

Glossary of terms related to the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans

By Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga

This glossary is the work of Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga. Aiko and her husband Jack Herzig played pivotal roles in the Redress Movement through their research at the National Archives in Washington D.C. The documents they found were instrumental in the *coram nobis* case that vacated the convictions against Fred Korematsu, Min Yasui, and Gordon Hirabayashi. She was also hired as the primary researcher for the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, and then worked for the Department of Justice Office of Redress Administration to help identify individuals eligible for redress payments.

“During the course of my work as a CWRIC researcher I learned that ‘relocation center,’ ‘nonaliens,’ and ‘evacuation’ were only a few of many euphemisms that were deliberately used to obscure and conceal what was done to American citizens under the fraudulent rationale of ‘military necessity’. In fact, it was not lost on me that the extremely problematic word ‘internment’ was in the very title of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. That is the reason for a list of terms that I had tentatively named a ‘Work in Progress’ which I began to compile after beginning my association with the CWRIC. Over the years a fuller descriptive subtitle evolved: ‘Terminology: WW II Exclusion/Incarceration of West Coast Japanese Americans.’”

Read the article by Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga that accompanies this glossary:

WORDS CAN LIE OR CLARIFY:

Terminology of the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans

<http://www.discovernikkei.org/journal/2010/2/2/terminology-incarceration-japanese-americans/>

Terms needing immediate replacement.

Refer to the Glossary below for discussion of the terms listed.

Replace “evacuation” with *banishment, diaspora, eviction, exclusion, exile, forced removal, mandatory or forced evacuation, uproot.*

For persons imprisoned in WRA concentration camps, replace “colonist, detainee, evacuee, internee, and relocatee” with *excluee, incarcerated, inmate, prisoner.* [See especially *detain/detainee/detention* in the Glossary.]

“Internment camp” is totally inaccurate to identify a War Relocation Authority Center; therefore, in describing a person held in custody in WRA concentration camps as an “internee” is incorrect. It is advised that “internee” be replaced with more precise terms, such as *excluee, inmate, or prisoner.* [See *intern/internee/internment camp* in the Glossary that explains the legal basis for recommending and encouraging the avoidance of these words except when applied to Department of Justice (DoJ) prisoners or when referring to the DoJ camps.]

Facilities administrated by the War Relocation Authority in which Japanese Americans were imprisoned during WW II that have been referred to as “detention camps, confinement sites, internment camps, and relocation camps” should be replaced with *concentration camps, gulag, or prison camps.*

Refer to the popular names used for three WRA camps by their official names: Granada, for Amache; Colorado River, for Poston; and Central Utah for Topaz.

Glossary

The following compilation of terms was originally created under the working title “Work in Progress. Terminology: WW II Exclusion/Incarceration of West Coast Japanese-Americans.” Many entries in this section are for informational purposes, supported by data found primarily in official records of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); e.g., “escape,” “contamination,” “draft,” “emancipated children,” “Executive Order 9066,” etc., which are not meant to be replaced by substitution of other terminology. They include words found in official documents, many of which were indicative of the attitudes of government officials with responsibilities associated with the program to evict and incarcerate West Coast Nikkei, or used by contemporary citizens in discussion of the historic, tragic wartime diaspora.

banish / banishment [See *evacuate/evacuation*]

During the April 30, 1987, hearing of the petitioner, U.S. Department of Justice, in its appeal to the Supreme Court in *William Hohri et al. v. U.S.A.* -- the class action lawsuit filed against the U.S. government by the National Council for Japanese American Redress – Hohri reported the following exchange between Justice Thurgood Marshall and the Justice Department’s Solicitor General Charles Fried. Marshall asked:

‘What is the difference between exclusion and killing?’

Fried’s eloquence left him. The answer wasn’t in his text. He hunted for words. ‘Killing is much worse,’ he replied.

[Marshall:] *‘How much?’*

[Fried:] *‘Well,--’*

[Marshall:] *‘When you pick up people and throw them out of their homes and where they live,’ Marshall pressed on, ‘what is anything between that and murder?’*

.....

[Thurgood:] *‘What is the difference between **banishment** and hanging?’*

*Fried replied, ‘Well, large numbers of those who were **banished** were able, after 1945, to return to their homes, and we should be grateful for that.’ [emphasis mine] ¹*

camp.

War Relocation Authority officials stated that "camp," when referring to a WRA relocation center is objectionable because it confuses WRA relocation centers with the internment camps or temporary detention camps under the jurisdiction of the War Department or the DoJ (which were managed by the Immigration & Naturalization Service). -- Source: RG 210-WRA. Memo of October 02, 1942, from WRA director Dillon S. Myer to All WRA Staff Members; Subject: Use of the terms "Japanese," "Camps" and "Internment."

camp names.

It is suggested that in the search for their government wartime concentration camp records, researchers visiting the National Archives identify the following three WRA camps by their official names rather than by their popular names which are commonly used within the Nikkei community. These include Granada, not Amache; Colorado River, not Poston; and Central Utah, not Topaz. This will facilitate retrieval of records and in the interest of historical accuracy, it is recommended that we familiarize ourselves with the proper nomenclature for these three concentration camps.

colonists.

Example: Among other documents which use the word “colonists” in reference to those held in WRA concentration camps, there is a memorandum dated March 12, 1943, by WRA community analyst John Baker, the subject being “Repercussions of the Registration Program (draft)” in

which he refers to Tule Lake prisoners as "colonists." – Source: RG 210-WRA. CWRIC #3057.¹ Also see WRA director's memo to staff, October 02, 1942, directing staff to avoid using certain terms that "are misleading and inappropriate."

concentration camp.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co.) 1996. 3rd edition. Defines concentration camp as "a camp where prisoners of war, enemy aliens, and political prisoners are detained ..., typically under harsh conditions; A place or situation characterized by extremely harsh conditions." The following are examples of the use of "concentration camps" by government officials and community leaders in the 1940s:

1. "Prepare plans for concentration camps (Army-Justice)." 09 October 1940. Memo from Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox to President Franklin D. Roosevelt [FDRL] – Source: FDRL. PSA Safe File, Box 5-Navy Dept. CWRIC #3552-3553.
2. November 1941. [Curtis] Munson Report, page 12. CWRIC #3684
3. December 1943. Attorney General Francis Biddle to FDR. *"The present practice of keeping loyal American citizens in concentration camps on the basis of race for longer than is absolutely necessary is dangerous and repugnant to the principles of our government."* -- Source: FDRL. OF 4849. CWRIC #3721-3724.
4. January 10, 1942. Leland Ford to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. Ford says people in his district are concerned about possible sabotage and fifth column activities by Japanese, both citizens and aliens. He wants to know if concentration camps are going to be set up for Japanese in the interior. CWRIC #19388. Also see Jan 16, 1942, Ford to Stimson. CWRIC #4376.
5. February 12, 1942. Chief of Staff, War Dept., in "Hawaiian Defense Forces" paper submits plan for consideration by Joint Chiefs of Staff to establish concentration camp on Molokai and/or transferring the Japanese population from Hawaii to a concentration camp on the mainland. -- Source: FDRL. PSF (Conf. File) 10, Hawaii. CWRIC #3665.
6. February 16, 1942. Manchester Boddy to Attorney General Francis Biddle re syndicated columnist Walter Lippmann's newspaper attack as influencing the public to demand the removal of West Coast ethnic Japanese and putting them into concentration camps. Boddy wrote: *"I find no distinction in the public mind regarding Japanese aliens and their dual citizenship children."* -- Source: RG 107-Secretary of War, Entry 47, Box 6. Folder: ASW 014.311 Alphabetical. CWRIC #107.

confine / confinement sites.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co.) 1996. 3rd edition. Defines as obsolete the use of "confine" as a prison.

The term "confinement," associated with a woman giving birth, has been used in recent years as a bland substitute for "concentration camp," "prison camp" and "gulag" but suffers from the same problems as use of "relocation camp." It obfuscates the truth. To say that one was confined does not adequately bring to mind the conditions that would be conveyed if one states that he/she was imprisoned in a concentration camp.

contamination.

Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy to WRA Director Dillon Myer, November 06, 1942, regarding a request of Minidoka family members to join husbands or fathers in Department of Justice (DoJ) internment camps, operated by the Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS), suggests paroling selected internees to "relocation centers" rather than transferring family into internment camps, where Nisei would be exposed to too many Issei and become "contaminated."

"While ordinarily I would favor any steps toward family unity in appropriate cases, I am not particularly enthusiastic about a wholesale transfer which would subject the Nisei to further Issei contamination." – Source: RG 107-Secretary of War, Entry 47. Folder: ASW 020 CAD. CWRIC #902.

detain / detainee / detention.

"A 'detainee' in the United States is an enemy alien when he is held in a detention camp under the jurisdiction of the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice, pending a hearing or final decision on his case. When the case of each is settled, he is either interned for the 'duration,' released, or paroled. For the purposes of sending and receiving mail, a detainee has been accorded the privileges of prisoners of war."

– Source: RG 85-Immigration & Naturalization Service, Entry 279 WW II Internment Files. Crystal City-General Files, Box 26, titled: 211/032 thru 213/032. Folder: Regulations Governing the Censorship and Disposition of Prisoner of War and Interned and Detailed Civilian Mail. July 3, 1943. Chpt. 1, 9 A - Civilian Internees and Detainees. HPC #000453.

The primary reason to avoid using "detainee" for those imprisoned in WRA concentration camps and DoJ/INS internment camps is that "detention" is applied to temporary imprisonment.

An arrested Issei was first detained in a local jail, an INS detention facility, or transported to another holding area, sometimes a former CCC camp or an army post. After a hearing, the detainee was either released, paroled, or sent to an internment camp as a potentially dangerous person. Thus, Japanese-descended persons in WRA camps were not officially classified as "detainees." The men released were still under restrictions, some of which were not imposed upon parolees, who were reunited with their families in WRA camps. Those released were required to report regularly to either FBI or INS offices throughout the period of the war. Men who were sentenced after hearings as possibly subversive persons were interned for the duration of the war and jailed in DoJ/INS internment camps. Following a determination by officials as to their status as internees who should not be permitted to be paroled to WRA camps, some were permitted to be joined by their families in the Crystal City Internment Camp in Texas, a camp that has been referred to as the DoJ/INS family camp.

Over the past 50 years, we Nikkei have claimed to have been detained in the camps but here, again, we have been misapplying the term because official "detention" was of a short, limited period of time and was used to describe that period when an alien was held in custody until a hearing was held. To reiterate, after the hearing the Issei was judged either to be eligible for parole to join his family in a WRA camp or to the family which may have resettled outside the camp, or the hearing board recommended that the Issei should continue to be an internee in a Justice Department camp. Nikkei incarcerated in WRA concentration camps, were therefore -- in government parlance -- never detainees detained in a detention camp, nor were they internees interned in an internment camp.

diaspora.

A dispersion of an originally homogeneous people. A dispersion of an originally homogeneous entity, such as a language or a culture. [From Greek *diaspora*, dispersion, from *diaspeirein*, to spread about: *dia-*, apart + *speirein*, to sow, scatter.] The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co.) 1996.

draft - Selective Service Act of 1940.

The following is the initial regulation in the Selective Service Act of 1940 as it pertained to Nikkei men eligible to be drafted during World War II:

Paragraph 362, Class of IV-F: Physically, mentally, or morally unfit.

a. In Class IV-F shall be placed only registrant who..

5. Is being retained in the custody of any court of criminal jurisdiction or other **civil authority**. [emphasis mine] In the event such court or other civil authority releases such registrant from custody, upon final adjudication or otherwise, such registrant may be reclassified.

The War Relocation Authority began its 1946 report, *The Evacuated People: A Quantitative Description*, with the following statement: "Some 120,313 persons of Japanese descent came under the custody of the War Relocation Authority [ed., a federal **civil authority**] between May 8, 1942 (the date Colorado River Relocation Center opened) and March 20, 1946 (the date Tule Lake closed)."²

The following is quoted from one researcher's study of the Selective Service Regulations section 622.43 which classified draft-age men as Class IV-C if they were "not acceptable for training and service because of nationality or ancestry....":

Initially, Class IV-C was reserved for aliens. But a few days after the first relocation camp opened at Manzanar, California, the War Department 'discontinued the induction of Nisei [into the military] on the West Coast.' At the time, there was no classification category to deal with draft-age Japanese Americans. Only two of the available classes seemed even approximately suitable, one 4-C, originally established for aliens, and the other 4-F, for persons deemed morally, mentally, or physically unacceptable [ed., or who came under the custody of a civil authority]. After careful consideration, it was concluded that the 4-C classification would be least objectionable, and an order was issued, directing the use of this classification [IV-C] for all registrants of Japanese ancestry....

On September 14, 1942, the Selective Service adopted regulations prohibiting Nisei induction and classifying registrants of Japanese ancestry IV-C, the status of enemy aliens. To accomplish this, Section 622-43 was amended to apply to all men 'whether a national of the United States or an alien.'

The author thanks Eric Muller, Dan K. Moore Distinguished Professor in Jurisprudence and Ethics, University of North Carolina School of Law for his clarification, below, of the 1944 amendment to the Selective Service Act that enabled the induction of Nikkei men into the Army from the concentration camps.

In 1942, a Selective Service Administration regulation declared that any person 'retained in the custody of a court of criminal jurisdiction or other civil authority' should be classified in Class IV-F, the class for those who were 'morally unfit' and therefore not subject to the draft. Under one interpretation of language, Nikkei men in the custody of the War Relocation Authority, a 'civil authority,' would be qualified for classification in the IV-F category. However, by early 1944, when the government began drafting Nikkei men out of the War Relocation Authority concentration camps, the Selective Administration had amended its regulation to eliminate the language about individuals 'retained in the custody of a court of criminal jurisdiction or other civil authority.' Thus, the IV-F classification was no longer available to Nikkei men in 1944, and the decision to draft them out of the concentration camps therefore did not violate Selective Service regulations.

[Ed., Dr. Muller is the author of *American Inquisition: The Hunt for Japanese American Disloyalty in World War II* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007) and *Free to Die for Their Country: The Story of the Japanese American Draft Resisters in World War II* (University of Chicago Press, 2001).]

emancipated children, exemption from exclusion.

Discussion of whether to release children of mixed marriages is found in official government records. Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy states that the War Dept. is not opposed to allowing *happa* [mixed ancestry] children to join a non-Japanese parent or grandparents outside of WRA camps provided those adults are free of Japanese tradition/culture. McCloy does stress (after the fact) that the loyalty of individuals should be weighed rather than assumption of disloyalty to U.S. as a group. – Source: February 11, 1943 letter from McCloy to Gen. John L. DeWitt. RG 107-Secretary of War. Entry 7, Box 8. Folder: ASW 014.311-WDC Exclusion Orders. CWRIC #527-528

escape.

There were vocal non-Japanese who advocated the uprooting of Japanese Americans from the West Coast into the camps claiming that the exclusion program was designed for the protection of the Nikkei from anti-Japanese vigilantes. These persons and others who clamored for removing the Nikkei were motivated to do so for various other reasons – economic gains, racial bigotry, fear of the "enemy" living among them. If the WRA camps were not prisons, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover would not have asked Attorney General Francis Biddle:

I shall appreciate being advised whether these Centers are considered to be military reservations. I shall also appreciate advice as to the agencies responsible for the location of any persons who might escape from the Relocation Centers and as to what procedure may be instituted against such escapees, and as to the agency responsible for the enforcement of regulations promulgated with respect to such Centers by the War Relocation Authority. [ed., emphasis added]

-- Source: Hoover memo to Biddle, October 01, 1942. Department of Justice records. 146-13-7-2-0. Section 21, 9/26/42-12/2/42. CWRIC #24599-24600.

Obviously, persons who are ostensibly under protective custody and supposedly free to come and go would not need to "escape."

evacuation / evacuee.

Suggested acceptable words to replace "evacuate or evacuation": evict/eviction; exclude/exclusion; expel/expulsion; forcibly removed; banish/banishment; uprooted; exiled, kicked out, booted out, forcibly evacuated, mandatory evacuation, ousted.

Suggested words to replace "evacuee": excludee, prisoner, inmate, or incarcerated. Apply the word "internee" only to those who were imprisoned in DoJ/INS internment camps. Do not use "evacuee, relocatee, and detainee" for persons who were incarcerated in WRA concentration camps.

The term resident is indeed innocuous but it obscures the truth. When referring to a person who is under custody in a local jail, a penitentiary, or in a concentration camp, most likely s(he) would be referred to a prisoner or inmate.

Many camp survivors do not wish the term prisoner to be applied to them since they had never committed any crime, but we should say it like it was in order to educate the public that we were indeed imprisoned simply on the basis of our racial ancestry. As Gordon Hirabayashi has aptly stated, "*Ethnicity is not a crime.*" However, important government officials and many American citizens deemed the Nikkei as possibly dangerously loyal to the Emperor of Japan and, therefore, we were considered potential enemy combatants.

The government's preferred nomenclature were *colonist, evacuee, resident, resident colonist, relocatee*. WRA memos, letters, and reports repeatedly emphasized that "evacuees" are not "internees." Examples:

-- October 02, 1942. Memo from WRA director Dillon S. Myer to All WRA Staff Members. Subj: Use of the terms "Japanese," "Camps" and "Internment."

-- April 01, 1943. WRA solicitor Philip M. Glick to Edwin G. Arnold, Special Asst to WRA Director. Memo re "Definition of the term "evacuee." RG 210-WRA, Series 16, Box-325. Folder: 31.000 Legal General. Also, RG 210-WRA, Series 16, Box 3. Folder: Edwin G. Arnold. CWRIC #7563-7563a.

-- May 04, 1943. Adm Instruction No. 77, Supplement II. By WRA director Dillon Myer. Subj: Definition of "Evacuee" and Property of Evacuees. RG 210-WRA. Series, 16. Box 325. Folder: 31.000 Legal (General) June 23, 1943-August 1943. CWRIC #8011, #4739

-- J. A. Krug, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior, and D. S. Myer, director, War Relocation Authority. *The Evacuated People: A Quantitative Description* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946) p.2.

*For purposes of simplification and clarity of terminology in this report, these persons shall be referred to as 'evacuees'. With few exceptions the group was composed of persons of Japanese descent who were **evacuated** from, or who were involved in, the Army **evacuation** of the West Coast in 1942.*

exclude / excludee / exclusion.

Webster's Collegiate Thesaurus (1976) and The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1996) offer definitions for the word "exclude" as follows: count out, eliminate, suspend, prevent, prohibit, blackball, blacklist, ostracize, block, lock out, shut out, and prevent from entering, keep out; bar; to prevent from being included, considered, or accepted, reject; to put out, expel – all representing conditions experienced by Nikkei on the West Coast who were excluded from their homes as a result of E.O. 9066.

All persons in the WRA and DoJ/INS camps were excludees. Japanese-Americans who "voluntarily" removed themselves during a specific time allowed for such movement from the Pacific coastal areas and all other non-West Coast Japanese Americans prohibited from entering Military Area #1 were also excludees. The government labeled persons who moved out of Military Area 1 as "voluntary evacuees." There is a need for an appropriate nomenclature for this category of Nikkei who did not enter the camps but were nevertheless forced to leave their homes prior to March 27 from Military Zone No. 1.

The definition for "exclusion" in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1996)* is as follows: "*The act or practice of excluding; the condition or fact of being excluded.*"

Exclusion or eviction definitely are among the preferable choices to replace the word evacuation.

Refer to August 02, 1943. McCloy to General Drum re persons issued individual exclusion orders. RG 107-Secretary of War. Entry 7, Box 8. Folder: ASW 014.311 General-Exclusion orders. Also see folder: ASW 014.311 EDC Exclusion Orders-General.

Executive Order No. 9066, Date of Rescission

Over the past few decades, it was assumed that until President Gerald Ford issued a proclamation, "An American Promise," on February 19, 1976, Executive Order No. 9066 was "still on the books," ready to be implemented against another minority group. However, attention has been called to take note of the end of President Ford's proclamation which raised questions about the decades-old belief that the executive order was still in force until 1976. The following is the statement from Mr. Ford's declaration concerning this matter:

Now, therefore, I, Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim that all the authority conferred by Executive Order No. 9066 terminated upon the issuance of Proclamation No. 2714, which formally proclaimed the cessation of hostilities of World War II on December 31, 1946.

President Ford's statement indicates that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's February 19, 1942 E.O. 9066 was already void as its authority had expired on December 31, 1946.

Roger Daniels, scholar and author of the Japanese American wartime history, was consulted about this. He responded, as follows: "... *What the language about 12/31/1946 meant was that the war was over. Actually, most of the authority of 9066 had been ended by the Supreme Court in Endo on December 13, 1944.*"

exemptee.

A term applied in the exclusion process by the government to a person exempted from forced removal from designated military zones.

gulag.

A forced labor camp or prison, especially for political dissidents. A place or situation of great suffering and hardship, likened to the atmosphere in a prison system or a forced labor camp. The American Heritage Dictionary (1996). Historian Don Hata sees the nationwide network of isolated War Relocation Authority, Department of Justice/Immigration & Naturalization Service, War Department incarceration sites as a gulag.

imprisoned.

Describes accurately the condition of all Nikkei who were held in WRA or DoJ/INS camps.

incarceration.

December 29, 1942. FBI Special Agent in Charge M. B. Rhodes, Omaha, Nebraska, to FBI director J. Edgar Hoover: "... *who are presently incarcerated in various Relocation Camps*" – Source: FBI 62-69030-16. CWRIC #6391.

On April 12, 1982, President Ronald Reagan issued Proclamation 4927 celebrating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week, 1982. President Reagan refers in this proclamation (although he does not specify the ethnic minority by name) to the wartime forced removal of Japanese Americans:

In spite of years of struggle and toil, in spite of exclusion and incarceration and discrimination, peoples whose roots lie in Asia and the Pacific Islands have brought forth myriad contributions to this country -- Source: Federal Register, Vol. 47,

No. 2, Wednesday, April 12, 1982

According to Raymond Okamura (Berkeley, California), this is one of the rare instances where the highest elected U.S. government official has conceded that Japanese Americans were actually incarcerated instead of merely "evacuated" or "relocated."

inmate.

From *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1979)*: "One of a group occupying a single place of residence; esp, a person confined (as in a prison or a hospital)."

One of many examples of the use of "inmates" to describe the Japanese-American prisoners in the WRA camps is found in a memorandum dated December 09, 1942, from 11th Naval District (Douglas) to District Intelligence Office, re "Japanese Relocation Centers, Activities of Inmates" in which Douglas urges segregation. -- Source: RG 107-Secretary of War. Entry 47, Box 9. Folder: ASW 020 CAD. CWRIC #876-78.

intern / internee / internment camp.

1. The following is extracted from a 196-page typescript report issued by FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, titled "Summary of Information-WRA and Japanese Relocation Centers, August 2, 1945":

Chpt. 5, A-FBI Summary of Japanese Relocation Centers and FBI Activities in connection with the War Relocation Authority.

....3. Recommendations

....t. Segregation

*. **It should be remembered that Japanese-American citizens cannot be placed in internment camps.**"* p. 35. [emphasis mine]

-- Source: RG 65-Records of the FBI. Document No. 62-69030-710.

2. 01 Nov 43 letter, 2 pp, from WRA Leland Barrows to Lt. Col. H. A. Gerhardt of Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy's office: "*Although evacuees denied leave clearance are transferred to Tule Lake and not permitted to leave Center, they are not legally interned.... Legal authority for detention of American citizens has never been tested in court.*"

-- Source: RG 107-Secretary of War. Entry 47, Box 9. Folder: ASW 014.32-014.33. CWRIC #837-838.

3. WRA memos, letters, and reports emphasize that "evacuees" are not internees.

Example: October 02, 1942 memo from WRA director Dillon S. Myer to All WRA Staff Members. Subj: Use of the terms "Japanese," "Camps" and "Internment." -- Source: RG 210-WRA.

4. Definition of "Civilian Internees and Detainees"

"9 A. A civilian internee is a non-military individual who is held by an opposing belligerent, if the cause of this detention is the simple fact of his being an enemy alien.

*In the United States, however, only those alien enemies who have been determined to be potentially dangerous to the security of the United States **are interned.**"* [emphasis mine]

Source: RG 85-INS. Entry 279-WW II Internment Files. Crystal City-General Files.

Box 26, titled: 211/032 thru 213/032. Folder: Regulations Governing the Censorship and Disposition of Prisoner of War and Interned and Detailed Civilian Mail. July 3, 1943.

Chpt. 1, 9 A - Civilian Internees and Detainees. HPC #000453.

The WRA, War, and State Departments did not use the word “internees” in identifying those in the WRA camps. Moreover, international political ramifications and outcry against the U.S. would have ensued if the word got out to the world that the U.S. government actually interned its own citizens of one targeted minority ethnic group, among which were thousands of native-born American citizens banished from their West Coast homes. It was, therefore, critical that Nisei, Sansei or Yonsei (second, third & fourth generation Japanese-Americans) in WRA camps be referred to euphemistically by the U.S. government as evacuees, non-alien, colonists, residents, or relocatees – never internees.

non-alien.

Exclusion Orders (and other proclamations or documents) issued by the Western Defense Command (WDC) referred to Americans of Japanese ancestry as “non-alien” rather than as American citizens. [See p. 97, Civilian Exclusion Order No. 27 in *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942*, by General John L. DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command.] Instructions issued pursuant to the proclamation of Civilian Exclusion Orders applicable to specific geographic areas were addressed to “all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien.”

parolee.

After having appeared before hearing boards, internees judged not to be subversive or potentially dangerous to national security interests were paroled to join families either in WRA concentration camps or to locations where their families had relocated.

prison / prisoner / prison camp.

In an encouraging sign that there are Americans who recognize the wartime WRA concentration camps for what they were, the following is excerpted from a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times*. It reads: “In 1988, Congress apologized to Japanese Americans who during World War II were thrown into **prison camps** such as Manzanar.” [emphasis mine] Source: *Los Angeles Times*, July 23, 2009, page A3. “Legislature apologizes for past discrimination against Chinese,” by Corina Knoll.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1996) defines these three terms as follows:

prison (n). 1. A place where persons convicted or accused of crimes are confined; a penitentiary or a jail. 2. A place or condition of confinement or forcible restraint. 3. A state of imprisonment or captivity. (as vt): to confine in a prison; imprison.

prisoner: 1. A person held in custody, captivity, or a condition of forcible restraint especially while on trial or serving a prison sentence. 2. One deprived of freedom of expression or action. A second dictionary defines prisoner as a person deprived of his liberty and kept under involuntary restraint or custody; esp: one on trial or in prison.

prison camp: 1. A camp for prisoners of war. 2. A minimum security facility for the confinement of prisoners. In this sense, also called work camp.

relocation / relocation camp.

“Relocation” is a euphemistic term employed by the government rather than words that reflect the true nature of the exclusion of West Coast Japanese-American minority. Words to replace “relocation” are banishment, diaspora, eviction, exclusion, exile, expulsion, forced removal. Even the WRA administrative staff was not sure what “relocation” meant. Were Japanese-Americans relocated into the camps, or were the camps to be departure areas from which Japanese-Americans were to be relocated or resettled? [Example: see WRA administration

Internal memo, September 25, 1943. CWRIC #6064-6065.]

Replace **relocation camp**, confinement site, or detention camp with *concentration camp, prison camp, or gulag*.

resettlement. [See **relocation**]

The WRA resettlement program involved the release and movement of Japanese-Americans from the concentration camps into mainstream American society.

The 'resettlement' (euphemism for murder) of Jews living in the so-called Government General (occupied Poland). -- Source: Washington Post, Monday, January 20, 2003, A-22. Letters to the Editor. Letter written by Peter Black, senior historian, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington.

resident / resident colonist.

The word "resident" in addition to "evacuee" was generally the preferred term that some WRA administrators used when referring to their charges in the concentration camps, while others chose the term "resident colonist," unacceptable euphemisms for camp prisoners. Suggested substitute words are *excluee, prisoner, inmate, or incarcerated*.

segregatee.

Segreege is the designation for persons who responded to questions No. 27 and 28 of the so-called loyalty questionnaire with a "No-No" or gave qualified responses, such as "Yes, provided that...." Persons from nine WRA concentration camps who fell into this category were transferred to the Tule Lake concentration camp to join those at that camp who had also signed "No-No" on those two questions or gave modified answers, rather than "Yes-Yes." This camp came to be identified as the Tule Lake Segregation Center. Also see CWRIC #659.

Voluntary evacuee. [See *excluee*.]

END NOTES

1. William M. Hohri. *Repairing America: An Account of the Movement for Japanese-American Redress* (Pullman, Washington: Washington State University Press, 1988) pp 221-22.
2. United States Department of the Interior, War Relocation Authority (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946).

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inlibrary; printdisabled; digital-library-of-japanese-american-incarceration; americana. Digitizing sponsor. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. Contributor. Densho. In this revisionist history of the United States government relocation of Japanese-American citizens during World War II, Roger W. Lotchin challenges the prevailing notion that racism was the cause of the creation of these centers. After unpacking the origins and meanings of American attitudes toward the Japanese-Americans, Lotchin then shows that Japanese relocation was a consequence of nationalism rather than racism. "Words Can Lie or Clarify: Terminology of the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans." Densho's terminology conforms with the "Resolution on Terminology" adopted by the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund (see <http://www.momomedia.com/CLPEF/backgrnd.html>). See also: Roger Daniels, "Words Do Matter," a 5-part article on the Discover Nikkei website. The legacy we offer is an American story with ongoing relevance: during World War II, the United States government incarcerated innocent people solely because of their ancestry. The internment of Japanese Americans in the United States during World War II was the forced relocation and incarceration in concentration camps in the western interior of the country of about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, most of whom lived on the Pacific Coast. Sixty-two percent of the internees were United States citizens. These actions were ordered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt shortly after Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.