**Chapter 25, Section 1: Mobilizing for War**

**I. Converting the Economy** *(pages 736–737)*

**A.** The United States’s industrial output during World War II was twice as productive as Germany and five times that of Japan. This turned the tide in favor of an Allied victory. Part of the success of the United States was the result of the government mobilizing the economy before the U.S. entered the war.

**B.** Roosevelt and his advisers believed the best way to rapidly mobilize the economy was to give industry an incentive to move quickly. The government signed **cost**-**plus** contracts agreeing to pay a company whatever the manufacturing cost, plus a guaranteed percentage of the costs as profit.

**C.** The **Reconstruction Finance Corporation** (RFC), the government agency which had been set up during the Depression, made loans to companies to help them with the cost of converting to war production.

**Discussion Question**

Why was the United States able to expand its war production so quickly after the attack on Pearl Harbor? *(The United States could expand its production in part because the government* *had begun to mobilize the economy before it entered the war. The government signed* *cost-plus contracts, and the RFC made loans to help companies with the cost of converting to* *war production.)*

**II. American Industry Gets the Job Done** *(pages 737–739)*

**A.** After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, almost all major American industries and 200,000 companies converted to war production.

**B.** The automobile factories turned to the production of trucks, jeeps, and tanks. They also built artillery, rifles, mines, helmets, pontoon bridges, cooking pots, and other military supplies, producing nearly one-third of the military equipment that was manufactured during the war. Henry Ford created an assembly line for B-24 bombers.

**C.** Henry Kaiser’s shipyards built many ships but were best known for the **Liberty ship**, a basic cargo ship used during the war. These ships were welded instead of riveted, making them cheaper and easier to build and difficult to fall apart and sink.

**D.** Roosevelt created the **War Production Board** (WPB) to set priorities and production goals and to control the distribution of raw materials and supplies. He set up the **Office** **of War Mobilization** (OWM) to settle arguments between the different agencies.

**Discussion Question**

Why was the production of trucks, jeeps, and tanks so critical to the war? *(This was critical because the country that could move its troops and supplies the quickest usually won the battle.)*

**III. Building an Army** *(pages 739–741)*

**A.** In order to win the war, it was vital that the United States build up its armed forces.

**B.** After the defeat of France by the Germans, Congress was no longer opposed to the idea of a peacetime draft. The **Selective Service and Training Act** was a plan for the first peacetime draft in American history.

**C.** At first, the numbers of draftees was overwhelming. The GIs, named after the initials on their uniforms meaning “Government Issue,” went through basic training for eight weeks. Although some complained after the war that the training was too short to be of any good, most soldiers gained a sense of camaraderie that made them a more effective unit.

**D.** At the beginning of the war, the United States military was completely segregated. African Americans were organized into their own military units with white officers in command.

**E.** African Americans were **disfranchised,** meaning they were often denied the right to vote. An African American newspaper, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, launched the **“Double** **V” campaign** stating that African Americans should join the war because a win would be a double victory over racism abroad and at home. Roosevelt, knowing that the African American vote had helped him win, ordered the U.S. military to recruit and send African Americans into combat.

**F.** The army air force created the 99th Pursuit Squadron, an African American unit. The African American pilots became known as the **Tuskegee Airmen.** They played an important role in the Battle of Anzio in Italy.

**G.** In the army, African Americans also performed well, receiving various awards for distinguished service. Segregation did not end during the war, but led to full military integration in 1948.

**H.** Congress established the **Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps** (WAAC) in May 1942. This was the first time women were allowed in the military. By 1943 women became a part of regular war operations. The army, Coast Guard, the navy, and the marines all set up their own women’s organizations.

**I.** In 1941 the American troops were untrained and had little military experience. They did, however, get the job done and suffered the fewest casualties in combat of all the major powers in the war.

**Discussion Question**

Who made up the American armed forces in World War II? *(The American armed forces were made up of recruits who had almost no military experience and were given little training. African Americans were segregated from white troops and were rarely allowed in combat. President Roosevelt directed the army to put African Americans into combat. Some African Americans, such as the Tuskegee Airmen and tank battalions, participated in combat. At first, women were allowed to join the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, which was not part of the regular army. By 1943 women became part of the regular army, but were not allowed in combat.)*