

Mobilization for Total War

The nation rapidly geared itself for mobilization of its people and its entire industrial capacity. Over the next three-and-a-half years, war industry achieved staggering production goals – 300,000 aircraft, 5,000 cargo ships, 60,000 landing craft, 86,000 tanks. Women workers, exemplified by "Rosie the Riveter," played a bigger part in industrial production than ever before. Total strength of the U.S. armed forces at the end of the war was more than 12 million. All the nation's activities – farming, manufacturing, mining, trade, labor, investment, communications, even education and cultural undertakings – were in some fashion brought under new and enlarged controls.

1. Female workers were exemplified in what fictional character?

2. What was the approximate strength of U.S. armed forces at the end of the war?

- a. 10,000,000
- b. 11,000,000
- c. 12,000,000
- d. 13,000,000

As a result of Pearl Harbor and the fear of Asian espionage, Americans also committed what was later recognized as an act of intolerance: the internment of Japanese Americans. In February 1942, nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans residing in California were removed from their homes and interned behind barbed wire in 10 wretched temporary

camps, later to be moved to "relocation centers" outside isolated Southwestern towns.

Nearly 63 percent of these Japanese Americans were American-born U.S. citizens. A few were Japanese sympathizers, but no evidence of espionage ever surfaced. Others volunteered for the U.S. Army and fought with distinction and valor in two infantry units on the Italian front. Some served as interpreters and translators in the Pacific.

3. During World War II, nearly 120,000 _____ Americans residing in California were forced to live in internment camps.

- a. German
- b. Irish
- c. Italian
- d. Japanese

In 1983 the U.S. government acknowledged the injustice of internment with limited payments to those Japanese Americans of that era who were still living.

4. Do you believe that the internment of certain groups is ever justified during wartime? Explain your answer.

