the internment meant that the Japanese Americans were supportive of the U.S. government in a time of war.²² Other articles in the *Tanforan Totalizer* echoed the sentiment. On 13 June, for example Nori Ikeda, a student in Tanforan, wrote a letter urging her fellow internees to participate actively and comply with their internment orders, because their “contribution can be in the form of consciously doing our best in the work set up for us at the relocation centers. Thus can we prove our sincerity when we say we are behind the United Nations in this struggle for complete victory of a “free world” over a “slave world.”²³ According to Ikeda, by obeying the relocation orders, Japanese Americans played their role in the war effort. In addition to rationing and the draft, their relocation was a way in which Japanese Americans could prove their loyalty to the United States and her allies.

²¹ “Pros and Cons of Nisei Attitude Discussed,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 6 June 1942, <http://archive.densho.org> (accessed 3 March 2010).

²² Ibid.

²³ Nori Ikeda, “Letter to the Editor,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 13 June 1942, <http://archive.densho.org> (accessed 13 June 2010).

As long as the newspapers repeated the theme of patriotic sacrifice, the idea that internment was the nationalistic duty of these citizens, and that only the disloyal would dissent and revolt, the chance of outright rebellion was slighter. If there were hints of rebellion or dissent, center newspaper editors were quick to reassure their readers that the camps and centers were good for the nation and that the needs and desires of a few were less important than the safety of the United States as a whole. On 18 August 1942, for example, Katayama published an article in the *Tanforan Totalizer* exhorting his readers to remember their patriotic duty to support their country in a time of war. In this editorial, the *Totalizer* editor insisted his readers remember that a U.S. victory against “Hitler and Togo and Mussolini and all their lesser fascist confreres is the one true aim that must transcend all others.”²⁴

According to Katayama, the internment was necessary and any hardships or dissatisfaction that stems from the Japanese American experience during this period paled in comparison to the importance that winning the war has for the nation. The main goal for all loyal citizens was victory, and the internment was simply a way the internees could contribute to the endgame. Tanforan schoolteacher Marii Kyogoku reiterated this message in her 29 August editorial. She implored her fellow Nisei to realize that “in a war which is so important to win, our being here is really a small part.”²⁵ These editorials, as well as many other articles in the *Tanforan Totalizer* thus reiterated the message that the internment was a necessary sacrifice and that their government and President Roosevelt called upon all loyal citizens and residents of the nation to make.

²⁴ Katayama, “Editorial,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 15 August 1942, <http://archive.densho.org> (accessed 21 July 2010).

²⁵ Marii Kyogoku, “Editorial: Women and the War,” *Tanforan Totalizer*, 29 August 1942, <http://archive.densho.org> (accessed 13 November 2010).

This core message also appeared in a number of other assembly centers newspapers, including those published in the centers located in the San Joaquin Valley, the heart of California and home to one of the largest Japanese American communities prior to the war. Here, the editorial staff of the *Fresno Grapevine*, the Fresno assembly center's newspaper, ran articles and editorials that repeatedly urged the center's Nisei to consider their patriotic duty and what they were accomplishing by obeying the relocation orders. On 4 July, America's Independence Day, *Grapevine* City Editor Richard Itanaga's article took on a more patriotic tone than usual. Itanaga used his column to beseech his readers to think only of their duty as loyal citizens, to keep in mind that their internment served a higher purpose for the nation during World War II. He stated that because of the internment and the internees' compliance with it, Japanese Americans had "a part, however small, towards making sure that there will be Independence Days for countless years to come."²⁶ For those internees unable to serve in the military due to age, gender, or health, the internment was to be their contribution to the war effort. By cooperating with the relocation, Itanaga implied, these internees proved their loyalty and dedication to democracy's defense during World War II. The play on democratic sentiment was also utilized by *Grapevine* editor Ayako Noguchi, who on 13 June stated that the upcoming Flag Day was more significant than previous ones because the U.S. was battling fascist enemies who sought "to annihilate the freedoms symbolized by the Stars and Stripes."²⁷ Because of these fascist threats, and the war in general, Noguchi urged her readers to show their "unswerving patriotism" and prove that they "are determined to preserve the American way of life and to that end are making great and unprecedented sacrifices."²⁸ In Noguchi and Itanaga's respective

²⁶ Richard Itanaga, "Between the Barracks: Today is the Day of Days for All of Us Americans," *Fresno Grapevine*, 4 July 1942, <http://ecollections.lib.csufresno.edu/specialcollections> (accessed 8 July 2010).

²⁷ Ayako Noguchi, "Flag Day," *Fresno Grapevine*, 13 June 1942, <http://ecollections.lib.csufresno.edu/specialcollections> (accessed 19 February 2011).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

columns, the rhetoric of sacrifice once again appeared in conjunction with patriotic, democratic discourse, linking the two ideas. In this way, *Fresno Grapevine* editors perpetuated the WCCA and OWI's argument that loyal citizens accepted interment because their nation needed them to do so in order to win the war.

For those internees unconvinced by this argument, some editors offered a further reason for compliance. Expectedly, *Pinedale Logger* editor George Watanabe reaffirmed the sacrifice/patriotism discourse. In a 27 June editorial titled "Evacuees and the War Effort," Watanabe highlighted how the internees' efforts and endeavors contributed to America's war efforts, claiming that any experience, good or bad, served as "endeavors of the evacuees' loyalty and patriotism, which have been so sharply questioned since Pearl Harbor. They serve as boomerangs to the many fascist elements who are attempting to bring the race element into the present conflict."²⁹ However, Watanabe also claimed that anything the internees' undertook or experienced within the centers only proved how loyal Japanese Americans were to the United States, a loyalty that he and other Nisei felt was under question because of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Watanabe believed that only the internment and the Japanese Americans' compliance with it would rehabilitate the internees' reputation in the United States. Through their efforts and their obedience, the internees "will continue to prove to their fellow citizens that they are far from being merely 'sunshine patriots.' Come what may, we will continue aiding the nation's war efforts in whatever manner possible."³⁰ Watanabe thus suggested that the internees' obedience would ultimately help the Japanese Americans themselves. However, the main argument forwarded by assembly center newspapers remained the same: internment is a patriotic sacrifice by Japanese Americans – a sacrifice similar to the war rationing and military

²⁹ George Watanabe, "Evacuees and the War Effort," *Pinedale Logger*, 27 June 1942, <http://ecollections.lib.csufresno.edu/specialcollections> (accessed 12 April 2011).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

service that all Americans had to endure. According to center newspapers, compliance with the relocation orders was the best way for Japanese Americans to prove their loyalty and dedication to the United States, traits, as Watanabe stated in the *Pinedale Logger*, “which have been so sharply questioned since Pearl Harbor.”³¹

Importantly, center newspaper editors published articles and editorials that reinforced this picture because they had no other choice. The WCCA had full editorial control over what the newspapers published and what the internees read. In order to be allowed to publish at all, the Japanese American editors had to publish articles that gained the approval of the WCCA administrators in each center. This meant, most saliently, that editors wrote commentaries in support of the national discourse of the internment as a patriotic sacrifice. On the surface, the editors designed these articles to ease their readers’ concerns, fears, and anger over their relocation. However, the WCCA designed this discourse to ensure compliance from and obedience by interned Japanese Americans.

An article in the *Fresno Grapevine* covering Kido’s visit to the center encapsulates this discourse and the WCCA approach perfectly. In his speech, Kido urged the internees to comply with the military because “although the Nisei are going through trying times, all must make sacrifices to help towards upholding American ideals.”³² Kido’s statements reiterated the fact that yes, the internment was a hardship, but it was a necessary hardship for loyal Americans, one the Japanese Americans must endure because their government called for them to do so. Through their internment, the Japanese Americans could “show the other Americans that we too can take it and serve our country in its job of winning this war.”³³ The WCCA used this

³¹ Watanabe, “Evacuees and the War Effort,” *Pinedale Logger*, 27 June 1942.

³² “Saburo Kido Visits the Center,” *Fresno Grapevine*, 8 July 1942, <http://ecollections.lib.csufresno.edu/specialcollections> (accessed 3 March 2010).

³³ *Ibid.*

approach, apparent in a number of different center publications, to coerce the internees to cooperate with the relocation. Because the newspapers portrayed the internment as a patriotic sacrifice, the WCCA expected the internees to see their relocation as their nationalistic duty as American citizens, thereby ensuring their full support.

Assembly center newspapers disseminated this idea of the internment as a necessary experience for the loyal Japanese American citizens, their patriotic obligation. Through their cooperation, the internees could prove their allegiance to America and their full support of the nation's war efforts. The newspaper editorial staffs, chosen for their education, experience, and for the most part, lack of any major ties to Japan, published articles and editorials that encouraged this rhetoric. According to the WCCA, if the internees viewed the internment as an obligation, a crucial sacrifice for the defense of the country, then the Japanese Americans would be less likely to resist any military orders for relocation. Within the internment assembly centers and the relocation camps, the internees encountered potent nationalist discourse. While other Americans were being urged to buy war bonds, "make do and mend" their clothes, and avoid any criticism of the war effort, the internees were encouraged to sacrifice something more than the average American citizen. To illustrate their patriotism and dedication to the defense of the country, the Japanese Americans had to comply with an order that cost many millions of dollars in property and belongings, and relocate to camps and centers in regions. The relocation was depicted as the internees' patriotic sacrifice, and the newspapers in the centers reaffirmed this view with virtually every article and editorial published. In addition to the failure of this approach to acknowledge the tremendous sacrifice of these individuals by portraying the detainment a reasonable and patriotic contribution to the war effort, there is another significant aspect to this issue. The editorial process and the publication of only those articles that supported the official view of detainment deny us a historical source depicting the true views

and attitudes of individuals during a very difficult period of transition and adjustment to their new circumstances. While letters and memoirs do give us access to some sources of information on this issue, uncensored newspapers published in the assembly centers and camps would give historians a unique insight into the interests and attitudes of Japanese-Americans during WWII.