

Home Front Doing Its Part For Allied Victory Part I

"If you is careless today,
you're going to be car-less tomorrow."

--- Arthur Godfrey

Lincoln, Me. (DG)---

When the United States entered World War II, it united the American people, no matter how they felt before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. It was also a war that everyone got involved in. Of course, many able-bodied men and women enlisted in the Armed Forces. That involvement didn't stop there. For those who were unable to serve in the military, the people of the "**Home Front**" were asked to ration, sacrifice, and perform domestic duties for those people who worked in defense plants. Radio advertising played a key role in getting the message across. This is the first of a 2-part series on what was asked of the people of the Home Front, and how radio advertising kept the listeners informed on what had to be done.

From 1942-1945, the radio listeners couldn't get away from a brief message of some kind on how they could help out on the war effort. One such message was the saving of soap. As the announcer stated, there were vital materials in soap that were needed for the war effort--- and of course, soap was needed for the men and women of the military. To make a long story short, all soap products for the Home Front were cut back. The trick was how to conserve the soap that was available. Of course, radio helped out with helpful suggestions. ■

For bar soap, it should not soak in the water for an extended time, because the soap bar melted away faster than it really should. When the user was finished with the soap, the bar should not rest on a wet soap dish. Doing this made the soap soft, mushy, and unpleasant to the touch. When the soap bar wore down to a small sliver, there were 2 possible, but effective alternatives in using it. **1.)** Moisten the sliver and put it on a new soap bar, and **2.)** Collect several soap slivers, place them in a washcloth, and create a soap mitt. The soap mitt was excellent for washing, while it completely used all the soap slivers for this purpose.

For laundry soap in granulated or flake form, there were 3 easy tasks the people could do to conserve what they have. **1.)** Measure the amount of soap used; **2.)** Cut back on washing the laundry until a full load was accumulated; and **3.)** Scrape dishes well before washing.

The rationing of petroleum products meant some



adjustments had to be made when it comes to going from Point A to Point B. To conserve fuel and rubber, the listeners were asked not to make unnecessary trips--- and better yet, form a car pool with the listener's friends and neighbors. The maximum speed limit during the war years was reduced to only 35 m.p.h. The commercials for oil companies also asked the people to take their cars at their local service stations, to have them properly tuned up and their tires inflated at the proper air pressure.

On a broadcast of **THE TEXACO STAR THEATER**, announcer Arthur Godfrey said it best when it comes to car care during the war years. Said he, **"If you is careless today, you'se going to be car-less tomorrow."** 🇺🇸

The trickiest was the rationing of food. In order to purchase food, a point system was created. Once again, conserving played a major role. While some foods were easy to purchase, others like meat and sugar were more difficult. The makers of **Crisco**, **Spry**, and other shortening or lard products were coming up with recipes that made a satisfying meal, yet saved ration points. Another way to save points was to serve soup, pasta, or even breakfast cereal for dinner.

The radio listeners heard the phrase **"Food Fights For Freedom--- Produce, Conserve, Share, and Play Square."** 🇺🇸 The phrase meant for people to grow their own fruits and vegetables in Victory Gardens. Once they were ready, the fruits and vegetables were canned. When fruit was used for jellies and jams, pectin products like **Sure-Jell** and **Certo** were great to use, because they helped in the making of jams and jellies with a smaller amount of sugar. **"Play Square"** meant there was so much meat, dairy products, and sugar to go around. Purchase within the point system instead of dealing with the infamous and naughty **"Black Market."**



The biggest task of all men, women, and children of the Home Front was to maintain good health. It was best to eat the foods within the **"Basic 7"** food group, but with food rationing in effect, it wasn't all that easy. When sacrifices had to be made for a meal, the people weren't getting the important vitamins and minerals for good health. Enter the multi vitamins. Radio listeners knew they could get their needed daily vitamin requirement when they heard commercials for multi vitamin products like **Benefax**, **Vimms**, **Grove's**, **Stams**, **Vitamins Plus**, and **One A Day**.

The announcers on the radio commercials for tooth paste and shave cream encouraged the people when it was time to purchase tooth paste or shave cream, to take an empty tube with them to the store where it was purchased. It didn't matter if the empty tube was the same brand or the same type of product--- as long as it was a tube. Since the empty tubes were made of metal, they were sent to the government's defense factories for the making of metal goods for the military.

This is only a sample of how radio informed the American people on what they needed to do to help the men and women of the Armed Forces. In Part II of this series, we'll take a look at how the **War Advertising Council** got the word out on what the people of the Home Front had to do--- and more importantly, **NOT** do in their helping the Allies win the war.



Author's Note: This article is dedicated to everyone who fought in World War II, and to the

people of the "Home Front" who did their part in assisting with the Allied Victory.