

US Studies II

Unit 3 DBQ

World War II Home Front

2013-2014

US Studies II
Document Based Question
WWII Homefront
Objectives: 5.3.2.g and 5.3.3.a/b/c/e

Directions: This question is based on the accompanying documents (1-6). The question is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of the documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented.

Historical Context: When the United States entered World War II, great sacrifices were demanded from all Americans. The American homefront became a unified force in order to support the war effort.

Task:

- Carefully analyze the following documents (1-6) and complete the graphic organizer.
- Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Use evidence from at least five documents in the body of the essay.
- Support your response with relevant facts, examples and details.

Question:

How did Americans change their lives to support the war effort?

Document 1



Weimer Pursell, 1943/US Office of Price Administration 1943

Document 2

Anne Relph remembers what it is like to be evacuated from her home in California to go to Louisiana:

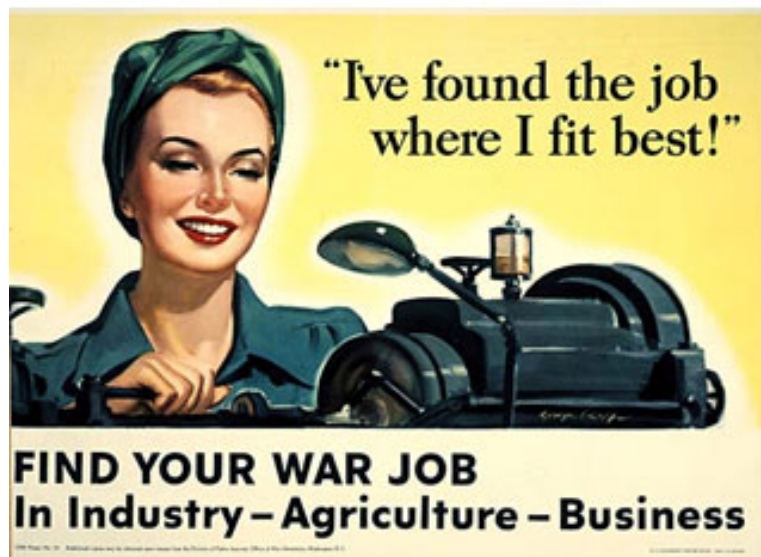
“I was in an elementary school, and soon after Pearl Harbor my mother got very worried...that Japanese were going to attack the coast of California, because a submarine was sighted or something like that. So she sent me to stay with relatives in Louisiana... I didn't realize why I was being sent until I got there...[My mother] simply said, ‘You're going off to spend a vacation with Aunt Gladys in Louisiana.’

My mother brought me home in about six or eight months. Of course, it had become obvious that the Japanese were not circling Los Angeles and were going not going to come and drag us all off. But the psychological effect of that attack on Pearl Harbor created a kind of war hysteria that took a while for people to get over. To me as a child, though, the war never had any reality. We lived in North Hollywood, and they had big searchlights on those hills, I guess to look for aircraft or something.

I can remember going up and taking hot coffee to the soldiers in uniform. I was a member of the Civil Air Patrol, which was something they organized for kids. We brought the WAC uniforms from the army surplus and were given wooden guns to drill with, and we were taught Morse code and the different kinds of airplanes to watch for. We were never actually used, but we did have a sense of being prepared for something, for some time in the future. That is the only time that to me the war seemed real.”

- From Roy Hooper, *America Remembers the Home Front*

Document 3



US Office of War Information 1943

Document 4

Dorothy Currier lived in Massachusetts and worked for the state farm bureau during the war:

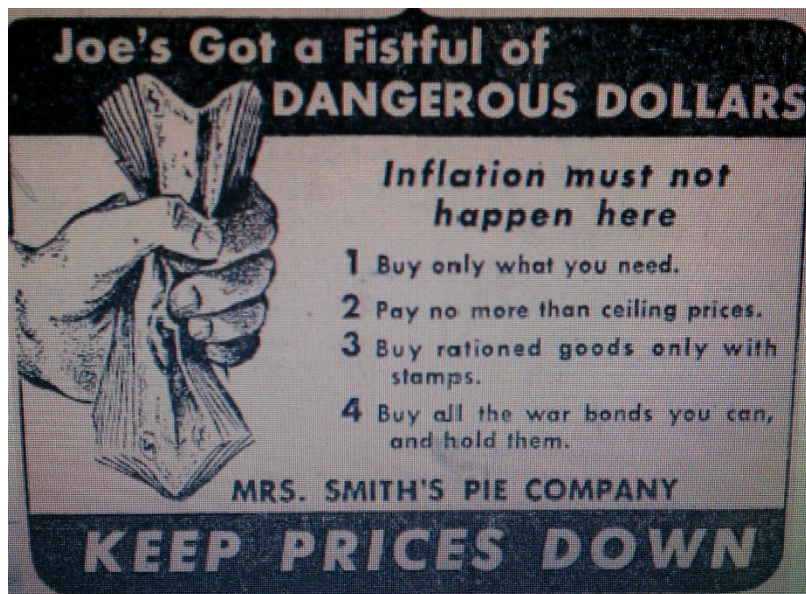
I went into civil defense...[and] very shortly was a zone warden. You had to spend hours on the telephone trying to sell civil defense. "Why do I have to walk up and down the streets and be a post warden?" people would say... "What's the point of all this— nobody's ever going to attack us here." It was an awful selling job... I had the biggest zone—I was kind of pleased they thought I could do it. I chose a man for an assistant, but I think I was the only woman zone warden... [W]ith practice drills and night blackouts, people became more aware that the whole country was getting prepared for the war. We all made curtains for the windows and put up for the night blackouts.

Food stamps were a big problem, because we were just a family of two, and there was no way you could stretch it. When you signed up, you had to say how many were in your family, and you were given so many food stamps for a week or a month. I had a small backyard garden, and I canned every vegetable we ate for the entire winter. I had a big stock—then along came the rationing, you were supposed to declare every single edible thing you had in the house, and that had to be deducted from your food stamps.

Gas stamps worked the same way. You had to go down and declare why you needed a car at all... We couldn't drive where we wanted to. Then there was rent control. We had a two-family house, and the rent was frozen at some ridiculous figure, like thirty-two dollars a month. We couldn't raise it, we couldn't do a thing. We just had to sit there and maintain the place. That went on for years too."

- From Roy Hooper, *America Remembers the Home Front*


Document 5



Morning Call Newspaper 1944

MUNITIONS from KITCHENS

HOW MUCH IS A POUND OF FAT?




IT'S ENOUGH GLYCERINE TO FIRE FOUR 37 MILLIMETER ANTI-AIRCRAFT SHELLS & BRING DOWN A NAZI PLANE!




ACH!


IT'S ENOUGH GLYCERINE TO SEND A SHELL SCREAMING TOWARD AN INVASION OBJECTIVE!



IT'S ENOUGH DYNAMITE TO BLOW UP A BRIDGE AND STOP AN INVADER!



IT'S THREE CELLOPHANE BAGS TO PROTECT THE GAS-MASKS OUR SOLDIERS CARRY!



IT'S 10 ROUNDS FROM A 50-CALIBRE AIRPLANE CANNON POINTED AT A JAP!

GET YOUR USED FAT INTO THE FIGHT! PUT IT IN ANY CLEAN CAN AND RUSH IT TO YOUR MEAT DEALER. IT WILL HELP WIN THE WAR!