

blink of time we had become participants and not spectators in a fight to the death contest of our own. We had ended one week in peace and started the next at war with Japan.

In an instant the word Japanese had taken on a new meaning. "Enemy." From the day of infamy at Pearl Harbor the very word "Japanese" suggested to most Americans deceitful, untrustworthy, treacherous and evil individuals that did not look like us, act like us or live like us.

To most Americans all orientals looked alike. This fact made it difficult for many of us to differentiate between Chinese and Japanese. ^{Some} ~~Some~~ this was like trying to tell poisonous from harmless snakes when you don't like snakes of any kind.

Within weeks, everyone was in some measure directly involved in the war, with family members or friends in the armed forces, working for war related industries or Federal departments, or involved in voluntary contributions to the war effort. Men between 20 and 45 were now registered for the draft. Here in the western coastal states we were doubly aware of the conflict we were in because from our ports flowed most of the tools of war, both men and materials.

Our portion of the United States was the most exposed to possible enemy attack by a fast moving foe that was gobbling up vast territories in the Pacific. In the short time of four months, Japanese conquests had taken Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore, Batavia, Rangoon and Battan. Corregidor seemed doomed in spite of a gallant effort to survive. President Roosevelt within the week had called for "rationing of all essential commodities of which there is a scarcity." The sale of War Bonds and War Savings Stamps was being promoted with a patriotic frenzy.

American residents of Japanese origin were caught in the center of this