

Historical Context

Homefront Experiences LEQ

- B) 1
- C) 2
- D) 2

6

When World War II began, the United States took on a policy of isolationism due to many factors, including the ethnic allegiances of immigrants, and because many citizens believed that the US involvement in WWI had been a mistake. Despite Congress passing Neutrality Acts in 1935, the US helped to support the British with the "cash-and-carry" plan, which allowed the sale of arms to Britain. However after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese in 1941, the US officially joined the war. As always, wartime changed many Americans' lives, especially those of women and African Americans. During World War II, women left their traditional household spheres and supported the war by taking on hundreds of new jobs, and African Americans began the civil rights movement, beginning racial integration, equal treatment, and new opportunities.

Thesis

Good Cause - Effort

Millions of men had to leave the United States to travel overseas to fight in the war, leaving empty spaces in the jobs they used to work. The nation began mobilizing "women" to fill the jobs. Those who took on factory jobs were often called "Rosie the Riveters", and were depicted as muscular, self-reliant, and independent. Women also participated in programs such as the Women's Army Corps (WAC), where they did mechanics, repaired armor, and served as clerks, labors, and delivered mail, and the Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), where they performed jobs exclusive to men like many communication systems, airfield control towers, gunnery and blind flying instruction, and aviation ground crew. Another significant program was the Women's Auxiliary Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) where women were trained to fly military aircraft. These roles proved that women could balance work while maintaining their roles as mothers and wives.

Total Role

United Auto Workers were forced to confront issues such as equal pay, maternity leave, and childcare facilities after women entered the workforce. Even though men ~~are~~ assumed their previous jobs once returning from war, and many women were forced to leave, their experience left more women wanting to join the workforce than ever before.

America was forced to deal with its racial issues during WW2 because Nazis used US prejudices as proof to show that ~~the~~ Germany wasn't the only racist country. Early in the war, Washington DC was still segregated, lynchings continued, and there were race riots in Detroit, Michigan. Blacks were excluded from the air force and the marines, and were in segregated army units. However, after the threat of a March on Washington in 1941 by A. Philip Randolph, Executive Order 8802 banned discrimination in defense jobs and created the Fair Employment Practices Commission. The FEPC exposed the deep racial divide in the US, and was the first federal agency to campaign for black rights since Reconstruction. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) held sit-ins in northern cities to protest for the integration of restaurants and theaters. The Double U Campaign also showed a protest for equality, with many saying that victory over Germany and Japan must be accompanied by victory over segregation at home. This campaign displayed how differently blacks and whites viewed the Four Freedoms. To African Americans, freedom from fear meant an end to lynchings and freedom from want was an end to job discrimination. While racism did not end immediately during the war, many ^{white} Americans rejected racial practices after learning about the Holocaust. Shortly after the war ended, the Freedom Train opened in Philadelphia, which did not allow segregation on the train. In July,

Background

Cause & Effect

desegregation of the US army policy. Acts such as these during and after the war and the shift in American public opinion helped to end the prejudice against blacks and end segregation.

World War II brought forth many great changes in America such as women assuming the previous jobs of men in programs like the WAVES and WASPs, expanding their influence, and African Americans, with civil rights organizations such as the NAACP and CORE working to end discrimination in the armed forces and the public realizing the contradictions between America's freedom ideals and the racist reality.

Excellent Essay
- great use of examples and analysis

