

Rationing during world war ii

War



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30 March 2012 Rationing During World War II Rationing is defined as a fixed allowance of provisions of food, especially for soldiers or sailors or for civilians during a shortage (dictionary. com). In 1942 a rationing system began to guarantee minimum amounts of things people needed. During World War II, people couldn't just walk into a store and buy whatever they wanted. Ration books are books that contained coupons where shopkeepers could cut out the coupon for the person to use.

War ration books and tokens were issued to each American family, controlling how much gas, tires, sugar, meat, silk, shoes, nylon, and other items any person could buy (Rationing on the US Homefront). The Office of Price Administration (OPA) issued each person in a household to get a ration book, even children and babies. Ration books were organized by color: buff-colored books were mostly for adults, green ration books were for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children under the age of five, and blue ration books were for children from ages six to sixteen (Rationing on the US Homefront).

On National Registration Day, 29 September 1939, every person in a household had to fill out a form explaining with details about who lived in their house. Ration stamps were only valid for a certain period of time so it would prevent hoarding of the stamps. The government issued ration books because they were worried that when items became scarce that the prices would go up, and poor people couldn't buy the things they needed (Barrow, 2010). Rationing made sure that people got an equal amount of food every week. The government tried its hardest to make it fair for everyone.

Still, some people thought that rationing was unfair (Barrow, 2010). People were encouraged to provide their own food in their homes thus starting the ‘

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Dig for Victory! ' campaign. The ' Dig for Victory! ' campaign was where men and women made their yards and flower-beds into gardens to grow vegetables (Dig For Victory!, 2004). A typical ration for one adult per week was: butter 50g (2oz), sugar 225g (8oz), cheese 50g (2oz), jam 450g (1lb) every two months, bacon and ham 100g, meat to the value of 1s. 2d (1 shilling and sixpence) per week, eggs 1 fresh egg a week, dried eggs 1 packet every four weeks, margarine 100g (4oz), milk 3 pints (1800 ml), tea 50g (2oz), sweets 350g (12oz) every four weeks (Barrow, 2010). With the above list of rationed items, each person was allowed sixteen points to use on whatever rationed item they wanted. Pregnant women, mothers who are nursing their children or children under the age of five were allowed to pick their choice of fruit, a daily pint of milk, and double eggs first (Barrow, 2010). Clothes rationing began two years after food rationing started.

During World War II, there was a shortage of material for clothing. The shortage made people "make due and mend" so that way factory workers could make uniforms, and parachutes for the war (Giullian, 2010). The government gave each person a ration book for clothes. Just like food rationing, when people wanted to buy new clothes, all they had to do was bring their ration book to the store and then buy the clothes they wanted, then you hand over your ration book to the storekeeper and they mark off what the person got in their ration books.

The coupon system allowed people to get a new set of clothing each year. Coupons were a different color so they wouldn't use all their coupons at once. The government told the people when they could use their other coupons. At first, each person was given 60 coupons to last them the whole

year. Later on, the coupon amount dropped to 48. Children were assigned an extra 10 ration coupons for their clothing in case they grow during the year. What would you buy with 60 coupons to last you the whole year?

Fourteen years of rationed food and it finally came to an end because meat and bacon restrictions were lifted. Rationing of food ended nine years after the war ended. Rationing ended on 4 July 1954 (Barrow, 2010). Fourteen years of rationing, people could finally enjoy buying the necessities they needed for their daily life. Men, women, and children went back to a normal lifestyle they were used to.

References:

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