

CIVILIAN LIVING

IN

WARTIME

This information has been prepared for the purpose of giving relocation center residents an idea of some of the conditions they may expect to find when they leave the centers and resume normal living on the outside.

War Relocation Authority
Washington, D. C.
February 1944

INTRODUCTION

A great many changes have taken place since many of the people now living in relocation centers left their homes. Most of these changes, affecting the lives and work and habits of the American people, have come about naturally in the change-over from a nation at peace to a nation at war. Some are a direct result of governmental action.

Everyday living is more complicated than it used to be. Working hours are longer. Sometimes it is hard to get a seat on a bus or street-car or train. It costs ration tickets as well as money to buy certain products. In some of the larger cities, stores are crowded and long lines form at restaurants. People no longer expect the kind of service they had before the war, either in stores or through regular service establishments. Many laundries cannot accept work from new patrons, because they lack the facilities or the workers to render service. The rationing of shoes has, of course, brought an increased demand for shoe repair services, and people occasionally have to wait days for work to be finished. Civilian goods in many lines are becoming scarce. This shortage is more pronounced in the centers of concentrated war industry than in other areas. The construction of new homes has been curtailed with the result that many families, especially in war industry centers, are doubling up with relatives or are living in trailers and other emergency forms of housing which would not be considered adequate in peacetime.

But civilian living in wartime is not all petty inconveniences and annoyances. Employment opportunities have been greatly expanded. Many people are enjoying higher wages than they ever earned in their lives, and practically no one is unemployed. Training schools, developed as a wartime production need, are giving many individuals their first chance to learn a skilled trade or operation. The demands for increasing industrial production have greatly widened opportunities for racial minorities.

While no attempt is made here to give a complete report on the change-over from a peacetime to a wartime economy, a few of the trends are noted and some of the changes which evacuees leaving the centers may expect are pointed out.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

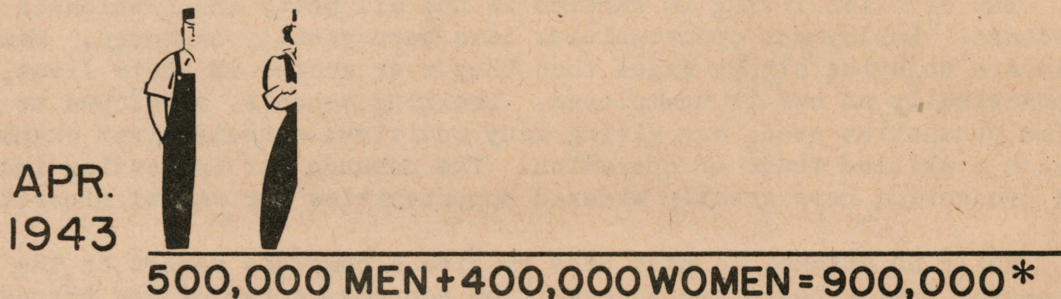
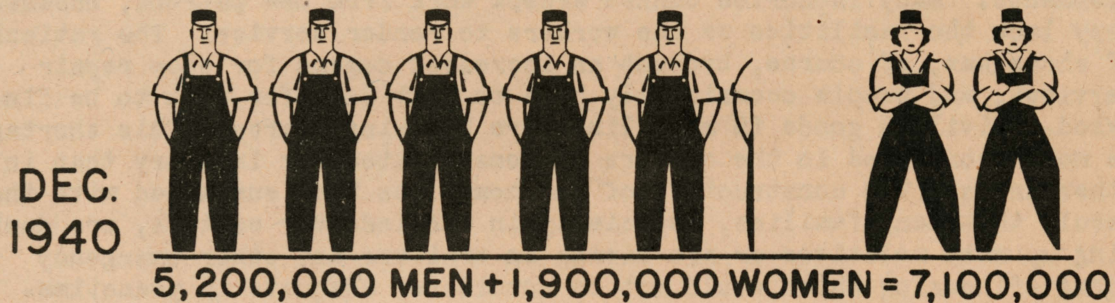
Employment Opportunities

Probably the change which affects the ordinary civilian most is the relative ease of getting a job. In sharp contrast with depression days when men were looking for jobs, the jobs are now looking for men; and, in some areas and occupations, finding the men hard to get. In numerous cities and towns, "Help Wanted" signs appear in the windows of drugstores and beauty parlors and at factory gates. Classified advertisement sections of newspapers, which a few years ago took up one column of space, have grown to two pages. This labor shortage has been felt

more acutely in some sections than in others. The following chart, prepared by the Office of War Information, shows how unemployment generally has decreased during the war years.

UNEMPLOYMENT, 1940-1943

EACH SYMBOL  REPRESENTS 1,000,000 UNEMPLOYED



* MOST OF THESE ARE IN-BETWEEN-JOBS OR INCAPABLE OF SUSTAINED WORK

MEDIA DIVISION OWI

The war has also brought about a sharp change in employment opportunities for minorities. As never before in this country, men and women of all races are working side by side on the production lines and in offices. Many occupations which have previously been almost closed to members of minority groups are gradually taking on an increasing number of Japanese-American and Negro workers.

The President of the United States has twice called upon employers and labor organizations "to eliminate discrimination in regard to hire, tenure, terms or conditions of employment or union membership because of race, creed, color, or national origin." A special government agency known as the Fair Employment Practices Committee has been set up to see that this policy is carried through, and the War Labor Board has ruled against paying differ-

ent wages to people of different races doing the same work.

Women, too, find it easier to get jobs as more and more men are called into the army. As of January 1, 1944, 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ million women were at work--well over 5 million more than in January 1941. Although women without small children are wanted first, the government has set aside special funds for the operation of child care centers in war industry towns so that mothers who must work may do so without concern for their small children.

Another trend is increased work opportunities for older men and women. This applies to both farm and factory jobs. Older workers are acceptable almost everywhere if there is reason to think they are able to do the job. This is because many of the younger men are in the armed forces and there is a general need for labor to increase production.

These new employment opportunities are not all in work directly connected with war production. As the productive effort of our country has been stepped up, the expansion of the armed forces has drawn more and more able-bodied workers and has left vacancies in the factories and on the farms. The whole war effort has increased the demand for workers in practically all trades and services for fishermen, teachers, nurses, laundresses, domestics, miners, dairy farmers, and hundreds of others.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Farm Employment

Employment opportunities in rural areas, as well as industrial centers, have been greatly expanded. The production of food is essential to the United Nations war effort. In addition to serving as the "arsenal of democracy", the United States is also playing a major role as granary of the United Nations. Food production goals have been established by the War Food Administration and greater emphasis is being placed on ample production of the more essential foods, while the planting of crops considered less essential to the war effort is being discouraged.

The greatest shortage of year-round farm workers seems to be in the dairy-producing areas, although there are plenty of opportunities for experienced farm workers in many other sections of the country where seasonal crops are produced. Farm wages generally have advanced more than industrial wages on a percentage basis compared with wages paid before the war. Either seasonal or year-round employment is readily available to evacuees who are experienced in farm work.

Working Hours

Most civilians are working longer hours than before the war. In areas of labor shortage designated by the War Manpower Commission, all employees are on a 48-hour minimum work week, and a minimum of 48 hours has also been adopted in the essential war industries. At the same time, however, the American principle of extra pay for extra work has not been sacrificed during the war. In all industries which produce articles for use in more than one state, the federal Wage and Hour law requires the payment of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ times the hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of 40

in any working week. Domestic, agricultural workers, and commercial fishermen are exempted from this law. In plants or shops under union contract, the "time and a half for overtime" standard also usually prevails, and employers governed neither by law nor union contract frequently find it necessary to pay overtime in order to keep their employees.

Training Schools

The need for more skilled workers in many industries and the changing of occupations of many of the people have brought about the establishment of special training schools. Many of these schools are operated so that employed people may attend the classroom sessions in off-duty hours and improve their working skills.

In many industries and plants there are special courses known as "Training Within Industry" courses, where workers are given an opportunity to relate their work to study while remaining employed, and thus, earn promotions and better pay.

Wage Stabilization

Wages in the United States have been stabilized; contrary to a rather common impression, they have not been "frozen." Rather than arbitrarily freezing wages at any set point, the United States government has given to the War Labor Board--composed of representatives of organized labor, industry, and the public--the responsibility for holding wages in line against inflationary tendencies and for deciding when wage increases are warranted.

This program requires the War Labor Board to review and act upon applications for general wage increases in concerns employing eight or more workers. Agricultural workers and people who work in offices or plants with less than eight employees may receive wage increases without obtaining the approval of the WLB.

The program does these things:

1. Permits individual promotions and wage increases based on merit without WLB approval under certain conditions. For example, a helper or apprentice may become a skilled worker and receive the pay for the position to which he has been promoted.
2. Establishes as a national policy equal pay for women doing the same work as men, and no discrimination in wages based on race or color.
3. Allows the correction of inequalities in pay for workers doing identical or closely similar work within a plant.
4. Permits pay increases where wages lagged behind living costs in the pre-war "defense" period of rising prices. Under the "Little Steel" formula, wages may be raised 15 per cent above those paid on January 1, 1941.
5. Permits wages at the bottom of the scale to be brought up to the point where they assure the employee a decent standard of living.

Wages may be raised to 40 cents an hour without WLB approval.

6. Retains the principle of collective bargaining under which employers and employees (through their union representatives) both have a voice in deciding what wage adjustments should be made, subject to WLB approval.

Employment Stabilization

Working men and women in the United States are no longer free to change jobs as their fancy dictates, or to go scouting about in search of the most attractive job offer. This does not mean that the worker is rigidly held in the same job for the duration of the war. As in the case of wages, labor is not "frozen." It is "controlled" or "stabilized" in order to make the most efficient and democratic war use of a limited amount of manpower.

The freedom of a civilian to transfer from one job to another depends upon whether the work he is doing is considered essential to the war effort. Essential activities, as defined by the War Manpower Commission, include war production work, the processing of food, metal mining, agriculture, commercial fishing, production of finished lumber products, and many others.

Job transfers are governed by Regulation 7 of the War Manpower Commission. This regulation provides that certain categories of workers must have statements of availability or referral cards from the United States Employment Service, or both, in order to obtain employment. A worker who has been employed in an essential activity may be hired by another employer only for essential work and only upon presentation of a statement of availability. These should be secured from the employer. If the employer fails or refuses to issue the statement, the worker should apply for one at the nearest office of the United States Employment Service. The worker is entitled to a statement if:

1. He has been discharged.
2. He has been laid off for an indefinite period or for 7 or more days.
3. Continuance of his employment would involve undue personal hardship.
4. Such employment is or was at a wage or salary or under working conditions below standards established by State or Federal law or regulations.
5. Such employment is or was at a wage or salary below a level established or approved by the National War Labor Board (or other agency authorized to adjust wages or approve adjustments thereof) as warranting adjustment, and the employer has failed to adjust the wage in accordance with such level or to apply

to the appropriate agency for such adjustment or approval thereof.

Certain workers must also have in addition to the statement a referral card from the United States Employment Service in order to be hired. They are:

1. Workers whose last employment was in a critical occupation.
2. Workers whose last employment was in agriculture and who are to be hired for non-agricultural work.
3. Workers who have not lived or worked in the locality of the new employment throughout the preceding 30-day period.

In order to be sure that his employment is in the interest of the war effort and is in accordance with regulations, the worker should seek advice and guidance from the nearest local office of the United States Employment Service.

No-Strike Pledge

Leaders of industry and of organized labor have agreed that while the war lasts there shall be no strikes by workers and no lockouts by employers. This pledge has been well kept. In 1942 there was only one-fourth as much time lost through strikes as in an average peace-time year. It was as if one day were lost in strikes out of about 5 years of steady work. Instead of striking, workers take their disputes to the War Labor Board for settlement while they remain steadily on the job.

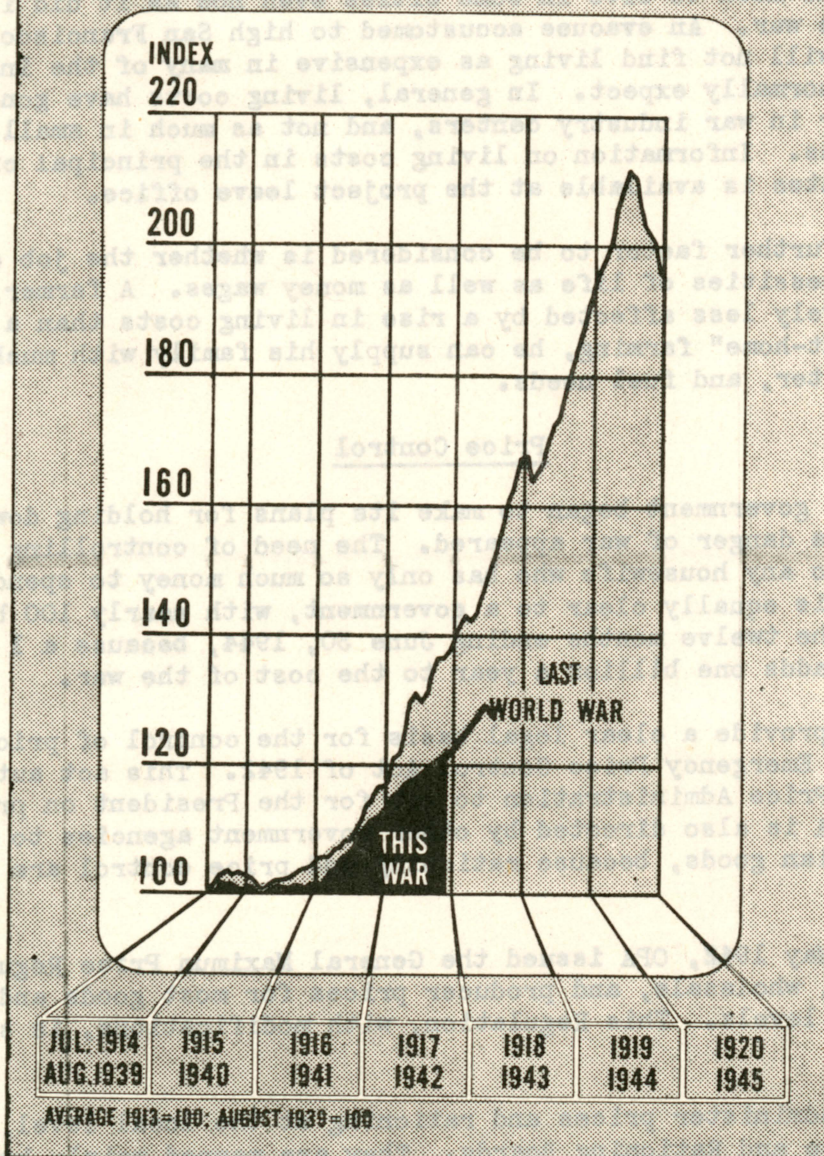
COST OF LIVING

There is considerable talk today about the rise in the cost of living, about the difficulty of making ends meet on a limited income. While civilians, generally speaking, are paying higher prices for many commodities and services, much of the talk about skyrocketing living costs is greatly exaggerated. It is true that prices have risen and that wages have lagged behind. All things considered, however, the people of the United States are relatively well off financially, and evacuees preparing to leave the centers may want to bear in mind several factors about economic conditions outside.

Comparison with World War I:

The following chart shows how much better the United States is controlling living costs in this war than in the last. If prices in this war behaved as in World War I, living costs would be 15 to 20 per cent higher than they are today.

COST OF LIVING IN LAST WORLD WAR AND IN THE PRESENT WAR



Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics

Living Standards

Despite the rise in the cost of living, according to reports of the Department of Commerce, the people of the United States have had the money with which to maintain practically the same standard of living as that enjoyed during peacetime. That is because almost every able-bodied person can find a job and because a lot of the money, which in peacetime was spent for automobiles, and luxuries no longer obtainable, is now going for

better food, housing, and clothing.

Real Wages

The actual size of a civilian's pay check is not nearly as important as how far that pay check will stretch. In that connection, the sectional variation in living costs is an important consideration. It does not cost as much to live in some cities even now as it did in other cities before the war. An evacuee accustomed to high San Francisco prices, for example, will not find living as expensive in many of the inland cities as he might normally expect. In general, living costs have gone up faster and higher in war industry centers, and not as much in small towns and rural areas. Information on living costs in the principal cities in the United States is available at the project leave office.

A further factor to be considered is whether the job supplies any of the necessities of life as well as money wages. A farmer, for example, is relatively less affected by a rise in living costs than a city person. By "live-at-home" farming, he can supply his family with much of their food, shelter, and fuel needs.

Price Control

Our government began to make its plans for holding down prices as soon as the danger of war appeared. The need of controlling wartime prices is clear to any housewife who has only so much money to spend each week for food. It is equally clear to a government, with nearly 100 billions to spend in the twelve months ending June 30, 1944, because a 1 per cent rise in prices adds one billion a year to the cost of the war.

To provide a clear legal basis for the control of prices, Congress passed the Emergency Price Control Act of 1942. This act authorizes the Office of Price Administration to act for the President on prices and rents. OPA is also directed by other government agencies to ration certain civilian goods, because rationing and price control are closely linked.

In May 1942, OPA issued the General Maximum Price Regulation, which set retail, wholesale, and producer prices for most goods and services at March 1942 levels. This Regulation, with modifications, is still in effect.

To administer prices and rationing at the local level, OPA has set up War Price and Rationing Boards. They are manned mainly by volunteer workers. If, after relocation, you have any trouble about prices or rationing, the War Price and Rationing Board in your community is there to help you.

Rent Control

If you live in a community with rent control, you want to know about the Area Rent Office. It protects tenants from having to pay more than a legal rent. Most rents are fixed at the March 1942 level. The Rent Office also protects tenants from being put out of their homes without just cause. The Rent Office will tell you whether the rent you are

paying is within the legal limit.

Rationing

Rationing is bound to make quite a change in your usual buying habits. When you go into a grocery store now, you may see that many items have tickets which say, for example, "23 cents, 14 points", or "35 cents a pound, 6 points." You will learn what the ration point values of certain foods are, and how much you can buy on the number of points your ration board allows you. You carry ration books or tokens with you when you shop and give the clerk the right kind and number of ration stamps or tokens. You also will plan to use rationed goods, such as shoes, so that they last you until your ration permits you to buy more.

You are bound to find some inconveniences in getting used to buying rationed goods. But you may take comfort in the fact that rationing is not half so annoying as not being able to find anything to buy. Before sugar was rationed, for example, a few families were getting all they wanted, but many others were unable to buy sugar at all. Under rationing, everyone gets a fair share of the supplies we have. As soon as there are supplies enough for all, rationing will stop. For that reason, coffee rationing was stopped in July 1943.

Try to remember these facts about rationing. You have to go to your ration board to get a certificate to buy such rationed articles as tires, bicycles, safety work shoes, rubber boots, or other rationed items that are only bought by a few people occasionally. To buy farm equipment, you go to the County Agent of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service. You give up certain coupons to get shoes, sugar, fuel oil, or gasoline. Books with these coupons are obtained from your ration board. Point stamps have to be used for certain classes of foods. One class, known as processed foods, includes most bottled foods, canned foods, and certain dried foods. Another class includes meats, fats, and oils. Butter and cheese are regarded as fats. You cannot possibly remember all the details about rationing, of course, but the stores where you buy will help you learn what you must know. Many of them have posted signs telling when certain coupons expire, and what coupons must be used for certain goods. The rationing program is changing from time to time as supply conditions change. For this reason, it is important to pay attention to rationing news, in the stores, on the radio, and in the newspapers.

TAXES AND SAVINGS

Taxes to Beat the Axis

Modern warfare costs money. Already this war has cost more than the whole of the last war. To pay for even part of the guns, battleships, and planes needed to strike fascism off the face of the earth, civilians must dig deep into their pocketbooks. Taxes are higher. More people are paying them this year than ever before in history. Heavy as the new tax rates are, they do not cut as deeply as in other nations at war. Spread among the people of the United States according to ability to pay, they still leave the average American with more spending money than he ever

had before.

New kinds of taxes and the fact that many people are paying taxes for the first time require that everyone know his taxes and regularly set aside money in advance for paying them. The average income earner in the United States is now paying two kinds of federal taxes.

Income Taxes

The most far-reaching change in the war tax laws is the "pay-as-you-go" policy recently enacted by Congress. Under this law, income taxes on wages and salaries (except in the case of agricultural and domestic workers) are regularly deducted from payrolls. This is not a new tax but merely a change in the method of collecting taxes. By withholding money for taxes it is a real convenience for wage earners. It reduces the opportunity to spend too freely and thus to find at the end of the year that taxes are more than the savings put away to pay them.

Since July 1, 1943, employers have been deducting 20 per cent of wages and salaries after allowing for personal exemptions and credits for dependents. The amounts of wages not subject to the tax deductions are:

For single persons.....\$12 a week

For married persons (where husband or wife
claims the total allowance).....\$24 a week

For each dependent, an additional.....\$ 6 a week

Thus, a single person claiming an allowance only for himself will earn \$12 a week free of tax, but 20 per cent of earnings over \$12 a week will be deducted by the employer and turned over to the United States Treasury to apply on his tax bill.

The amounts deducted from the taxpayer's wage or salary are held by the Treasury to apply against his final tax for the year as shown on the annual return he files by March 15 of the following year. In most cases, the amounts deducted from his pay envelopes will just about equal his actual taxes. If, however, too little or too much has been withheld, he will pay more or will get a refund.

Excise Taxes

Excise taxes ordinarily are sales taxes on selected articles and services. They are added to the price of commodities and services which the consumer buys. The taxpayer does not always realize he is paying them, but he should take account of their existence, nevertheless, when he figures out his budget. Among the increases in our excise taxes under the wartime tax laws are:

Cigarettes from $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 cents a package.

Local telephone service from 6 to 10 per cent.

Domestic telegraph messages from 10 to 15 per cent.

Passenger transportation from 5 to 10 per cent.

A number of other excises are in effect, many of which were not changed in 1942. For example, there is a tax on the price of movie tickets of one cent for each 10 cents or fraction thereof, and a tax of 5 per cent of the bill at cabarets or similar places of entertainment.

Savings

To promote systematic savings on an easy pay-as-you-go basis, the Payroll Savings Plan was initiated by the Treasury and is now in effect in 183,000 firms in the United States, many Federal, State and local Governmental agencies and units, and in the Army and the Navy. About 27,000,000 persons are participating in the plan and the deductions from their pay for the purchase of War bonds amounts to \$425,000,000 a month.

The Payroll Savings Plan works this way: A business firm agrees to install a Payroll Savings Plan. This means that it will set up the necessary machinery, work out a bookkeeping system and assign a sufficient number of employees to work on a plan whereby at the request of a worker the firm will withhold some of each paycheck and save it for him or her toward the purchase of a War Bond.

The company further agrees that when the deductions from the pay of any particular person add up to the purchase price of the bond designated by that person, the firm will buy the bond for him and deliver it to him.

In many instances the firm becomes an issuing agent, which means that they themselves are allowed to issue the Bonds and can deliver them directly to the worker as the accumulations are made.

The worker, on his side of the bargain, signs a card or form which authorizes the firm to deduct and save so much out of each paycheck and held it until a Bond has been bought, and when the first Bond has been bought, continue the same process until another and another and so on, or until the worker may cancel such a subscription.

The Plan is an adaptation of the Christmas Club idea and makes it possible for workers to buy Bonds on an easy, convenient and sensible basis and in an amount which they would ordinarily find it difficult to buy. It does more than that--it gives the worker and his family a backlog against the time when the War is over and readjustment from war to peace takes place.

TRANSPORTATION

Evacuees who leave the centers must expect a decided change in travel conditions. Troop movements, soldiers returning home on furlough before going overseas, and workers commuting back and forth to war plants use up almost every available bit of space in the trains. Planes are heavily crowded, too, as soldiers, government officials, and business executives go about the country engaged in the job of winning the war. Bus service has been curtailed because of shortages of buses, gas, and rubber; trolleys and buses are crowded, especially in the new wartime centers of population.

HOUSING

Housing conditions in many cities and centers of war production activity are acute. This is a result of the migration of war workers and over-taxing of existing housing facilities in the vicinity of the busy war plants. The government has built and is building a great volume of war housing, but the need to conserve critical materials has prevented the construction of sufficient new dwellings to give everyone the sort of place he would like to have in which to live.

War Housing Centers have been established by the National Housing Agency in a number of cities and towns where the most congested housing conditions exist. These Centers are set up to advise civilians on their housing problems and to allocate existing or new war housing among those who need it most. It is necessary to be an in-migrant to get assistance from the War Housing Centers. But it is not always necessary to work in a war plant or at an army camp. The government has recognized that workers in many essential occupations and in government jobs are required in some localities to back up the war production efforts, and has made provisions to house them, too, as far as possible. Full information can be obtained at the War Housing Centers.

The following is a list of some of the towns and cities where centers have been established and where new residents may apply:

New England States:

Connecticut:	Bridgeport	Massachusetts:	Springfield
	Bristol		
	Hartford	Maine:	Portland
	Meriden		
	Waterbury		
	Willimantic		

Middle Atlantic States:

New York:	Buffalo	Pennsylvania:	Allentown
	Elmira		Canonsburg
	Geneva		Chester
	Niagara Falls		Harrisburg
	Rome		Lancaster
	Syracuse		Newcastle
	Utica		Philadelphia
			Pittsburgh
			Rochester
			Reading
			Sunbury

New Jersey:	Camden	Maryland:	Baltimore
	Long Branch		
	Newark	Virginia:	Alexandria
	Somerville		Arlington
	Trenton		Norfolk

Delaware:	Wilmington	District of Columbia:	
			Washington

North Central States:

Kentucky:	Louisville	Ohio:	Akron
			Canton
Michigan:	Adrian		Cleveland
	Battle Creek		Columbus
	Detroit		Dayton
	East Ypsilanti		Lima
	Monroe		Lorain
	Muskegon		Marion
	Pontiac		Newark
	Saginaw		Springfield
			Warren
Illinois:	Chicago	Wisconsin:	Beloit
	Evansville		Madison
	Rockford		Milwaukee
			Superior

Mountain States:

Colorado:	Denver	Utah:	Ogden
	Pueblo		Provo
			Salt Lake City
Wyoming:	Casper		Tocoele
	Cheyenne		
	Rock Springs		

Other States:

Texas:	Beaumont	Kansas:	Dodge City
	Corpus Christi		Wichita
	Dallas		
	Fort Worth	Oklahoma:	Oklahoma City
	Galveston		Tulsa
	Houston		
	Texarkana		