

Resource Sheet#8

Document G-*Secondary Source Commentary on the Lanham Act of 1942*

Under the Lanham Act [as amended in 1942] the federal government spent some \$50 million to help create roughly 3,000 day-care centers. But those centers enrolled only about 130,000 children and were in short supply in the war-boom cities where they were most needed... The underutilization of day-care centers stemmed partly from such problems as distance, cost, transportation, and inadequate publicity. But many parents simply did not wish to put their children in centers run by strangers and chose instead to make do in more traditional ways, especially by entrusting the care of their children to relatives, close friends, or neighbors. Yet many child-care centers worked well, and enrollments increased toward the end of the war.

Source: Jeffries, J. W. (1996). *Wartime America: The World War II home front*. Chicago: The American Ways Series.

Background Information: The Lanham Act was landmark legislation that in part aided women in reaching their full potential in the workforce. Through the Lanham Act, women were able to place their children in federally funded day-care centers.

Guiding Questions:

1. What did the Lanham Act provide to war-boom cities?
2. What problems arose that limited the success of the Lanham Act?
3. How did the Federal Government support women workers?