CHAPTER TWENTY:
THE WORLD WAR II ERA AND SEEDS OF A REVOLUTION

CHAPTER SUMMARY

World War II and the decade following witnessed many efforts by African Americans come, or begin to come, to fruition. As America prepared to enter World War II in 1941, African Americans faced continued exclusion from the job market. The NAACP quickly picked up on the idea of a “Double V” campaign to fight for victory over fascism in Europe and racism at home. This increased militancy, aptly demonstrated by A. Philip Randolph and the March on Washington Movement, led to Roosevelt’s desegregation of defense industries in 1941. Roosevelt, however, refused to desegregate the armed forces, which continued to relegate blacks to menial non-combat roles based on stereotypical, racist views. Soldiers and civilians protested the policy, as did many black women excluded from nursing for the War Department. With this continued protest, and as the war went on, the government began to change its position. Black workers, moving North and West to find higher paying industrial positions, continued to face discrimination, but did find jobs in areas once exclusively reserved for whites. As during World War I, racial conflicts and protest at home could lead to violence, as in Detroit in 1943 when more than 30 people were killed in a bloody race riot. Blacks and whites also began to form new racial protest groups, with new tactics and goals, including the SRC and CORE.

The aftermath of the war brought the onset of the Cold War and a tide of anti-communist hysteria, including targeting those associated with the search for African-American rights. On the other hand, the Cold War also brought positive benefits for blacks, as politicians adjusted to new voting realities. Harry Truman officially desegregated the armed forces and advocated numerous other pieces of civil rights legislation. The Supreme Court also proved helpful, with the forceful presence of multiple NAACP cases. These cases initially focused on obtaining equal graduate level education for blacks, but spread by the early 1950s to grade school desegregation. The NAACP culminated several decades of legal work in 1954 with the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas case, which declared segregation in public education unconstitutional and paved the way for a full scale change in black life in America.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Understand the origins of World War II as well as how America became involved.

Understand the roles, changes for, and continued discrimination of blacks in the military during World War II.

Understand the role of blacks in America during the war, including as workers and with continued protest.

Understand the positive and negative effects of the Cold War on blacks, both in politics and social life.

Understand the developments of the Brown v. Board of Education case, as well as its importance and place in NAACP activism.
CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Introduction

II. On the Eve of War, 1936-1941
   A. Origins of World War II
      1. Germany and Italy
      2. War in Europe
      3. Japanese Activities
   B. U.S. Entry
      1. Pearl Harbor
      2. Isolationism
   C. African Americans and the Emerging World Crisis
      1. Ethiopia
      2. Spanish Civil War
   D. A. Philip Randolph and the March on Washington
      1. Mobilization over past discrimination
         a. Labor
         b. Military
      2. “Double V” Campaign
         a. Origins
         b. Criticism of discrimination
         c. Inaction of Roosevelt
      3. March on Washington Movement
         a. Goals/Tactics
         b. Results
   E. Executive Order 8022
      1. Terms
      2. Effect

III. Race and the U.S. Armed Forces
   A. Institutional Racism in the American Military
      1. Imbedded Racism
      2. American War College Study
      3. War Department Policies
      4. Dorie Miller
   B. The Costs of Military Discrimination
      1. Treatment at Training Camps
      2. Comparison to Germans POWs
      3. Black service during war
      4. Fort Chicago Base Mutiny
   C. Soldiers and Civilians Protest Military Discrimination
      1. Black leadership
      2. Examples of protest
   D. Black Women in the Struggle to Desegregate the Military
      1. General role of black women
      2. Staupers and Quota Elimination for Nurses
   E. Soldiers and Sailors Protest
   F. The Beginning of Military Desegregation
      1. Propaganda
         a. Films
b. Use of prominent African Americans
   2. Loosening of racism
   3. Expanded military options
   4. Changes for nurses
G. The Tuskegee Airmen
   1. Training
   2. Record
H. The Transformation of Black Soldiers
   1. Differences from World War I
   2. Effects of Service

IV. Black People on the Home Front
   A. Black Workers: From Farm to Factory
      1. Reasons for leaving farm
      2. Demand for labor
      3. Directions of migration
      4. Unions
   B. The Fair Employment Practices Committee during the War
      1. Executive Order 9346
      2. Resistance by the South
   C. Anatomy of a Race Riot: Detroit, 1943
      1. Origins
      2. Events
      3. Outcome
      4. Interpretation by whites and blacks
   D. Old and New Protest Groups on the Home Front
      1. NAACP
         a. Success
         b. Internal disputes
      2. Southern Regional Council
      3. Congress of Racial Equality
      4. Black Women’s Organizing
      5. Black College Students

V. The Transition to Peace

VI. The Cold War and International Politics
   A. Origins/Influences
   B. African Americans and World Affairs: W. E. B. DuBois and Ralph Bunche
      1. Criticism from DuBois
      2. Working Within the System
   C. Anti-communism at Home
      1. Origins
      2. Attack on DuBois
   D. Paul Robeson
      1. Pro-Soviet Views
      2. Reaction from Government/Whites
      3. Travel Ban
   E. Henry Wallace and the 1948 Presidential Election
      1. Emergence of the Progressive Party
2. Response of Truman
3. Reaction of white Southerners

F. Desegregating the Armed Forces
   1. Increasing Tensions in Europe
   2. Black resistance to segregated military service
   3. Executive Order 9981
   4. Korean War

VII. The Road to Brown
   A. Foundation of the NAACP - Legal Defense Fund
   B. Constance Baker Motley and Black Lawyers in the South
      1. Background
      2. Education
      3. Work for the NAACP-LDF
      4. Sipuel Case
      5. Sweatt Case
   C. Brown and the Coming Revolution
      1. Difficulties faced by lawyers
      2. Briggs v. Elliot
      3. Brown case

VII. Conclusion

TEST MATERIALS

MAP QUESTIONS
(Locate the following regions, geographical features or political entities on a map)
Italy
Germany
Soviet Union
Poland
Japan
China
Great Britain
France
Philippines
Guam
Hawaii
Pearl Harbor
Ethiopia
Spain
Belle Isle
Detroit
Czechoslovakia
Korea
Topeka, Kansas