

F.D.R. and the New Deal

Overview

America was a troubled land in the 1930s. With a plunging stock market, soaring unemployment rates, and many Americans struggling for basic necessities, Americans gathered in front of the Capitol to watch the inauguration of a new president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Setting forth a tone of optimism and resolve, F.D.R. strove to raise the spirits of Americans in the inaugural address, and began numerous legislative attempts at improving American life and economics his first day in office. In this lesson, students will explore F.D.R.'s New Deal programs through reading, discussion, and artistic presentations to classmates.

Grade

11

North Carolina Essential Standards for American History II

- AH2.H.1.2- Use Historical comprehension...
- AH2.H.1.3- Use historical analysis and interpretation...
- AH2.H.1.4- Use historical research...
- AH2.H.2.1 - Analyze key political, economic, and social turning points since the end of Reconstruction in terms of causes and effects (e.g., conflicts, legislation, elections, innovations, leadership, movements, Supreme Court decisions, etc.).
- AH2.H.2.2 - Evaluate key turning points since the end of Reconstruction in terms of their lasting impact (e.g., conflicts, legislation, elections, innovations, leadership, movements, Supreme Court decisions, etc.).
- AH2.H.3.2 - Explain how environmental, cultural and economic factors influenced the patterns of migration and settlement within the United States since the end of Reconstruction (e.g., gold rush, destruction of the buffalo, reservations, ethnic neighborhoods, etc.).
- AH2.H.4.2 - Analyze the economic issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., currency policy, industrialization, urbanization, laissez-faire, labor unrest, New Deal, Great Society, supply-side economics, etc.).
- AH2.H.5.2 - Explain how judicial, legislative and executive actions have affected the distribution of power between levels of government since Reconstruction (e.g., New Deal, Great Society, Civil Rights, etc.).
- AH2.H.8.1 - Analyze the relationship between innovation, economic development, progress and various perceptions of the "American Dream" since Reconstruction (e.g., Gilded Age, assembly line, transcontinental railroad, highway system, credit, etc.).
- AH2.H.8.2 - Explain how opportunity and mobility impacted various groups within American society since Reconstruction (e.g., Americanization movement, settlement house movement, Dust Bowl, the Great Migration, suburbia, etc.).
- AH2.H.8.3 - Evaluate the extent to which a variety of groups and individuals have had opportunity to attain their perception of the "American Dream" since Reconstruction (e.g., immigrants, Flappers, Rosie the Riveter, GIs, blue collar worker, white collar worker, etc.).

- AH2.H.8.4 - Analyze multiple perceptions of the “American Dream” in times of prosperity and crisis since Reconstruction (e.g., Great Depression, Dust Bowl, New Deal, oil crisis, savings and loan crisis, dot.com bubble, mortgage foreclosure crisis, etc.).

Essential Questions

- How did President Hoover respond to the Great Depression?
- In what ways did FDR work to alleviate depression hardships?
- What were the various programs that comprised the New Deal and what effect did these have on American society?

Materials

- “FDR & the New Deal” Power Point, available in the Database of K-12 Resources (in PDF format)
 - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click “View” in the top menu bar of the file, and select “Full Screen Mode”
 - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to cnorris@unc.edu
- FDR’s 1933 Inaugural Address, recording and text available at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrfirstinaugural.html>; text also attached
- The First 100 Days, article from TIME, attached and available at http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906979,00.html
- The First 100 Days Response Worksheet, attached
- “Using ‘Federal Project Number One’ to Advertise Other New Deal Programs,” group assignment attached
- Deal or No Deal, attached and available at: http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/printout/0,29239,1906802_1906838_1906978,00.html#

Duration

- 60-90 minutes for lesson (additional class time may be provided for working on group projects)
- 30-60 minutes for presentation of projects & culminating review

Preparation

Students should have a basic understanding of the events causing the Great Depression and its effect on society. See the Consortium’s “The Great Depression,” available in the Database of Civic Resources.

Procedure

What Would You Do, Mr. or Mrs. President?

1. As a warm up, give students the following assignment to respond to in writing (the assignment can be projected using [slide 2](#) of the “FDR & the New Deal” Power Point):
 - “‘And then the Depression came.’ This familiar lament more than distinguished one decade from another. Within its meaning are the images and realities of disaster: the crash of the stock market, the howl of the dust storms, the cry of the hungry, the silence of the shamed. Thousands of Americans watched their destinies evaporate. The horizon of prosperity looming ‘just around the corner’ seemed to fade from view. The Depression jolted many out of the American Dream with its pattern of unemployment, frustration, and despair...” (Source: <http://newdeal.feri.org/nchs/index.htm>)

Imagine that you are the President of the United States in 1929 as the economy and society begin their spiral downward. What would you do? What legislation would you propose to improve life for Americans? What message would you send to citizens to reassure them?

2. After approximately 5-10 minutes of writing, ask volunteers to share their thoughts, noting their ideas on chart paper. As students share their ideas, use this as an opportunity to also review the general feelings experienced by American society in the late 1920s and early 1930s. (What were some of the major problems in the country? What were some of the major events taking place? What was the mood of the country?)

President Herbert Hoover

3. Project slides 3-4 of the "FDR & the New Deal" Power Point and explain that in 1929, Herbert Hoover had taken office as the 31st President of the United States. He had only been in office 8 months when the economic meltdown began. Hoover, viewed as having a strong belief in "big business" and "small government", was considered by some to have a "laissez-faire" viewpoint as the Great Depression took hold. Explain:
 - "Hoover's stance on the economy was based largely on volunteerism. From before his entry to the presidency, he was a proponent of the concept that public-private cooperation was the way to achieve high long-term growth. Hoover feared that too much intervention or coercion by the government would destroy individuality and self-reliance, which he considered to be important American values. Both his ideals and the economy were put to the test with the onset of The Great Depression. President Hoover made attempts to stop "the downward spiral" of the Great Depression by hoping that the private sector would recover largely through its own volition. His policies, however, had little or no effect. As the economy quickly deteriorated in the early years of the Great Depression, Hoover declined to pursue legislative relief, believing that it would make people dependent on the federal government. Instead, he organized a number of voluntary measures with businesses, encouraged state and local government responses, and accelerated federal building projects. Only toward the end of his term did he support a series of legislative solutions." (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbert_Hoover)
 - Discuss:
 - Evaluate Hoover's response to the Great Depression. What do you think of his "small government" mentality? How do Hoover's attitudes/actions relate to the ideas you posed in today's warm-up?
 - Why do you think Hoover's approval ratings dropped so low?
 - Do you think it is fair that Hoover was blamed for the Depression? Why or why not?

The 1932 Election

4. Project slide 5 and share with students that as the Depression took hold, the United States' presidential election of 1932 took place. Reminding students that the effects of the 1929 Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression were being felt intensely across the country, ask students to predict who they believe will win the 1932 election and why.
5. Continue on to slide 6 and explain that President Herbert Hoover's popularity continued to fall as voters felt he was unable to reverse the economic collapse, or deal with prohibition. Hoover's main opponent in the election, Franklin D. Roosevelt, used what he called Hoover's failure to deal

with these problems as a platform for his own election, promising reform in his proposed policy called the New Deal. Roosevelt won by a landslide, and this "critical election" marked the collapse of the Fourth Party System or Progressive Era. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1932)

6. Move on to slide 8 and discuss:
 - Imagine being FDR, newly elected during the midst of a national crisis. How would you feel? What do you think your first order of business would be and why?
7. Project slide 9 and further discuss:
 - What is your first impression of FDR based on this image and quote? Why?
 - How would you characterize FDR based on this quote? Do you feel that politicians typically follow this protocol of "try it...if it fails, admit it frankly..."? Explain. How do you imagine Americans responded to such simplicity and honesty?

Inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt - 1933

8. Next, project slides 10-13 as students listen to the first part of FDR's 1933 inauguration speech. (Teachers can choose to pass out a copy of the attached speech for students to follow along with, and may want to play/discuss more of the speech than what is outlined in the PPT. The entire text and recording of the speech can be found via a simple internet search (i.e.: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrfirstinaugural.html>.) Afterwards, discuss:
 - FDR states at the beginning of his speech, "This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly." Why do you think FDR focuses on the importance of truth and honesty at the beginning of his speech? How do you think citizens would have responded to this focus on truth telling? Is this something you associate with politicians? Explain.
 - Which parts of the speech offer evidence that FDR is attempting to inspire Americans and make them more hopeful for the future? ("This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself...")
 - When FDR says that "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself", what "fear" is he referring to?
 - What difficulties does FDR recognize society is facing? ("Values have shrunken to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone. More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.")
 - How does FDR attempt to put these difficulties into perspective? ("In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things." He goes on to say, "Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for.)
 - How do you think the American public responded to this inauguration speech?

- “Roosevelt's Inaugural Address was a pitch-perfect combination of optimism (“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself”), consolation (the nation's problems ‘concern, thank God, only material things’) and resolve (“This nation asks for action, and action now’). The speech won rave reviews. Even the rock-ribbed Republican Chicago Tribune lauded its “dominant note of courageous confidence.” F.D.R. had buoyed the spirits of the American people — and nearly 500,000 of them wrote to him at the White House in the following week to tell him so.” (Source: *TIME, The First 100 Days*)

The First 100 Days & the New Deal

9. Use slides 14, 15, & 16 to introduce students to Roosevelt’s first actions in office and discuss:
 - In what way do you think the economic situation paved the way for Roosevelt’s ambitious legislative agenda?
10. For further exploration, hand out the attached TIME article, “The First 100 Days”, for students to read individually or in partners. Also provide the attached response questions for students to answer upon reading. Afterwards, briefly go over the answers as a class.

Using “Federal Project Number One” to Advertise Other New Deal Programs

11. To allow students to learn about the various New Deal programs more in depth, hand out and explain the attached “Using ‘Federal Project Number One’ to Advertise Other New Deal Programs” assignment, in which students will teach classmates about a New Deal program through writing, music, art, or theatre. Teachers should determine the size of student groups, and whether to assign groups or allow students to choose. Teachers should also determine whether to assign New Deal programs or let students select a program they want to work on; just ensure that all groups do different programs so that the class will learn about a wide variety of New Deal components in the student presentations. Let students know how much class time or homework time they will have to work on their project, as well as when their project is due. Remind students that they will be responsible for presenting their project to the remainder of class and teaching their fellow classmates about their New Deal program.
 - **Optional variation:** If time does not permit completing the project, tell students to research a New Deal program and create a poster advertising the program for homework. Tell students that posters must contain the name of the program, a catchy slogan, visual aids that symbolize the program, and a brief summary of the purpose of the program. Project a few examples of actual posters created advertising various New Deal programs so that students have examples to follow. New Deal posters can be found at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaposters/wpahome.html>.
12. During the class that students present, review respectful audience member expectations and instruct students to take notes on the writing, art, music, and theatre projects that are viewed. (Teachers may want to have all of the art work and written projects displayed around the room for students to circulate and browse through, followed by the live presentations of the musical and theatrical projects.)

It is recommended that students create a chart on notebook paper in which they take notes on all the New Deal programs the class presents. Students should note the program, what they learned from their classmates’ project about the New Deal program, and what they liked about their classmates’ project:

New Deal Program	Summary of Program (What I learned...)	What I liked about the presentation...

13. After each presentation, spend a few minutes having students review the information they noted in their chart, adding any additional information as needed and correcting any misinformation. Likewise, after students have browsed through any art or written projects, lead the class in a feedback session for each art/written project as well. After all presentations and review of art/writing, discuss:

- Of all the New Deal programs you have learned about, which do you think was most important or effective and why?
- Are any of these programs, or similar programs, in existence today? (As you discuss this, have students note this information on their charts.)
- Do you think any of these New Deal programs would have faced opposition from politicians (those on the right) or citizens? Which programs and why?

Responses to the New Deal

14. Once students have a better understanding of most of the New Deal programs, focus them on thinking about how society would have responded to these various programs and why. To deepen the conversation, project the political cartoons on slides 17, 18, & 19 and ask for student thoughts:

- Slide 17: "Fast Worker"
 - What do you see? (students should point out words, objects, symbols, basic actions, etc.)
 - What does the woman symbolize? Why has the artist drawn the lady and FDR in this proximity to one another?
 - Why is this cartoon titled "Fast Worker"?
 - What is your interpretation of this cartoon? What message is the artist trying to convey? How might this cartoon address the New Deal?
- Slide 18: "The Grand and Glorious Feeling"
 - What do you see? (students should again point out words, objects, symbols, basic actions, etc.)
 - What does the sun symbolize? What other text do you see that is symbolic?
 - Why is the man saying, "If this is a dream please don't wake me up?" Is he dreaming? If not, why is he drawn in this way?
 - What is your interpretation of this cartoon? What message is the artist trying to convey? How might this cartoon address the New Deal?
- Slide 19: New Deal button
 - What do you see?
 - What message is this artist trying to convey?
 - Does the opinion represented in this image differ from the previous political cartoons we examined?
 - Who might have held this type of opinion regarding the New Deal programs and why?

15. Discuss the various outlooks regarding the New Deal and its impact on society. See TIME's article, "Deal or No Deal," attached and available at http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906978,00.html.

Comparing the Great Depression and the New Deal to Current Events

16. Facilitate students comparing and contrasting issues facing America today to those during the Great Depression. Ask students:
- What are various economic and social problems that exist in society today? (Teachers are looking for answers such as the current economic crisis, housing crisis, homelessness, poverty, unemployment, drug use, gang violence, etc. List answers on the board/chart paper.)
 - Which of these issues today were also issues dealt with during the Great Depression? (check the issues students note) Which are issues that are solely a modern problem?
 - Who is responsible for solving such problems that face our society?
 - In what ways does President Obama and his attitude/actions towards the current issues our nation is facing compare to FDR's attitude/actions in addressing the Great Depression?
 - What responsibilities does government have to the people? (Refer students back to the Preamble to the Constitution.)
 - What is the responsibility of government in formulating public policy and solutions to social problems such as these? To economic problems? What are the benefits of government at the local, state, and/or national level in addressing social and economic problems?
 - What is the responsibility of volunteer organizations?
 - What is the responsibility of individual citizens?
17. **Optional:** For further exploration, teachers may want to have students read or summarize for them "FDR's Lessons for Obama", a TIME article attached and available at http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906745,00.html.
- Teachers can have students write a persuasive essay or letter to the editor detailing their opinions as to how to address a current economic or social problem in America today (i.e., the housing crisis, poverty, homelessness, gangs, etc.) Students should discuss possible social and political actions for addressing the problem and the benefits to society of following such recommendations.
 - Rather than an essay or letter to the editor, teachers can instruct students to assume the role of President Obama and write and deliver a speech on the above topic(s). Teachers may want to play some of FDR's "fireside chats" as an example for students to follow. (Recordings of "fireside chats" can be found at: <http://www.authentichistory.com/1930-1939/history/01.html>)

Resources

- "The Legacy of FDR", series of Time articles at http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906745,00.html
- The Great Depression-lessons, images, political cartoons, etc: <http://www.authentichistory.com/1930s.html>
- New Deal posters: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaposters/wpahome.html>
- Recordings of FDR speeches, addresses, "fireside chats", etc.: <http://www.authentichistory.com/1930-1939/history/01.html>

Franklin Delano Roosevelt First Inaugural Address
Delivered 4 March 1933

President Hoover, Mr. Chief Justice, my friends:

This is a day of national consecration. And I am certain that on this day my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency, I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our people impels.

This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure, as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself -- nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life, a leadership of frankness and of vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. And I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; and the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone. More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

And yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered, because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply.

Primarily, this is because the rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed, through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

True, they have tried. But their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced by failure of credit, they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership, they have resorted to exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They only know the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

Yes, the money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths. The measure of that restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy, the moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days, my friends, will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves, to our fellow men.

Recognition of that falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political position are to be valued only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, and on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live.

Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation is asking for action, and action now.

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing great -- greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our great natural resources.

Hand in hand with that we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use of the land for those best fitted for the land.

Yes, the task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the values of agricultural products, and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure of our small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the Federal, the State, and the local governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities that have a definitely public character. There are many ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped by merely talking about it.

We must act. We must act quickly.

And finally, in our progress towards a resumption of work, we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order. There must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments. There must be an end to speculation with other people's money. And there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

These, my friends, are the lines of attack. I shall presently urge upon a new Congress in special session detailed measures for their fulfillment, and I shall seek the immediate assistance of the 48 States.

Through this program of action we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order and making income balance outgo. Our international trade relations, though vastly important, are in point of time, and necessity, secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy. I favor, as a practical policy, the putting of first things first. I shall spare no effort to restore world trade by international economic readjustment; but the emergency at home cannot wait on that accomplishment.

The basic thought that guides these specific means of national recovery is not nationally -- narrowly nationalistic. It is the insistence, as a first consideration, upon the interdependence of the various elements in and parts of the United States of America -- a recognition of the old and permanently important manifestation of the American spirit of the pioneer. It is the way to recovery. It is the immediate way. It is the strongest assurance that recovery will endure.

In the field of world policy, I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor: the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others; the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.

If I read the temper of our people correctly, we now realize, as we have never realized before, our interdependence on each other; that we can not merely take, but we must give as well; that if we are to go forward, we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline, because without such discipline no progress can be made, no leadership becomes effective.

We are, I know, ready and willing to submit our lives and our property to such discipline, because it makes possible a leadership which aims at the larger good. This, I propose to offer, pledging that the larger purposes will bind upon us, bind upon us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty hitherto evoked only in times of armed strife.

With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems.

Action in this image, action to this end is feasible under the form of government which we have inherited from our ancestors. Our Constitution is so simple, so practical that it is possible always to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential form. That is why our constitutional system has proved itself the most superbly enduring political mechanism the modern world has ever seen.

It has met every stress of vast expansion of territory, of foreign wars, of bitter internal strife, of world relations. And it is to be hoped that the normal balance of executive and legislative authority may be wholly equal, wholly adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of public procedure.

I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken nation in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the Congress may build out of its experience and wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

But, in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, in the event that the national emergency is still critical, I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis -- broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.

For the trust reposed in me, I will return the courage and the devotion that befit the time. I can do no less.

We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of national unity; with the clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction that comes from the stern performance of duty by old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded, a permanent national life.

We do not distrust the -- the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action. They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it.

In this dedication -- In this dedication of a Nation, we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.

The First 100 Days

By Adam Cohen, TIME Magazine

Source: http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906979,00.html

March 4, 1933, was perhaps the Great Depression's darkest hour. The stock market had plunged 85% from its high in 1929, and nearly one-fourth of the workforce was unemployed. In the cities, jobless men were lining up for soup and bread. In rural areas, farmers whose land was being foreclosed were talking openly of revolution. The crowd that gathered in front of the Capitol that day to watch Franklin D. Roosevelt's Inauguration had all but given up on America. They were, a reporter observed, "as silent as a group of mourners around a grave."

Roosevelt's Inaugural Address was a pitch-perfect combination of optimism ("The only thing we have to fear is fear itself"), consolation (the nation's problems "concern, thank God, only material things") and resolve ("This nation asks for action, and action now"). The speech won rave reviews. Even the rock-ribbed Republican Chicago *Tribune* lauded its "dominant note of courageous confidence." F.D.R. had buoyed the spirits of the American people — and nearly 500,000 of them wrote to him at the White House in the following week to tell him so.

Hours after the Inauguration, Roosevelt made history in a more behind-the-scenes way. He gathered his Cabinet in his White House office and had Justice Benjamin Cardozo swear them in as a group, the first time that had ever been done. F.D.R. joked that he was doing it so they could "receive an extra day's pay," but the real reason was that he wanted his team to get to work immediately.

And that team came through brilliantly. In the next 100 days — O.K., 105, but who's counting? — his Administration shepherded 15 major bills through Congress. It was the most intense period of lawmaking ever undertaken by Congress — a "presidential barrage of ideas and programs," historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. observed, "unlike anything known to American history."

During the Hundred Days, F.D.R. took the country in a whole new direction. The 1932 election had been, in the words of President Herbert Hoover, not a "contest between two men" but one between "two philosophies of government." Hoover believed in small government and letting the free market operate. The Federal Government that Hoover presided over was stunningly limited in scope. Its entire budget was — fiscal conservatives, read it and weep — under \$4 billion. Even as the U.S. endured the worst depression in its history, Hoover argued that the answers lay in unfettered capitalism and private charity.

Roosevelt, by contrast, insisted that when people could not help themselves, government had to step in, "not as a matter of charity but as a matter of social duty." Roosevelt promised Americans a New Deal, though he was vague about what it would look like. At heart, he was a pragmatist, not an ideologue. During the campaign, he vowed to respond to the Depression with "bold, persistent experimentation." He was open to any ideas that might work.

The immediate crisis involved the banks. Thousands had failed, costing families their life savings. The failures had prompted bank runs: people rushed to take out their money, causing more banks to become insolvent. By March 4, all 48 states had ordered their banks closed. Within days, the Roosevelt Administration drafted an **Emergency Banking Act**. Congress rushed to pass it, even though there were no finished copies available to read. The new law authorized the Treasury Department to begin reopening the banks when they could prove they were healthy. Barely a week after the Inauguration, the banking system was operating again. Roosevelt's closest aide, Raymond Moley, later said that "capitalism was saved in eight days."

With the banking crisis resolved, Roosevelt was ready to begin rolling out the **New Deal**. In giving it substance, he got his ideas from the extraordinary men and women of his inner circle. At the urging of Agriculture Secretary Henry Wallace, a farmer and farm journalist from Iowa, F.D.R. backed a sweeping farm-relief bill. Prices had fallen so low that it no longer paid for many farmers to plant crops. As a way to prevent the crop surpluses that led to low prices, the **Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA)** called, for the first time, for the government to pay farmers not to plant.

Critics attacked the proposed law as dangerously radical. (One Republican sniped that the bill was difficult to understand because it had been translated from the original Russian.) But Congress quickly embraced it. By the

summer, **Wallace's Agriculture Department** would be sending out checks to hundreds of thousands of wheat, cotton and corn farmers.

Roosevelt had not planned to keep Congress in special session for 100 days. But as long as it kept enacting his agenda, he seized the opportunity. Frances Perkins, his Secretary of Labor and the first female Cabinet member, pushed for large-scale welfare and public-works programs. Families that fell behind on rent were being thrown out on the street, children were keeling over in school from malnutrition, and once upstanding members of the middle class were foraging for food in garbage dumps. Roosevelt backed a welfare program drawn up by Harry Hopkins, a social worker who became the first federal welfare administrator. Under Hopkins' energetic leadership, in his first day on the job, the **Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)** began sending out multimillion-dollar checks to the states.

The initial public-works program was one Roosevelt thought up himself: the **Civilian Conservation Corps**, which hired more than 250,000 young people to plant trees and fix up national parks. Later in the Hundred Days, F.D.R. signed on to a much larger plan. It allocated \$3.3 billion to put unemployed people to work in an array of government jobs across the country. This plan later grew into the **Works Progress Administration**, the New Deal's signature jobs program.

Roosevelt also imposed the first federal regulations on the stock market. Many Americans believed Wall Street chicanery had caused the Depression. The **Truth-in-Securities Act** required issuers of new securities to disclose important information. A second banking law, the **Glass-Steagall Act**, separated investment banking and savings banking. But the last major bill of the Hundred Days, the **National Industrial Recovery Act**, was a doomed attempt to revive the economy through government-business partnerships. The Supreme Court would soon strike it down, though key parts lived on, including a federal guarantee of workers' right to unionize.

In little more than three months, Roosevelt had done nothing less than create a new America — or, rather, two new Americas. The **Hundred Days** was the start of the American welfare state. For the first time, the Federal Government assumed responsibility for caring for its worst-off citizens. FERA paved the way for **Social Security** and **unemployment insurance** to become law in 1935 and, much later, for programs like **Medicare** and **Medicaid**. The Hundred Days also laid the groundwork for the modern regulatory state. A year after the Truth-in-Securities Act was passed, F.D.R. created the **Securities and Exchange Commission**. Before the New Deal ended, there would be a **federal minimum wage** and a **National Labor Relations Board** to protect the rights of workers.

Not all the Hundred Days legislation has survived. The federal welfare program was dismantled in the 1990s, during the Gingrich revolution, and turned into block grants to the states. In 1999, President Bill Clinton signed a repeal of Glass-Steagall's separation of investment and savings banking, possibly paving the way for the current financial meltdown. Other laws from the era have lasted too long, notably the AAA's generous crop subsidies, which were meant to be temporary.

Many aspects of the New Deal remain controversial. Some people argue that the Federal Government should do more for the unemployed, while others believe that government handouts have gone too far. Some want stricter regulations on Wall Street and Big Business, and others want less red tape.

But F.D.R.'s basic idea of an activist government has become a national consensus. That became clear last year when the financial system began teetering. There were few Herbert Hoovers calling for the government to stand idly by. George W. Bush and Barack Obama insisted, from opposite ends of the political spectrum, that the Federal Government had to spend billions to bail out the banks. Their parallel response was proof that 75 years later, the ideals of the Hundred Days have triumphed. In a very real way, we're all New Dealers now.

Name: _____

The First 100 Days Response Sheet

1. What was FDR's goal during his first 100 days in office?
2. How did FDR differ from Hoover?
3. "Roosevelt...insisted that when people could not help themselves, government had to step in, 'not as a matter of charity but as a matter of social duty.'" Do you agree or disagree and why?
4. What was FDR's first step in repairing the nation? Why do you think he made this his priority?
5. Summarize the following New Deal legislation, noting what you believe FDR's goal was in the program:
 - Emergency Banking Act-
 - Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA)-
 - Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)-
 - Civilian Conservation Corps-
 - Works Progress Administration (WPA)-
 - Truth-in-Securities Act-
 - Glass-Steagall Act-
 - National Industrial Recovery Act-
 - Securities & Exchange Commission-
 - National Labor Relations Board
6. Of the New Deal programs mentioned in the article, which do you think was most important or impactful in restoring the American security (economically and/or socially)?

Group Members: _____

Group Assignment:

Using “Federal Project Number One” to Advertise Other New Deal Programs

Background Information

The Works Progress Administration (WPA), was the largest "New Deal" agency, employing millions of people and affecting almost every locality in the United States, especially rural and western mountain populations. Established in April 1935 and directed by Harry Hopkins, its purpose was to provide socially useful work for the unemployed. WPA programs included the construction of public buildings such as schools, hospitals and courthouses; highways; recreational facilities such as athletic fields and parks and playgrounds; and conservation facilities such as fish hatcheries and bird sanctuaries.

One aspect of the WPA involved activity in the arts - four WPA arts projects ("Federal Project Number One") were established. "Federal One" not only provided work for artists, writers, musicians, and actors but nurtured young men and women who were embarking on a career in the arts during the Great Depression.

- **The Federal Writer's Project (FWP)** employed writers to produce a variety of publications. The FWP's most famous effort was a series of guidebooks for states, cities, and localities such as Death Valley.
- **The Federal Music Project (FMP)** provided jobs for thousands of musicians who performed for millions during the lifetime of the project.
- **The Federal Art Project (FAP)** had painters and sculptors create works of art and teach studio and art history classes.
- **The Federal Theatre Project (FTP)**, directed by Hallie Flanagan, was created according to Hopkins as a "free, adult, uncensored" federal theater. In addition to theater productions the FTP also established radio units, dance and vaudeville and circus productions, as well as marionette and children's theater companies.

(Source: <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/glossary/federal-project-number1.htm>)

Your Assignment

You and your group members are to imagine that you are an artist employed with “Federal One” who has been given the job of getting information to the public regarding one of the New Deal programs. Based on the actual Federal One projects described below, your group can choose between four options for sharing information about your New Deal program.

1. After you have selected or been assigned your New Deal program, research information regarding the program. Ensure you discover:
 - The date it was created
 - Why it was created (what was the purpose/goals of the program?)
 - The effect of the program on American society
 - What became of the program (For example, while some of FDR’s legislation was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, other programs still exist today.)
2. Choose one of the follow options for presenting your information:
 - **FWP Option (writing):** Your group will create a brochure, pamphlet or other written publication that teaches about your New Deal program; you will display and describe your written product to the class

- **FMP Option (music):** Your group will create a song that teaches about your program; you will perform the song for the class
 - **FAP Option (art):** Your group will create a visual project that teaches about your New Deal program; your art will be displayed for the class
 - **FTP Option (theater):** Your group will create a skit that teaches about your New Deal program; you will perform your skit for the class
3. As a group, begin brainstorming ideas for how to present your program’s information, using the project type you have selected, in a creative, interesting, educational, and accurate way. All group members should participate by offering ideas and then contributing to the creation of a first draft of your brochure/pamphlet/etc., song, poster/sculpture/etc., or skit.
 4. Be prepared to present your final product in class on _____.

New Deal Programs

- Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA)
- Bonus Bill
- Civilian Conservation Corps
- Economy Act
- Emergency Banking Act
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- Farm Security Administration (FSA)
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
- Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)
- Glass-Steagall Act
- Gold Reserve Act
- National Industrial Recovery Act
- National Labor Relations Act/Wagner Act
- National Youth Administration
- Prohibition (repeal)/21st Amendment
- Resettlement Administration (RA)
- Rural Electrification Administration (REA)
- Securities & Exchange Commission
- Social Security Act
- Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
- Truth-in-Securities Act
- Works Progress Administration (WPA) – focus on the WPA’s other goals and programs other than “Federal One”

**If you want to work on a program or piece of legislation not included in this list, you must get approval first.*

TIME MAGAZINE

Deal or No Deal?

Wednesday, Jun. 24, 2009

by Amity Shlaes

Seventy-five years ago, Harold Ickes tried to explain to a New York City audience the special bond between the President and the American people. Franklin Roosevelt, the Secretary of the Interior said, was "the leader you have been looking for — for more years than you would like to remember." This was a President, Ickes told the crowd, who would fight for America's forgotten man — the hungry, the senior citizens, the laborers — even as he waged a wider offensive against the Depression.

As it turned out, F.D.R.'s tenacity did not suffice to get the economy back to where it had been before the Great Depression began, in 1929. Today we know that actions Roosevelt took to resolve the crisis may actually have perpetuated it. Especially during the period from 1935 to about 1939, Roosevelt's moves kept recovery at bay.

The first bleak years of the Depression were no fault of his. After the historic market crash of 1929, his predecessor, Herbert Hoover, through a misguided sense of charity, took steps that kept the economy down. By insisting that companies continue to pay high wages at a time when they could ill afford it, Hoover made employers slow to rehire. He signed into law a tariff, Smoot-Hawley, that set off a global trade war. He also joined Congress in pushing the top income tax rate from 25% to a confiscatory 63%.

Meanwhile, events abroad triggered further damage. In 1931, while Roosevelt was still governor of New York, Britain shocked the U.S. by going off the gold standard, meaning that Britons could no longer demand gold in exchange for paper currency at their banks. Foreign governments and individuals then rushed to redeem their dollars for gold. A banking panic ensued. To lure back cash, the Fed pushed up interest rates. Such actions worked to cause a whole new round of bank failures.

In 1932, the year Roosevelt was elected to his first term, 24% of U.S. workers were jobless. As soon as he took office, in March 1933, Roosevelt made a number of positive moves. Brushing aside opposition from the financial glitterati, he created federal deposit insurance for banks. Knowing that they could retrieve their money even if the local thrift closed its doors so reassured small depositors that they were willing once again to leave their cash in banks. The following year, F.D.R. established the Securities and Exchange Commission, which, over the long run, bolstered U.S. competitiveness by promising clear rules for investors in American equities.

Roosevelt also reassured seniors by creating Social Security. During his first term, the stock market rallied strongly, affording snapshots of robust growth for short periods. By the fall of 1936, when he was running for re-election, unemployment had dropped to about 10%, from 20%. Perhaps the Depression was history. Voters rewarded the President with a stunning electoral sweep — 46 of the 48 states.

But at least five New Deal policies would halt that tentative recovery. The trouble started with Roosevelt's erratic budgetary-spending patterns. During his first term and especially in the lead-up to his 1936 re-election campaign, F.D.R. submitted budgets to Congress that called for unprecedented spending. From 1933 to 1936, the federal budget rose from 6% to 9% of the nation's GDP.

Roosevelt's Public Works Administration had such a large budget, \$3.3 billion, that even Ickes, who headed it, was astounded. "[If] we had it all in currency and should load it into trucks," Ickes wrote, "we could set out with it from Washington for the Pacific Coast, shovel off one million dollars at every milepost and still have enough left to build a fleet of battleships."

Once safely past the '36 election, the President permitted himself the luxury of second thoughts about outlays. Soon after, he, the Federal Reserve and the Treasury tightened money. Those moves helped cause the infamous Depression Within the Depression, a sharp downturn in 1937 and 1938. As much as the measures themselves, Washington's inconsistencies did damage.

Next came taxes. Instead of reversing Hoover's tax-hike error, Roosevelt compounded it by raising taxes again and again. His Treasury also cobbled together new business taxes. The same caution that had led banks to accumulate reserves during the worst of the downturn had moved corporations to put aside extra cash instead of using it to expand. Roosevelt, angered that firms were not spending to stimulate the economy, retaliated with an undistributed-profits tax on top of ordinary corporate taxes. Taken aback, observers accused him of "breaking the nest egg."

Beyond tax rates, a broader New Deal tax philosophy took its toll. Tax authorities had once drawn a clear line between tax avoidance — the use of legal deductions — and criminal tax evasion. Roosevelt blithely blotted out that line, conflating evasion with avoidance. Anyone who seemed to pay too little became a target of F.D.R.'s prosecutors. One of those targets was Andrew Mellon, Treasury Secretary under Warren Harding and Hoover. Roosevelt's Treasury Secretary, Henry Morgenthau, told prosecutor Robert Jackson, a future Roosevelt appointee to the Supreme Court, that when it came to Mellon, "you can't be too tough."

New Deal labor policy also prolonged the Depression. The centerpiece of the New Deal, the National Recovery Administration, supported minimum wages that employers often could not pay. The 1935 Wagner Act gave John Lewis and what would become his Congress of Industrial Organizations the power to insist that wages stay high or rise while the economy was still fragile. In the late '30s, joblessness rose yet again, and it became clear that double-digit unemployment would be the rule for the decade. People began to realize that the government-jobs programs that Roosevelt had created did not amount to true recovery because those jobs disappeared when the government stopped funding them.

Most intimidating of all was not a fact but a prospect: What more might this President do as he aggregated authority? In his 1937 Inaugural Address, F.D.R. told the nation outright that government was now fashioning itself into an "instrument of unimagined power." This shocked many who recalled the days of smaller government. That same year, when he sought to pack the Supreme Court, it became clear that F.D.R. meant what he said. The bill to allow court-packing was defeated, but voters still wondered where Roosevelt would turn next.

During the Depression Within the Depression, industrial production collapsed and families hungered again. Businesses went on "capital strike," choosing not to invest in the future. Even British economist John Maynard Keynes, who believed in deficit spending, chastised the U.S. President. "It is a mistake to think businessmen are more immoral than politicians."

In those later years of the 1930s, the Dow gave up its previous gains, closing off hope that it would soon return to its 1929 benchmark level. (The market would not regain those heights until the mid-1950s.) Per capita GDP reached pre-Crash levels only at the very end of the 1930s. But worst of all was the abiding unemployment, which gave the Depression its adjective — *Great* — in American memory.

Astonished by the difficulty of attaining true recovery, Americans talked about how the term *forgotten man* could have several meanings — it could also describe the citizens who paid for the New Deal. "Who is the forgotten man in Muncie?" asked an editorialist from the Indiana town's paper. "I know him as intimately as I

know my own undershirt. He is the fellow that is trying to get along without public relief ... In the meantime the taxpayers go on supporting many that would not work if they had jobs."

When the recovery came, as the decade closed, what were the causes? For one thing, as scholars like Christina Romer, chairwoman of President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, have noted, gold flowing in from troubled Europe gave U.S. banks the kind of reserves that enabled them to lend more. And as F.D.R. turned his attentions to crises in Asia and Europe, he tired of his war on business at home. Instead of getting pounded, big companies found themselves working hand in glove with the government to arm the U.S. or supply matériel for lend-lease.

The real question about the Great Depression is not how or whether World War II ended it, but rather why the Depression lasted until the war. That episode of American life reminds us that even the best-intentioned government intervention can make things worse. And that when a politician remembers one forgotten man, he often creates another.

Shlaes is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and the author of The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression. She is currently writing a biography of Calvin Coolidge

Source: http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/printout/0,29239,1906802_1906838_1906978,00.html#

Alas for countless pundits and inspirational speakers, it is apparently not the case that the Chinese word for *crisis* is spelled by joining the characters for *danger* and *opportunity*. But that common fallacy nevertheless captures an important metaphorical truth: whatever the perils it brings with it, a crisis can be a grand opportunity. Among those who have understood that truth was Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Writing to his fellow Democrats in the 1920s, Roosevelt noted that their party could not hope to return to power until the Republicans led the nation "into a serious period of depression and unemployment." The Great Depression soon brought a far longer and deeper period of woe than F.D.R. foresaw. But the crisis of the 1930s also provided an object lesson in the relationship between economic danger and political opportunity — a lesson Barack Obama is now trying to follow. Obama, too, came to office in the midst of an economic crisis, and in the solutions he has offered, it appears he has often looked to the example of F.D.R., whose presidency — and the very idea of activist government that it represents — is very much back in the public mind this year. Roosevelt pushed through policies that aimed not just to deal with the immediate challenge of the Great Depression but also to benefit generations of Americans to come. Pulling off a similar feat will require Obama to persuade Americans to see opportunities in the present crisis as well.

A More Secure America

It's old news that F.D.R.'s New Deal did not end the Depression. On that score, there was little difference between Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover. But unlike Hoover, F.D.R. seized the occasion to shape a legacy of durable reforms. For that accomplishment — along with winning World War II — historians routinely rank him among the greatest Presidents.

So what did Roosevelt's greatness consist of, and how did he attain it?

Forget about the Hundred Days of 1933, the legendary crucible in which F.D.R.'s anti-Depression strategy was supposedly forged. The legislative frenzy of that fabled springtime gave a stricken nation a valuable psychological boost, but many of its initiatives did not survive the Depression decade. F.D.R.'s greatest achievements came later. Their essence can be summed up in a single word: security.

All the major New Deal reforms that endured had a common purpose: not simply to end the immediate crisis of the Depression but also to make America in the future a less risky place, to temper for generations thereafter what F.D.R. called the "hazards and vicissitudes" of life. By creating the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the New Deal provided more confidence to bank depositors. With the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), it guaranteed more reliable information for investors. The Federal Housing Administration gave more protection to mortgage lenders and thus more options to home buyers. The National Labor Relations Board brought more stability to dealings between capital and labor. The Fair Labor Standards Act ensured more predictable wages for the most vulnerable workers. And Social Security offered at least a minimal safety net for both the unemployed and the elderly.

Those reforms constitute our most valuable heritage from the Depression era. Few of them generated any appreciable economic stimulus in the short run. But taken together, those measures laid the foundation for unprecedented economic growth and broadly shared prosperity in the years after World War II — an era that the novelist Philip Roth once aptly described as "the greatest moment of collective inebriation in American history."

A Postwar Roosevelt Boom

Roosevelt's innovations dramatically changed the character of American society. They deeply shaped the life trajectory of the so-called Greatest Generation, as well as the fates of millions born well after the Depression passed. It was no coincidence that African-American aspirations for full citizenship, denied for a century, were substantially realized at last in that context of stable economic health and almost giddy national self-confidence. By any conceivable metric, the New Deal's reforms were a success, as gauged by the conspicuous upward social mobility of several postwar generations of both genders and all races and ethnicities.

With the exception of the FDIC, however, none of them dates from the Hundred Days, or even from 1933. Therein lies an important lesson. Had the Hundred Days swiftly brought about economic recovery, a return to business as usual might have meant politics as usual as well. In that scenario it is doubtful that any of those landmark reforms would have come to pass. Roosevelt, in short, understood the difference between the urgent and the important. He could hardly ignore the compelling need to steer the economy out of the Depression, but he refused to allow that task to deflect him from his more important objective of making American life less hazardous — and more inclusive — ever after. He aimed not merely to end the crisis at hand but to forestall similar calamities in the future, and thereby to build a country, as he once said, "in which no one is left out."

F.D.R. appreciated the irony that it was the Depression that made it possible for him to realize those larger objectives. It would be too much to say that he deliberately prolonged the crisis to preserve the possibilities for reform. But he candidly acknowledged the relationship between peril and progress in his second Inaugural Address, on Jan. 20, 1937. He began on that day by boasting of "our progress out of the Depression" and went on to list several signs of returning prosperity.

But then he said something decidedly unusual in the canon of presidential addresses. "Such symptoms of prosperity," he warned, "may become portents of disaster!" Only then did he utter one of his most quoted and most misunderstood lines: "I see one-third of a nation ill housed, ill clad, ill nourished."

The address in its entirety makes it clear that when he spoke of that "one-third of a nation," F.D.R. was not referring primarily to the victims of the Great Depression, which he thought was ending. He was speaking, rather, about the accumulated social and human deficits spawned by more than a century of buccaneering, laissez-faire American capitalism — deficits that he considered not yet fully redeemed in 1937. Solving that problem was what he meant when he said in June 1936 that "this generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny."

Such rendezvous are rare in American history, and not without reason. As the historian Henry Adams wrote, among the founders of the Republic, the greatest fear "was power; not merely power in the hands of a president or a prince, of one assembly or several, of many citizens or few, but power in the abstract, wherever it existed and under whatever form it was known." That's why the framers of the Constitution constructed a political order based on "checks and balances." That arrangement has conspicuous virtues, but it also designs a measure of paralysis into the American political system. It impedes swift adjustment to changing economic and social realities. It sustains a chronic deadlock in which trauma and shock become the necessary preconditions for effective political action. To a degree not found in other political cultures, it forges a perverse partnership between danger and opportunity.

President Obama knows this. Asked by PBS news anchor Jim Lehrer in February if he did not feel burdened by the several crises now besetting the country, Obama noted that the moment "is full of peril but full of possibility" and that such times are "when the political system starts to move effectively."

Roosevelt could not have said it better. F.D.R. championed a long-deferred reform agenda that put security at its core. Obama wants to advance another set of reforms that have long been stalled. He has already used the crisis to propose new regulatory rules for the banking-and-finance industry. But there are many more objectives on the horizon. Universal health care was first advocated in the platform of Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party in 1912. A cogent energy policy has been pushed by every President since Richard Nixon, to no avail. Immigration begs for comprehensive rethinking, as do education, a host of environmental issues, and central tenets of national-security policy and military doctrine.

Like F.D.R., Obama must take measures to turn the economy around. If he doesn't, he'll go down in the history books as another Hoover. But to warrant comparison with Roosevelt, he will be judged not simply on whether he manages a rescue from the current economic crisis but also on whether he grasps the opportunity to make us more resilient to face those future crises that inevitably await us.

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Source: http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1906802_1906838_1906745,00.html.
