

SSUSH19 – Examine the origins, major developments, and the domestic impact of World War II, including the growth of the federal government.

d. Investigate the domestic impact of the war including war mobilization, as indicated by rationing, wartime conversion, and the role of women and African Americans or Blacks.

When the United States fully and officially engaged in World War II, the nation went into a total war effort. To orchestrate the conversion of privately owned manufacturing companies to supply the United States' war effort, the Roosevelt administration created the War Production Board. The War Production Board's responsibility was to regulate the production and allocation of materials and fuel. The board stopped the production of non-essential goods, such as automobiles, and imposed a rationing system for gasoline and rubber. Civilian industrial plants soon began producing war goods in great quantities. Plants that produced silk ribbons instead produced parachutes, typewriter plants produced machine guns. Ford, General Motors, and other automobile manufacturers produced great numbers of airplanes, tanks, trucks, and artillery pieces. One of the most remarkable feats was the creation of the Liberty Ship by Kaiser Aluminum. These ships were created in an assembly line fashion such that eventually a single cargo ship could be produced in just 42 days.

Food rationing began in 1942. Items such as sugar, meat, butter, canned vegetables and fruits all required coupons (also known as rationing stamps). Allotments were based on family size. Families that were able, planted Victory Gardens to supplement their diets. Rationing of gasoline, sugar, and tires led to some black market deals, although most Americans bore the hardships with a good spirit. Consumers knew everyone was in the same position and the goods they gave up were destined for servicemen and women overseas.

At the outbreak of the war, women who already had jobs found that the choices of occupation and the rate of pay suddenly changed for the better. Women served in many different capacities during the course of World War II. Some women served in the military. There were 216,000 women who volunteered for service in the various branches of the Armed Services. In order to meet the demand for labor, the United States government began a campaign to lure women into the workforce. The government created a fictional ideal woman known as "Rosie the Riveter" to appeal to women's patriotism. Women worked in many different areas including munitions, aircraft plants, shipyards, and in more traditional positions as clerks and secretaries. By the war's end, 18 million women had entered the work force.

Black workers, despite receiving training in government approved programs, were denied access to defense jobs. Many employers refused to hire Black workers. They believed that Blacks could not be trained for complex mechanics jobs or for aircraft construction. A. Philip Randolph, a Black labor organizer, had created the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters to fight discrimination in 1925. Randolph and other Black leaders met with President Roosevelt in September 1940. They presented the President with a memorandum urging his administration to take action to desegregate the armed forces and to end discriminatory hiring practices in industries with government contracts. The administration declined the request.

Define

Rationing

Wartime Conversion

Role of Women in WWII

Role of African Americans in WWII

Integration of Defense Industries

- 1. How did rationing impact WWII?**
- 2. How did wartime conversion impact WWII?**
- 3. How did the role of Women impact WWII?**
- 4. How did the role of African Americans impact WWII?**
- 5. How did Roosevelt use executive powers to integrate the defense industries?**

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e. Examine Roosevelt's use of executive powers including the integration of defense industries and the internment of Japanese-Americans.

President Roosevelt used Executive Orders during World War II to quickly implement measures that might have stalled in the legislature. Two such areas where he mandated policy outside of the typical legislative process was in integrating the defense industry and the internment of Japanese-Americans after the Pearl Harbor attack.

A. Philip Randolph began the March on Washington movement in January 1941 as a grass-roots movement aimed at forcing the Roosevelt administration to act on discriminatory practices. The media began reporting that 100,000 people were planning to march on Washington in the upcoming July event. Roosevelt feared a race riot might occur in segregated Washington D.C. if the march took place. Roosevelt also worried any violence would give a potential propaganda victory to Adolf Hitler. After meeting with Randolph and the head of the NAACP, Roosevelt issued an executive order prohibiting discrimination on government contracted jobs.

Another issue that prompted Roosevelt to issue an executive order related to immigrants. The United States worried that its large immigrant population of Italians, Germans, and Japanese would pose a security risk in the event of war with the Axis Powers. In 1939, at the request of President Roosevelt, the Justice Department developed a list of enemy aliens that included potentially dangerous American citizens and former citizens of Germany, Italy, and Japan who might be potential spies or saboteurs. Enemy aliens were required to register with the government in 1940. When the war broke out in 1941, suspects on the Enemy Alien List were arrested. However, very few were held in jail. Most were later released and required to move away from defense facilities and industrial production centers.

A second group of suspects included Italian-Americans, German-Americans, and Japanese-Americans. There were simply too many Italian-Americans and German-Americans to intern. Many Americans believed that the disaster at Pearl Harbor was the result of collusion between Japanese-Americans living in California and the Japanese military. Therefore, there was more widespread support for the harsh treatment of these immigrants. The west coast was designated a security zone and all potential enemies were to be removed from the region. Eventually 110,000 Japanese-Americans were removed from California, Oregon, and Washington under Executive Order 9066. Whole families were shipped off to the high desert regions of the American west. Many lost their homes, businesses, and farms.

Define

Internment of Japanese Americans

A. How did Roosevelt use executive powers to intern Japanese Americans?