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## QuickPoint! – 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Roosevelt Order a Sober Reminder to Defend Constitutional Liberties

By Lydia White

On Monday, government offices were closed in honor of Presidents' Day. Americans enjoyed a break from work and school, and some championed historic Leaders of the Free World.

But, just one day before, few observed a Day of Remembrance for abominable actions committed by a still-celebrated President.

Seventy-five years ago, Franklin D. Roosevelt issued [Executive Order 9066](#). The order evicted nearly 120,000 citizens and nationals of Japanese descent from Oregon, Washington, and California. Men, women, and children were forced to abandon their homes and businesses simply because of their ethnicity.

Many victims, [over half](#) of whom were U.S. citizens, were rounded up and relocated to temporary internment camps. Stables, including [Portland's own Pacific International Livestock Exposition](#), were converted into living quarters. Most victims were shipped to long-term incarceration camps, where they stayed for four years until the war concluded. All were subjected to bitter hostility, even upon returning home.

During the hysteria of war, racism swept the nation. The duress caused by international tensions led citizens and political leaders alike to choose security over liberty, destroying thousands of innocent lives in the process.

On Presidents' Day, we should celebrate the achievements of our past leaders. But let us not forget the atrocities committed by Presidents past, and work diligently to prevent present and future leaders from further violating civil liberties.

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*Lydia White is a Research Associate at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization.*