

## **Source A: Excerpts from Walter Lippmann and Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt**

**Walter Lippmann, article from his syndicated column Today and Tomorrow, "The Fifth Column on the Coast" (excerpts), New York Tribune, February 12, 1942**

*NOTE: The term "fifth column" refers to people who engage in espionage or sabotage within their own country.*

SAN FRANCISCO—The enemy alien problem on the Pacific Coast, or much more accurately the Fifth Column problem, is very serious and it is very special. What makes it so serious and so special is that the Pacific Coast is in imminent danger of a combined attack from within and from without. The danger is not, as it would be in the inland centers or perhaps even for the present on the Atlantic Coast, from sabotage alone. The peculiar danger of the Pacific Coast is in a Japanese raid accompanied by enemy action inside American territory.

This combination can be very formidable indeed. For while the striking power of Japan from the sea and air might not in itself be overwhelming at any one point just now, Japan could strike a blow which might do irreparable damage if it were accompanied by the kind of organized sabotage to which this part of the country is specially vulnerable.

This is a sober statement of the situation, in fact a report, based not on speculation but on what is known to have taken place and to be taking place in this area of the war. It is a fact that the Japanese navy has been reconnoitering the Pacific Coast more or less continually and for a considerable length of time, testing and feeling out the American defenses. It is a fact that communication takes place between the enemy at sea and enemy agents on land.

These are facts which we shall ignore or minimize at our peril. It is also a fact that since the outbreak of the Japanese war there has been no important sabotage on the Pacific Coast. From what we know about Hawaii and about the Fifth Column in Europe this is not, as some have liked to think, a sign that there is nothing to be feared. It is a sign that the blow is well-organized and that it is held back until it can be struck with maximum effect....

In preparing to repel the attack the Army and Navy have all the responsibility but they are facing it with one hand tied down in Washington. I am sure I understand fully the unwillingness of Washington to adopt a policy of mass evacuation and mass internment of all those who are technically enemy aliens.... There is the assumption that if the rights of a citizen are abridged anywhere, they have been abridged everywhere.

Forget for a moment all about enemy aliens, dual citizenship, naturalized citizens, native citizens of enemy alien parentage, and consider a warship in San Francisco harbor, an airplane plant in Los Angeles, a general's headquarters at Oshkosh, and an admiral's at Podunk. Then

think of the lineal descendant, if there happened to be such a person, of George Washington, the father of his country, and consider what happens to Mr. Washington if he would like to visit the warship, or take a walk in the airplane plant, or to drop in and photograph the general and the admiral in their quarters.

He is stopped by the sentry. He has to prove who he is. He has to prove that he has a good reason for doing what he wishes to do. He has to register, sign papers, and wear an identification button. Then perhaps, if he proves his case, he is escorted by an armed guard while he does his errand, and until he has been checked out of his place and his papers and his button have been returned. Have Mr. Washington's constitutional rights been abridged? Has he been denied the dignity of the human person? Has his loyalty been impugned?

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**Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt, report on relocating Japanese Americans to Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942 (excerpt), June 5, 1943**

In the war in which we are now engaged racial affinities are not severed by migration. The Japanese race is an enemy race and while many second and third generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become "Americanized", the racial strains are undiluted. To conclude otherwise is to expect that children born of white parents on Japanese soil sever all racial affinity and become loyal Japanese subjects, ready to fight and, if necessary, to die for Japan in a war against the nation of their parents. That Japan is allied with Germany and Italy in this struggle is no ground for assuming that any Japanese, barred from assimilation by convention as he is, though born and raised in the United States, will not turn against this nation when the final test of loyalty comes. It, therefore, follows that along the vital Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential enemies, of Japanese extraction, are at large today. There are indications that these are organized and ready for concerted action at a favorable opportunity. The very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken.

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