

America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression

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**America in the 20th Century:
The Great Depression
Grades 5-12
Viewing Time: 30 minutes**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The sixth volume in the award-winning *America in the 20th Century Series: The Great Depression* explores the "bust times" that came to be called the Great Depression. From the events that triggered the "Black Tuesday" collapse of the stock market to the myriad federal programs initiated to revive the economy, the program provides an excellent overview of the period. Additional discussion covers the social effects of the depression; the presidential administrations of Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt; the New Deal and its effects on labor, conservation, and cultural life; and the Dust Bowl.

MATERIALS IN THE UNIT

Program - *America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression*

Teacher's Guide

This Teacher's Guide has been prepared to aid you in utilizing materials contained within this program. In addition to this introductory material, the guide contains the following:

- ✓ Suggested instructional procedures for the lesson.
- ✓ Answer Keys for activity sheets.
- ✓ Follow-up activities and projects for the lesson.

Blackline Masters

Included in this program are ten blackline masters for duplication and distribution. They consist of classroom activities, information sheets, take-home activities, Pre-Test, Post-Test, and the text to the Video Quiz.

The Blackline Masters are provided as the follow-up activities for each lesson. They will help you determine focal points for class discussion based on the objectives for the lesson. The blackline masters have a three-fold purpose:

- ✓ To reinforce the program.
- ✓ To provide an opportunity for the students to apply and analyze what they have learned from the program.
- ✓ For use as diagnostic tools to assess areas in which individual students need help.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

It is suggested that you preview the program and read the related Suggested Instructional Procedures before involving your students in the lesson activities. By doing so, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class.

You will probably find it best to follow the program and lesson activities in the order in which they are presented in this Teacher's Guide, but this is not necessary.

It is also suggested that the program presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. The lesson activities focus on the content of the programs.

As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher's Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of your students.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

Teacher Preparation

- ✓ Preview the program *America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression*

- ✓ Read the descriptions of the Blackline Masters.
- ✓ Duplicate any Backline Masters you intend to use.

Student Preparation

The students should be supplied with the necessary copies of Blackline Masters required to complete the activities. By keeping students informed of current events, teachers can extend any of the lessons on the program.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing the program *America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression* and participating in the follow-up activities, students should be able to:

- Identify the causes and consequences of the Great Depression.
- Compare and contrast the efforts made by President Hoover and President Roosevelt to end the Great Depression.
- State the three main goals of President Roosevelt's New Deal administration and state specific examples of how it tried to accomplish each.
- Explain the effects of the first and second New Deal on labor, conservation, cultural life, women, and minorities.
- Describe the significance and legacy of the New Deal for the United States.

DESCRIPTION OF BLACKLINE MASTERS

Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test is an assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the Objectives prior to the launching of *America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression* lesson, which includes the program and the ensuing activities. The results of the Pre-Test may be contrasted with the results of the Post-Test to assess the efficacy of the lesson in achieving the Student Objectives.

Blackline Master #2: Video Quiz is a printed copy of the questions that appear at the end of the program. The Video Quiz is intended to reinforce the salient points of the program immediately following its completion and may be used for

assessment or as a catalyst for discussion.

Blackline Masters #3a-c: Post-Test is an assessment tool to be administered after the lesson (Pre-Test, program, and follow-up activities) has been completed.

Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions offers questions to spur conversation and to identify student comprehension and misunderstanding.

Blackline Master #5: Vocabulary Terms is a list of pertinent terms and definitions.

Blackline Master #6: Presidential Terms is an activity for students to outline the different administrative policies used by President Hoover and President Roosevelt during the Great Depression.

Blackline Master #7: The Great Picture is designed for students to complete a graphic overview of the main events and their causes of the Great Depression.

Blackline Master #8: The ABCs is a chart for students to organize the various programs of the New Deal that were designed to provide reform, relief, and recovery for United States citizens.

Blackline Master #9: Hard Times is an activity for students to explore photographs of the Great Depression on the Internet and write a news article that could correspond with a selected photo.

Blackline Master #10: Riding the Rails is an activity for students to learn about living life on the rails as a teenager. After researching real riders stories on the Internet, students will write an entry to a daily journal as one of the riders.

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

For Teachers

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/99/dust/intro.html>
The Library of Congress

<http://newdeal.feri.org>
The New Deal Network

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson147.shtml
The Education World

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/47misty/47misty.htm>
National Park Services

<http://www.gliah.uh.edu/historyonline/us34.cfm>
Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

<http://www.mcsc.k12.in.us/mhs/social/madedo/>
Mooresville High School, Mooresville Indiana

For Students

Note: Teachers should preview all sites to ensure they are age-appropriate for their students.

<http://newdeal.feri.org/index.htm>
The New Deal Network

<http://www.fdic.gov/about/learn/learning/index.html>
Federal Deposit Insurance Company

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/>
Public Broadcasting Station

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/rails/>
Public Broadcasting Station

- Additional websites are suggested to accompany Follow-Up Activities and are included on the Blackline Masters.

ANSWER KEY

Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. True | 6. False |
| 2. False | 7. True |
| 3. False | 8. False |
| 4. False | 9. True |
| 5. True | 10. False |

Blackline Master #2: Video Quiz

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. True | 6. True |
| 2. False | 7. False |
| 3. False | 8. False |
| 4. True | 9. False |
| 5. True | 10. False |

Blackline Masters #3a-c: Post-Test

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. C |
| 2. B | 7. B |
| 3. A | 8. A |
| 4. A | 9. D |
| 5. D | 10. C |

The following answers may vary.

11. Black Tuesday was the collapse of the stock market on October 29, 1929. It was the single most devastating financial day in the history of the New York Stock Exchange.

12. Key industries such as textiles, steel, railroads, automobiles, and construction were in trouble; a large gap between the rich and the rest of the nation, many were living beyond their means; overproduction, more was being produced than what people were able to buy; the banking system was in trouble, investments in stocks lost money, could not supply depositors with money, and a fourth of the banks in the nation were shut down

13. The Bonus Army were World War I veterans that had been promised a \$1,000 bonus; due to depression, a \$500 bonus was proposed to Congress instead. Veterans marched on Washing-

ton, D.C., and set up camp when the proposal failed. Hoover ordered them away, many did not leave. Hoover sent troops to drive the re-maining veterans out of town, many were injured, and a baby died. People saw Hoover as cold and heartless.

14. Eleanor Roosevelt rescinded her membership when the D.A.R. (Daughters of the Revolution) refused to let Marion Anderson sing in Washington, D.C.,’s Constitution Hall because of her skin color. Eleanor arranged for the concert to be held at the Lincoln Memorial.

15. Roosevelt explained in simple terms the steps he was taking as President to reform America during the Depression. The direct, plain speaking, one-on-one approach was comforting and reassuring to a worried American public.

16. People who could not afford train tickets hitched rides on the back of trains hoping they wouldn't be caught and could find a job in another town. Two million men became "hobos."

17. A huge drought in the Great Plains, coupled with past over-production of crops that caused soil erosion, turned the area from Texas to North Dakota into a "Dust Bowl." Strong winds blew dust all the way to the east coast of America. The Civilian Conservation Corps helped to prevent soil erosion by planting trees, and the Soil Conservation Services taught farmers how to conserve soil through crop rotation, contour plowing, and terracing.

18. The economic depression was worldwide. Many European nations were still suffering from the effects of World War I, high tariffs in the United States prevented world trade, and nations were unable to pay war debts.

Essay Questions

1. Answers may vary but should include examples of Herbert Hoover's "hands off" technique to economic reform. Hoover took some measures to reform the economy but was hesitant to do too much for fear of making government too strong. Hoover authorized expenditures for "Public Works Projects" like Boulder Dam. Hoover's opposition criticised him for his cautious, pessimistic approach to government. Franklin Delano

Roosevelt enacted his New Deal. The New Deal included many reforms such as the FDIC, Emergency Banking Relief Act, and the Federal Securities Act. Roosevelt took a more personal approach to governing the United States. Roosevelt's opposition accused him of not going far enough to help the poor.

2. Answers may vary but should include examples such as the following:

Public Works Projects - Hoover (Boulder) Dam - Resulted in large number of jobs for Americans.

Emergency Banking Relief Act - Authorized the United States Treasury Department to inspect banks and allow only those that were financially sound to stay open; offered loans to banks in trouble.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) - Provided federal insurance for bank depositors. Resulted in Americans trusting banks again.

Public Works Administration - Provided funds to states to build schools, libraries, and other community buildings. Resulted in a failure to diminish unemployment quickly enough.

National Industrial Recovery Act - Established a fair code of practices for various industries. Resulted in the setting of fair prices and recommendation of a minimum wage.

Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions

Answers will vary. Possible answers follow.

1. Businesses began slowing down, economic boom of 1920s ending, stock prices falling, stockbrokers demanded that people repay loans for stocks bought on margin, and on October 29, 1929, "Black Tuesday" saw the collapse of the stock market and stocks sold for almost nothing.

2. Key industries were in trouble, the gap between the rich and the rest of the nation, people living beyond their means with credit, overproduction of products, banking system in trouble when investments in stocks were lost, and not enough money to pay depositors, World War I caused economic slump world-wide, and many businesses failed and millions lost their jobs

3. Soup kitchens and bread lines were set up for the unemployed, unemployed "rode the rails" looking for jobs, people lost their homes and lived in shantytowns, and many children suffered from malnutrition and stopped attending school to work.

4. Reassured the nation its economy was sound, advocated the "do-nothing" approach for the economy to recover naturally, took cautious approach and spent federal money on public works construction, provided emergency financing for big businesses hoping for trickle-down theory, and asked private charities to help the less fortunate.

5. The New Deal's purpose was to provide relief for the needy, recovery for the economy, and reform for the financial system. Accomplishments included restoring confidence in financial system with the "bank holiday" and FDIC; helping farmers with AAA; provided work for the unemployed with CCC, PWA, CWA, TVA; and gave direct assistance for the needy with Federal Emergency Relief Administration, National Industrial Recovery Act, Federal Housing Administration, and Home Owners Loan Corporation.

6. Unemployed were hired to build community buildings, repair roads, flood control, and other conservation projects, and jobs also included creating a system of dams to provide hydroelectric power. The needy were given food, clothing, loans for home mortgages, and low interest rates for mortgage payments.

7. Critics on the left said the New Deal did not go far enough to help poor or reform the economy, whereas critics on the right said it gave the government too much control over the economy and FDR was establishing dictatorship. The Supreme Court declared NIRA and AAA unconstitutional and FDR's "court

packing" aroused public protest. Father Charles Coughlin, Dr. Francis Townsend, Upton Sinclair, and Senator Huey Long all opposed FDR's New Deal.

8. Minimal improvement in the economy and Eleanor Roosevelt's visits around the country influenced FDR to urge Congress to pass additional measures to help the economy and the needy. The second New Deal included, AAA, FSA, WPA, Wagner Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, Social Security Act, and Rural Electrification Administration.

9. Many women and African-Americans were appointed to important positions, such as Mary McLeod Bethune, Robert C. Weaver, William H. Hastie, Marian Anderson, Mary Dewson, and Frances Perkins. African-Americans abandoned the Republican Party, many Mexican-Americans deported to Mexico, and Native Americans received full citizenship and the Indian Reorganization Act passed in 1934.

10. People went to the movies to forget their troubles. Almost every home had a radio, which played soap operas, comedies, children's shows, and FDR's Fireside Chats. Many New Deal programs supported artists and writers.

Blackline Master #6: Presidential Terms

Answers will vary. Outline can be evaluated on execution, accuracy, and content.

Blackline Master #7: The Great Picture

Answers will vary. Overviews can be assessed on execution, accuracy, and content.

Blackline Master #8: The ABCs

FDIC - Federal Deposit Insurance Company

AAA - Agricultural Adjustment Act

CCC - Civilian Conservation Corps

PWA - Public Works Administration

CWA - Civil Works Administration

TVA - Tennessee Valley Authority

NIRA - National Industrial Recovery Act

FHA - Federal Housing Administration

Explanations will vary. Charts can be assessed on execution,

accuracy, and content.

Blackline Master #9: Hard Times

Answers will vary. Articles can be assessed on execution, accuracy, creativity, and content.

Blackline Master #10: Riding the Rails

Answers will vary. Journals can be assessed on execution, accuracy, creativity, and content.

**America in the 20th Century: The Great Depression
Narration**

In 1928, on the campaign promise of continuing prosperity and a "chicken in every pot," Herbert Hoover accepted the Republican Party's nomination to run for President. He declared that the United States of America was nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in its history. He predicted, "*We shall soon with the help of God be in sight of the day when poverty will be banished from this land.*" Yet, shortly after his election, the United States' economy crumbled, banks closed, millions of people became jobless, homeless, and hopeless during the Great Depression.

As the Roaring Twenties were drawing to an end, so too, was an era of relative prosperity for many Americans. As early as 1926, the construction of new housing had decreased. Businesses had too much inventory and too few buyers. Nevertheless, an optimistic America wanted to believe the good times would last forever, pointing to fortunes that were being made on the Stock Market. Even people with little money to spare wanted in on the action and stock brokers readily agreed to sell shares on "margin," where they would "lend" citizens money to buy stock. These investors figured the stock's price was bound to go up and up, allowing them to pay back the stocks original price ten-fold.

The constantly rising price of stocks cast a spell over the nation. Noon hour traffic stood still, as people eagerly awaited news of their improved finances. Even distinguished Yale University economist Irving Fisher made a bold speculation.

Irving Fisher

"The nation is marching along a permanently high plateau of

prosperity."

But, the simple fact was that the price paid for many stocks was unduly out of proportion to the actual profitability of the companies who issued them, creating the illusion of increased value.

On October 29th, 1929, the reality finally caught up with the stock market and what went up came crashing back down. Panicked investors sold 16 million shares in a single day, many for just pennies a share, millions of other stocks went unsold entirely on that afternoon known as Black Tuesday. In just a matter of hours, the stock prices took such a nosedive that any gains made over the previous year vanished. The market's collapse was the most distressing downturn in the history of the New York Stock Exchange, so distressing in fact, a number of investors committed suicide rather than face financial ruin. Black Tuesday may have signaled the start of The Great Depression, but the collapse of the stock market wasn't the only cause of the nation's financial woes.

The Federal government of the 1920s had supported big business with low interest rates and very little governmental regulation, especially over the stock market. In turn, many businesses borrowed more money to expand than they could ever afford to repay. High tariffs that had kept American business owners happy because they kept foreign-made products out of the U.S., unfortunately, meant many European countries were unable, and increasingly unwilling, to buy American-made products.

For instance, Germany was barely able to pay the World War One reparations she owed, and high tariffs like the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act passed by Congress in 1930 only made matters worse. The tariff's goal was to protect American farmers and manufacturers, but it backfired. America found itself unable to sell her farm goods and manufactured products abroad. World trade, in turn, faltered as foreign countries imposed severe tariffs of their own in retaliation. Many key industries were struggling even before Black Tuesday. Throughout the boom-times of the Roaring Twenties, agriculture had been in a tailspin. The textile, steel, automobile and railroad industries were also beginning to feel the pinch; as the unemployment rate increased, most families bought even less. The gap between the handful of wealthy Americans and the rest of the population got

even wider. Even though most Americans had not profited from the economic boom of the 1920s, they bought many of the exciting new products and services during this era of unrestrained credit, living well beyond their means.

The banking industry too, was hard hit. Some banks had invested heavily in the stock market and helplessly stood by as that money vaporized into thin air. As Americans began to realize the pitiful state of the troubled economy, many panicked and rushed to withdraw their savings from banks. Many banks simply couldn't instantly produce the cash demanded, and instead, shut their doors leaving depositors with nothing. Bank failures wiped out nearly nine million individual savings accounts. 659 banks were closed in 1929 and by 1933 one quarter of America's banks had failed.

Millions of American workers lost their jobs—one out of every four workers was jobless.

Only a handful of wealthy investors profited from the collapse of the stock market—like President John F. Kennedy's father, Joseph P. Kennedy, or brilliant investor and presidential advisor Bernard Baruch, who became legendary as "The Man Who Sold Out Before the Crash."

Performer and humorist Will Rogers probably put it best:

Will Rogers

"Ten men in our country could buy the whole world and 10 million can't buy enough to eat."

So the millions of less fortunate Americans faced a grim and uncertain future. Soup kitchens and bread lines became as commonplace as the flappers and speakeasies of the Roaring Twenties. And Herbert Hoover's campaign promise of "A chicken in every pot" couldn't have been farther from the truth. America's towns and cities struggled in vain to help the thousands in need. The jobless became the homeless.

Shantytowns, makeshift communities of shacks constructed from wooden crates, tar paper, and cardboard, sprang up. Disillusioned citizens called them "Hoovervilles" after the President, and the newspapers they slept under, "Hoover Blankets." Others left the city to "ride the rails," looking for

work. Too poor to purchase train tickets, they hitched rides on freight cars hoping they wouldn't be caught, hoping they'd find a job. Approximately two million men became "hobos," wandering the countryside looking for work. Between 1929 and 1932, roughly 400,000 farms were "foreclosed" when farmers couldn't pay their mortgages and banks repossessed the property. Thousands of farm families became migrant workers, following crop harvests to eke out a living.

Then to make matters even worse, drought, coupled with the overproduction of crops in the Great Plains, turned the area from Texas to Oklahoma into a "Dust Bowl." In 1934, strong winds blew tons of dust from the plains, all the way to the east coast. Dust even coated New York City and settled on ships 500 miles out to sea in the Atlantic Ocean.

Unemployment and poverty hurt everyone, especially children. Many left school to work and help their families survive and many more went hungry and malnourished. Diet-related illnesses, like rickets and scoliosis, became all too common.

Once again, President Hoover tried to reassure the nation by saying: "*Recovery is just around the corner...*" but it was not to be, and more Americans grew disenchanted with his policies and administration. Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon echoed the beliefs of most of Hoover's advisors that the economy would recover on its own.

Hoover thought the government must take some action, but feared making government too strong, and so he chose a conservative approach: calling together business, banking, and labor leaders and urging them to work together and avoid laying off workers or calling strikes. Then, he authorized the expenditure of federal funds for large "Public Works Projects" like Boulder Dam, later renamed Hoover Dam, to create jobs and wages for thousands of workers. Hoover felt giving direct help to needy Americans would undermine their self-respect and looked to private charities to help the hungry. Instead, he approved more than two billion dollars in emergency financing to businesses, hoping their renewed success would "trickle down" to the people who needed assistance; it didn't. Rather, unemployment rose even higher and Americans were caught in a web of despair.

Americans, already tired of Hoover's pessimistic and cautious approach, then became outraged by his treatment of a group of World War One veterans in 1932. After the war, Congress issued veterans bonus certificates for their military service worth nearly \$1,000, to be redeemed in 1945. Dismayed by the economic outlook of the time, the veterans demanded the immediate payment of their bonuses in full.

In an attempt satisfy their demand, Texas Congressman Wright Patman proposed a bill in which the government would immediately give veterans \$500 in cash instead. To show their support of Patman's plan, between 10 and 20 thousand veterans and their families peacefully marched to Washington, D.C. This so-called "Bonus Army" established a shantytown in sight of the capitol building. Hoover provided food and supplies for them, but when Congress vetoed the bill on June 17th, he asked the bonus army to leave. Most left, but approximately two thousand stayed behind, hoping to meet with Hoover.

Fearing a riot, Hoover ordered General Douglas MacArthur and the twelfth infantry force to remove the veterans. Shocked Americans saw troops use bayonets and tear gas to force the vets to leave. In the melee, more than one thousand people were gassed, an eight-year old boy blinded, and an 11-month old baby was killed, the shantytown burned to the ground.

Public support for Hoover foundered, and with a chance to change direction, Americans overwhelmingly embraced a new President in Franklin Delano Roosevelt, popularly known as "FDR."

Roosevelt won a landslide election to become the 32nd President. FDR, the two-term governor of New York, brought a feeling of energy and optimism to the oval office.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

"Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

FDR's campaign song, "Happy Days are Here Again," was symbolic of his positive, take-charge approach as President and with a Democratic majority in both houses of Congress, he was able to make swift reforms that became known as the New

Deal. In just his first 100 days in office, FDR proposed and Congress approved more than fifteen new pieces of legislation aimed at providing relief for the needy, recovery for the faltering economy and reform of the American financial system. Just one day after becoming President, FDR declared a "bank holiday," closing all banks, and preventing any further withdrawals of money by depositors who had lost faith in the banking system. Then, he persuaded Congress to pass the Emergency Banking Relief Act, authorizing the U.S. Treasury Department to inspect the country's banks and allow only those that were financially solvent to re-open. The act offered loans to those banks which needed assistance and with the creation of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or FDIC, which provided federal insurance for bank depositors, Americans began to cautiously trust the banks once more.

The Federal Securities Act helped to restore public confidence in the stock market, as did the establishment of the Securities and Exchange Commission, which prevented the manipulation of stock prices.

Perhaps the most confidence-inspiring action by the new President occurred only eight days after his inauguration. Roosevelt took to the air waves as millions gathered around their radios for his first "Fireside Chat." He explained in simple terms the steps he had taken to reform the American economy. Roosevelt's direct, personal approach to the American people was reassuring and helped him garner the support of Americans to enact several more policies in his push toward recovery.

The Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC, was formed to put young men to work. The CCC planted 200 million trees in the Great Plains to prevent future soil erosion and built roads, parks, and flood control systems. The pay was only 30 dollars a month, but almost three million men got much-needed employment. Meanwhile, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided 500 million dollars in direct aid to the homeless, unemployed, and ill.

The New Deal also created the PWA, the Public Works Administration, which provided funds to the states so they could build schools, libraries and other community buildings, and create jobs for their citizens. When the PWA failed to diminish unemployment quickly enough, Roosevelt launched

the CWA— the Civil Works Administration. The CWA created more than four million jobs and workers built 40,000 schools and a half-million miles of roads.

In June of 1933, FDR's administration was able to pass the National Industrial Recovery Act—NIRA. It established a code of fair practices for various industries and set prices to ensure fair competition. The act also recommended minimum wages and maximum hours for workers. Meanwhile, the Tennessee Valley Authority was organized to build dams that provided electricity, flood control and, of course, many jobs for poor farmers in several southern states.

That same year, Roosevelt also submitted the Agricultural Adjustment Act, which limited crop production in order to increase crop prices and help reduce surplus.

Despite launching all these wide-sweeping new pieces of legislation, some critics felt the administration still hadn't gone far enough in helping the poor and reforming the economy. Some feared the New Deal was mostly benefiting already wealthy business owners and that it gave too much power to the government. Even ex-president Herbert Hoover was a vocal critic of FDR's New Deal policies.

Herbert Hoover

"We have seen the creation of a most gigantic spending bureaucracy that is not only a reduction of your standard of living but your freedom and your hopes."

By 1935, the Supreme Court decided that the NIRA was unconstitutional, saying that its enforcement of Federal employment codes went beyond the government's powers. The following year, it held that the Agricultural Adjustment Act was unconstitutional as well, because agricultural controls and regulations should be decided by individual states. Dismayed and fearing conservatives and the Supreme Court might unravel the New Deal, FDR proposed an intriguing bill to Congress.

Roosevelt's so-called "Court Reform" bill would have added six more justices to the Supreme Court, justices, he as President, would nominate. It was obvious that FDR would choose those sympathetic to his New Deal policies. The proposal was promptly nicknamed the "Court Packing" bill. The bill failed and tarnished Roosevelt's image. Regardless, because of court resignations, the President was able to appoint seven new jus-

tices in the next four years, who did support his policies.

But FDR hadn't seen the last of his critics. Roman Catholic Priest and radio broadcaster, Father Charles Coughlin, reached over 40 million listeners each week, as he challenged the New Deal. Coughlin wanted a guaranteed annual income for Americans and a nationalization of banks. In time, however, his anti-Semitic comments cost him most of his supporters. Dr. Francis Townsend, another outspoken opponent to FDR's policies, claimed Roosevelt wasn't doing enough to help the elderly; Townsend won widespread support with his demand for a national pension plan.

Francis Townsend

"This money to be collected by the government and returned directly to the people from whom it was collected in the form of pensions every thirty days."

Most vocal was Louisiana Governor and then-Senator Huey Long. Although a supporter of Roosevelt at first, later Long had nothing but criticism for him. "The Kingfish," as Long was often called, intended to run for the presidency and championed a nationwide social program called Share Our Wealth.

Huey Long

"We've had the promises of the president many, many times and now we're wanting a fulfillment. No empty words or empty messages mean anything to us. And no kinds of law except one that gives employment and homes and comfort and education to our people will satisfy us in the least."

A great many Americans agreed with the Kingfish and more than 27,000 Share Our Wealth clubs sprang up across the country. In 1935, at the height of his popularity, Long was assassinated.

Despite his outspoken critics, FDR knew the economy had improved, but not as much as he'd hoped for, and so he launched, with the help of his humanitarian wife, Eleanor, the "Second New Deal." Mrs. Roosevelt traveled the country from coast to coast seeing the poverty and suffering, urging her husband to provide even more help to the needy. She became a kindly symbol of hope for the downtrodden, who regarded her as a personal friend. Thousands of children wrote to her asking for help.

FDR convinced Congress to pass more legislation to spur the economy including a second Agricultural Adjustment Act, rewarding farmers that practiced soil-conservation and compensating farmers who cut production of soil-depleting crops, like cotton and wheat. The Resettlement Administration loaned money to tenant farmers so they could buy their own land, and established camps for migrant workers.

The second New Deal's most ambitious program was the WPA—the Works Progress Administration. The WPA created more than eight million jobs from 1935 to 1943 for a great many unskilled workers and professionals. The WPA constructed 850 airports, built or repaired 650,000 miles of America's roads, sewed more than 300 million articles of clothing for the needy, and erected 110,000 libraries, schools, and hospitals. Artists, authors, and musicians found work in the WPA too, painting murals on public buildings, writing, performing, and composing.

A National Youth Administration was also created to provide aid and part-time employment for students in need.

The second New Deal also helped reform labor laws with the passage of the Wagner Act, which supported worker's rights to form unions, and the establishment of the National Labor Relations Board to prevent unfair labor practices. From 1933 to 1941, the number of union workers rose from three million to eight. Congress also passed the Fair Labor Standards Act requiring minimum wages and maximum hours for workers. Despite the administration's pro-labor policies, strikes were prevalent and often led to violence. On Memorial Day, 1937, 10 people lost their lives at the Republic Steel strike in Chicago.

Perhaps the most important legacy of the second New Deal was the Social Security Act of 1935. For the first time, Americans over 65 years of age and their spouses had old-age insurance, jobless workers got unemployment compensation, and families with dependant children and the disabled received aid.

In 1935, only 30% of American farms had electricity, so Congress, with Roosevelt's urging, set up of the Rural Electrification Administration. Ten years later, 45% of rural America had electric power.

With widespread support from organized labor, minorities, and the public-at-large, FDR was re-elected as President in 1936. His victory marked the first time most African-Americans voted for a Democratic Party candidate.

With Eleanor Roosevelt's prompting, Roosevelt appointed the first female ambassador and several woman federal judges. Francis Perkins became the first female Secretary of Labor and Mary McLeod Bethune was appointed head of the office of minority affairs in the National Youth Administration, becoming the first African-American woman to head a federal agency. Meanwhile, Mrs. Roosevelt defied the Daughters of the American Revolution, publicly resigning her membership when the D.A.R. refused to let Marion Anderson sing in Washington, D.C.,'s Constitution Hall because of her color. Instead, Eleanor Roosevelt arranged for the concert to be held on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

In the midst of labor unrest, poverty, and hardship, Americans still managed to find fun—at the movies. For just a quarter, they could forget their troubles in one of more than 15,000 picture palaces. Radio too, entertained a weary America. Practically every home had a radio and families gathered to laugh at Burns and Allen, and thrill to the drama of Orson Well's Mercury Theatre on the Air.

By 1939, the nation seemed to be on the road to economic recovery and Congress cut back on the New Deal employment programs, since it had gone deeply into debt providing jobs and aid to Americans. The economy started to improve, but the Republican Party blocked any further relief efforts.

Meanwhile, FDR and America, despite wishing to remain neutral, began to realize that war was inevitable in Europe and very soon it became a reality. Ironically, when America finally entered World War Two, her massive investment in manufacturing guns, airplanes, tanks and ships would finally lift the country out of the Great Depression.