In 1980, Congress created the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to investigate the relocation programs during WWII. Two years later, the commission concluded their findings in the report "Personal Justice Denied". The following is an excerpt from the report.

**The Decision to Exclude**

*The Context of the Decision.* First, the exclusion and removal were attacks on the ethnic Japanese which followed a long and ugly history of West Coast anti-Japanese agitation and legislation. Antipathy and hostility toward the ethnic Japanese was a major factor of the public life of the West Coast states for more than forty years before Pearl Harbor. Under pressure from California, immigration from Japan had been severely restricted in 1908 and entirely prohibited in 1924. Japanese immigrants were barred from American citizenship, although their children born here were citizens by birth. California and the other western states prohibited Japanese immigrants from owning land…

The ethnic Japanese, small in number and with no political voice... had become a convenient target for political demagogues... Congressional delegations... pressed the War and Justice Departments and the President for stern measures to control the ethnic Japanese — moving quickly from control of aliens to evacuation and removal of citizens. … Only a few churchmen and academicians were prepared to defend the ethnic Japanese. There was little or no political risk in claiming that it was "better to be safe than sorry"…. The press amplified the unreflective emotional excitement of the hour…

*Making and Justifying the Decision*…. President Roosevelt relied on Secretary Stimson's recommendations in issuing Executive Order 9066.

The justification given for the measure was military necessity.

The first evaluation … runs counter to a basic premise on which the American nation of immigrants is built—that loyalty to the United States is a matter of individual choice and not determined by ties to an ancestral country. … no negative assumption was made with regard to citizens of German or Italian descent …

…no effective measures were taken by President Roosevelt to calm the West Coast public and refute the rumors of sabotage and fifth column activity at Pearl Harbor…

**The Effect of the Exclusion and Detention**

…Families could take … only what they could carry. … People were housed in tar-papered barrack rooms of no more than 20 by 24 feet. Each room housed a family, regardless of family size…. Privacy was practically impossible …. Eating and bathing were in mass facilities… the wages paid for work at the camps … of $12 a month … to $19 a month for professional employees. …

…doctors were in short supply; schools which taught typing had no typewriters and worked from hand-me-down school books…
The camp experience carried a stigma that no other Americans suffered.

The government's efforts to "Americanize" the children in the camps were bitterly ironic: An oft-repeated ritual in relocation camp schools . . . was the salute to the flag followed by the singing of "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty"—a ceremony Caucasian teachers found embarrassingly awkward if not cruelly poignant in the austere prison-camp setting.

… There were many kinds of injury … the deprivation of liberty suffered during detention; the psychological impact of exclusion and relocation; the breakdown of family structure; the loss of earnings or profits; physical injury or illness during detention.

... Total control of these civilians in the presumed interest of state security was rapidly becoming the accepted norm.

…Whatever we do, there was no help from outside, and it seems to me that we are a race that doesn't count…

The resulting infighting, beatings, and verbal abuses left families torn apart, parents against children, brothers against sisters, relatives against relatives, and friends against friends. So bitter was all this that even to this day, there are many amongst us who do not speak about that period for fear that the same harsh feelings might arise up again to the surface.

…those who were unwilling to profess loyalty or whom the government distrusted were segregated from the main body of evacuees into the Tule Lake camp, which rapidly became a center of disaffection and protest against the government and its policies—the unhappy refuge of evacuees consumed by anger and despair.

**The Decision to End Exclusion**

...Between May 1943 and May 1944, War Department officials did not make public their opinion that exclusion of loyal ethnic Japanese from the West Coast no longer had any military justification.

…

In May 1944 Secretary Stimson put before President Roosevelt and the Cabinet his position that the exclusion no longer had a military justification. But the President was unwilling to act to end the exclusion until the first Cabinet meeting following the Presidential election of November 1944. The inescapable conclusion from this factual pattern is that the delay was motivated by political considerations.

* * *

The promulgation of Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity, and the decisions which followed from it—detention, ending detention and ending exclusion—were not driven by analysis of military conditions. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. Widespread ignorance of Japanese Americans contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan. A grave injustice was done to American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review or any probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II.

Source: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/personal_justice_denied/summary.htm