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Resources for Teaching Fourth Grade History in California

World War II On the Home Front: Primary Source Documents

Advertisement created by the Petroleum Administration for War

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West Coast Gasoline Situation Critical

We may as well face the facts. The civilian gasoline situation here in the West will probably get worse before it gets better. You're entitled to know the truth. Here it is:

NO ONE can make accurate *predictions* about our gasoline supply. The actions of the enemy will have as much to do with it as the plans of our own General Staff. *But we can analyze the situation as it exists today.* And it doesn't look good.

The Pacific Coast petroleum industry is turning out 30% more gasoline today than it did in 1940. On top of our normal production that's an enormous amount. The increase alone amounts to almost as much gasoline as the entire German nation consumed before the war. Yet in spite of this, the West is facing a gasoline shortage. Here's why:

PACIFIC THEATER DEPENDS ALMOST ENTIRELY ON WEST COAST

WHEN the Japs took the Dutch East Indies, and the submarine menace cut off South America, the major job of supplying the Allied Forces in the Pacific fell squarely on the West Coast. This meant that almost every gallon of 100 octane used by a plane in the Solomons, and practically every barrel of fuel oil consumed by destroyers off the Aleutians, had to come from California refineries.

When you realize that the gas tanks of *one* Flying Fortress hold enough gasoline to supply 23 "A" cars for *one* year; that a destroyer steaming under forced draft from San Francisco to Sydney, Australia, burns up enough fuel oil to heat 1120 *homes* for a year, you can get an idea of what this means.

THIS IS ALREADY A BIG JOB

For example, in 1940 military and export took about 14% of our gasoline production. That left 86% for civilian use.

In 1942, the first year of the war, the Armed Forces took about 24% of the gasoline we made. But we increased ^{gasoline} production 11%. That meant we were making 111 barrels for every 100 we made in 1940. So while the Armed Forces took 27 out of every 111 (24%) it still left 84 barrels for civilian use, just about what we consume in peacetime. As a result, we didn't have any gasoline rationing until the last month of that year.

This year we have increased production to a point where we're making 130 barrels for every 100 we turned out in 1940. But the Armed Forces are now taking 60% of the gasoline we make—78 barrels out of every 130. That leaves 52 barrels for civilian use—40% less than normal.

NEXT YEAR IT WILL BE STUPENDOUS

NO ONE knows what the Army and Navy will require next year. But right now military authorities estimate that they may need as much as 75% of our gasoline. That would amount to *98 barrels out of every 130 we manufacture.* It would leave just 32 for our civilians, or *63% less* than we used in 1940!

HASN'T RATIONING HELPED?

YES, we *are* driving fewer miles in private automobiles than we did before the war. *But* we have a lot more people

out here than we had then. For example, civilian gasoline consumption in California (net taxable gallonage) during July of this year was only 4½% below July of 1940! That's a long way from the 62% reduction we might have to face in 1944. In fact, the only reason we've been able to carry on at our present rate of consumption *this* year is because a great deal of the gasoline we are using now is coming from *inventories*—accumulated by the industry in the past. At the present rate of consumption, these surplus stocks will be gone in two months.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

THE industry is taking every means that human ingenuity can devise to increase refinery yields and improve refinery facilities. New plants are being rushed to completion, new motor fuel blends are being tested, new techniques are being explored by talent pools of the best men in the industry. All of this will help some.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

BUT the industry can't solve the problem alone. We've *all* got to help. We've got to make every drop of civilian gasoline count. *Non-essential driving must be discontinued.*

If civilian gasoline is not conserved **NOW**, there will not be enough for *essential* driving later. This is your personal war problem.

GENERAL COMMITTEE, DISTRICT 5, PACIFIC COAST OIL COMPANY

REPRESENTATIVES FOR PETROLEUM ADMINISTRATION FOR WAR