

The Little White House NEWSLETTER



Roosevelt's Little White House - 706-655-5870 - 401 Little White House Rd. - Warm Springs, Ga. 31830

Winter Quarter 2016

From the Depression into the fire

The day before Pearl Harbor, The United States was still struggling through the Great Depression. Two days later, the Great Depression was effectively over as the United States entered the Second World War.

On Saturday, December 6, 1941, the stores boasted great sales. Although we were still in the mire of the Great Depression, optimism was on the horizon. The world may have been at war, but we were not. We were all shopping, putting up the tree, and saying Merry Christmas.

The economy was picking up. The new line of automobiles were out. Banks were solvent. Hollywood was booming, Factories were reopening and new orders were being placed. President Roosevelt, who had been guiding us through the Depression had been elected to an unprecedented third term. A very controversial decision, but Roosevelt wanted to see the US rise above the Great Depression. 1942 looked to be a good year.

On Monday morning, December 8, 1941, FDR asked congress for a Declaration of War and we entered World War II. The phrase "Merry Christmas" now took on a new tone. Aside from the fact that we were not ready for war, we had to change course nearly overnight. We had to build an army. We had to build

up our navy. We had to create an air force. We had to create arms and ammunition. We had to feed our fighting forces, and feed our country. We had to also pay for the cost of war.



On the day before Pearl Harbor, young men in high school were planning where they might be able to go to college. Two days later, they were standing in line to join our armed forces. At a time when women were considered mostly for nursing, library or teaching jobs, they were now looked at as a source of labor that could build planes, ships and tanks. Minority groups of Americans also wanted

to participate in the war effort. People never considered for anything more than lowly agricultural or servant positions were now being recruited to help gear up for total war. Sadly, Japanese families were relocated to camps out of fear.

For all practical purposes, the Great Depression ended on December 8, 1941. Over the space of the next few weeks and months, the United States would begin to transform itself into a superpower. But, what would it take to mobilize the entire nation for total war? What sacrifice?

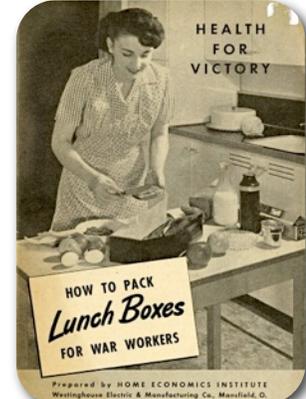
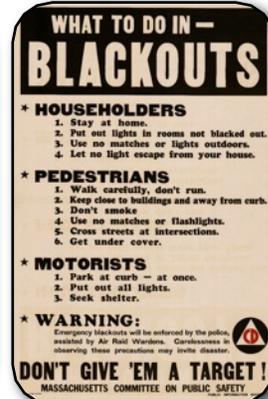
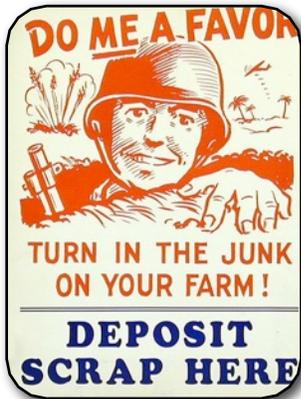
Just 16 days before Christmas, on December 9th, 1941, President Roosevelt gave us our direction on where to start.



"Whatever stands in the way of speed and efficiency in defense, in defense preparations of any kind, must give way to the national need."
- Franklin D. Roosevelt



The "Home Front" would become as important, if not more, than the fighting front. Without the millions of Americans willing to share in this fight, there would be no victory. But first, we had to be educated.



The Nation had to learn how to conserve, recycle raw materials, learn about civil defense, and stay healthy.

To conserve scarce goods for military use, products ranging from gasoline to sugar were rationed. Adults drove less, families ate less meat, drank less coffee and across the nation, patriots planted Victory Gardens in their back yards. And then we collected scrap.



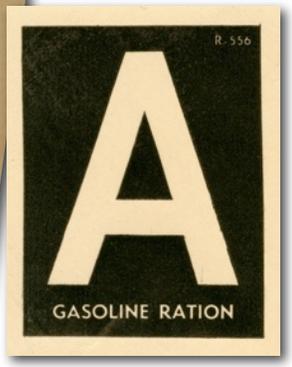
Rationing Begins

The first nonfood item rationed was rubber. The Japanese had seized plantations in the Dutch East Indies that produced 90% of America's raw rubber. President Roosevelt called on citizens to help by contributing scrap rubber to be recycled, old tires, old rubber raincoats, garden hose, rubber shoes, bathing caps.



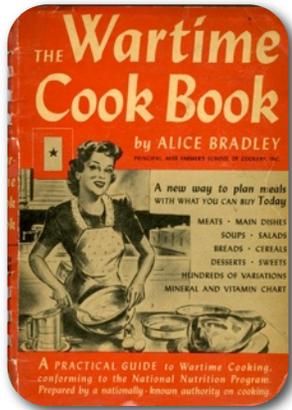
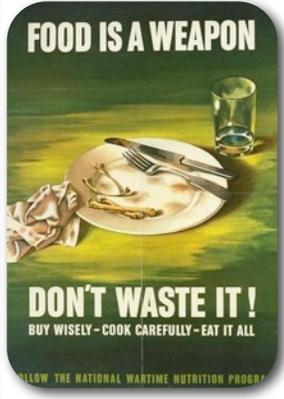
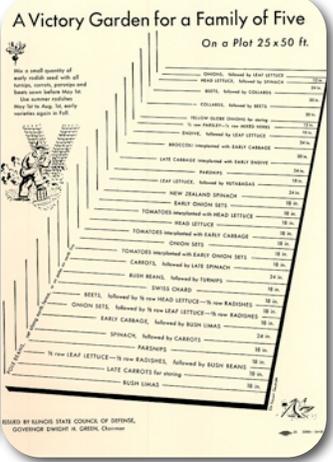
A wide variety of commodities (below) were rationed during World War II in the United States.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Tires | Jan 1942 to Dec 1945 |
| Cars | Feb 1942 to Oct 1945 |
| Bicycles | Jul 1942 to Sept 1945 |
| Gasoline | May 1942 to Aug 1945 |
| Fuel Oil & Kerosene | Oct 1942 to Aug 1945 |
| Stoves | Dec 1942 to Aug 1945 |
| Sugar | May 1942 to 1947 |
| Coffee | Nov 1942 to July 1943 |
| Processed Foods | Mar 1943 to Aug 1945 |
| Meats, canned fish | Mar 1943 to Nov 1945 |
| Cheese, canned milk, fats | Mar 1943 to Nov 1945 |



Food For Victory

We had to learn how to produce for ourselves, our neighbors and for the fighting men and women overseas as food became scarce. We grew Victory Gardens. Many Americans, those living in cities and urban areas had to learn new skills as the government issued Victory Garden instruction pamphlets. Gone were the days of free flowing grocery goods.



From Hollywood to Brooklyn, plots of ground, backyards, parks, and even City Hall lawns, were turned into garden spots as rationing took over. The nations industrial farms were all gearing up to feed the millions of soldiers and support staff that would be transported overseas.



The New Workforce

The need for war workers on the “Home Front” created economic opportunities for women and minorities and helped encourage the growth of labor unions.



NIENCIEWISZ
DU BOIS COHEN LAZARRI
HRDLICKA SANTINI
SCHMIDT WILLIAMS
KELLY

AMERICANS ALL

“...it is the duty of employers and labor organizers to provide for the full participation of all workers without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The New Fighting Force

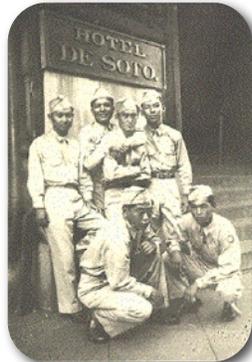
Questions arose about minorities serving in the military, but the need for manpower and the fact that All Americans wanted to participate paved the way for service.



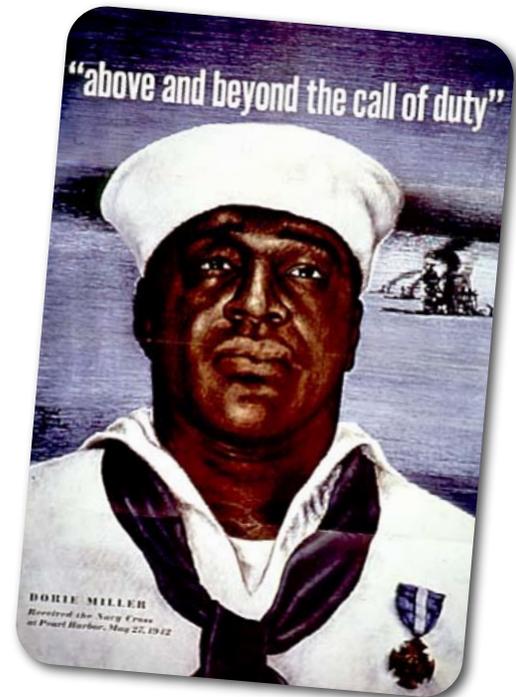
Navajo Code Talkers



Tuskegee Airmen



Nisei Soldiers



Paying For Victory WW II Savings and Bond Programs

The monetary cost of war is tremendous. On top of rationing and scarce goods, the government now asked that everybody participate in the wartime bond drives. They asked for spare change, dollars and any amounts that could be put to use to supply the materials for war. The first of these drives began shortly after Pearl Harbor in 1942.

- One in 1942
- Two in 1943
- Three in 1944
- Two in 1945



Gary Cooper attracted the longest line of purchasers and sold more bonds than any motion picture star.

To answer the question presented on the first page, President Roosevelt answered it best, with a challenge to the citizens of the United States during his radio address on April 28, 1942:



“Ask the workers of France and Norway and the Netherlands, whipped to labor by the lash, whether the stabilization of wages is too great a "sacrifice."

Ask the businessmen of Europe, whose enterprises have been stolen from their owners, whether the limitation of profits and personal incomes is too great a "sacrifice."

Ask the women and children whom Hitler is starving whether the rationing of tires and gasoline and sugar is too great a "sacrifice. . . ."

“ . . . As I told the Congress yesterday, "sacrifice" is not exactly the proper word with which to describe this program of self-denial. When, at the end of this great struggle, we shall have saved our free way of life, we shall have made no "sacrifice." ”

WE DID DO IT!

