

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE MILITARY

- Served in segregated units
- Civil rights organizations demanded segregated units to be able to fight instead of being assigned menial jobs
- 92nd Infantry Division
 - Awarded 7 Legion Merit Awards
 - 65 Silver Stars
 - 162 Bronze Stars
- 99th Fighter Squadron: Tuskegee Airmen
 - 95 Distinguished Flying Crosses

African Americans at Home

- 330,000 left the South for the west coast for good paying jobs
 - Between 1940-1944, the % of African Americans working in skilled and semi-skilled jobs rose from 16% to 30%
- Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
 - Founded by James Farmer
 - Aimed at confronting urban segregation in the North

Mexican Americans

- Served in segregated units
- 17 awarded Medal of Honor
- Company E of 141st Regiment 36th Division (Latino soldiers) was highly decorated
- Zoot Suit Riots 1943 Los Angeles
 - Style of dress adopted by Mexican American youths as symbol of their rebellion against tradition
 - 11 sailors in LA reported they had been attacked by Mexicans
 - Result: two nights of violence against Mexicans wearing the Zoot suits

Economic Gain

- Defense industries boomed
- Unemployment fell to all time low of 1%
- Workers were asked to put in long hours, overtime and night shifts
 - Trade off: growing savings accounts
- Farmers prospered with good weather for growing crops
 - Farm machinery and fertilizer resulted in increased crop prices which then resulted in more income for farmers

Women

- 6 million women entered workforce for the first time
- ½ of female jobs were in defense plants that offered challenging work and higher pay than traditional jobs

Population Shifts

- States with military bases and defense industries boomed
- More than 1 million people poured into California
- Burbank grew from 12,000 to 60,000 people after a major aircraft company was built
- Problems: housing shortage, food rationing

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS

- “Latch-key” kids
- Teenagers left alone tended to find trouble
- Young couples marrying “high school sweetheart” before being shipped off
 - Result: Dear John letters; increased divorce rate (500,000 divorces filed in 1945; 31 out of 100)